the Burning Wheel

Fantasy Roleplaying System

Gold Edition

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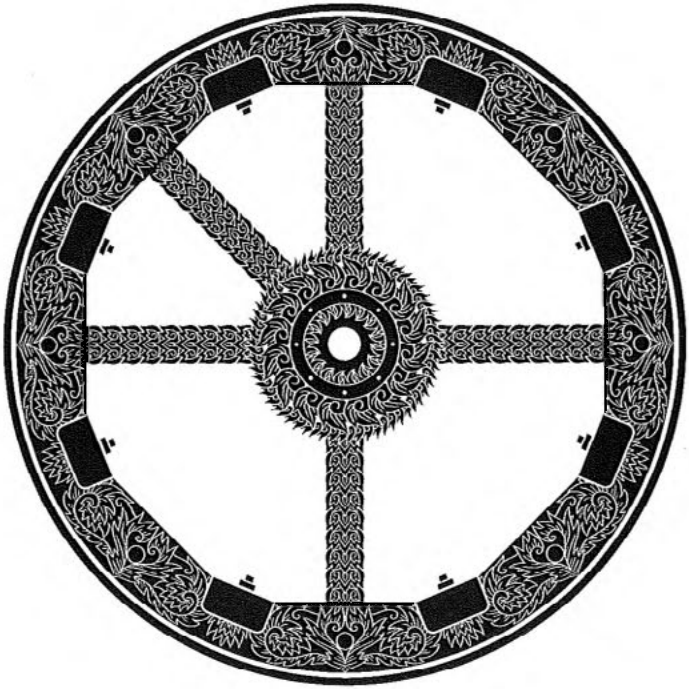

Fantasy Roleplaying System

Gold Edition

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Extra Thank You On Top

To Ken Hite, who, I believe, has impeccable taste. If you like this game, and you see Ken at a con, say a polite, "Thank you."

Gold Thank Yous

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Gold Dedication

This book is dedicated to a lost, confused 19-year old boy. Follow your dreams, dumb-ass, but be careful what you wish for. You might get it—and then what the hell will you do?

A Special Nod

To Barbara Tuchman, JRR Tolkien and to Ursula K. Le Guin for continuing to inspire me.

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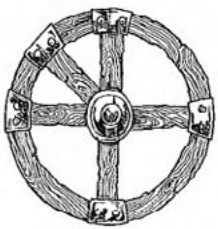

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Foreword

At their core, the Burning Wheel books are instruction manuals on how to play. Luke and company have never wasted much ink on why to play their game. Perhaps because when one sees *how* to play the game, the *why* becomes clear.

So how do you play Burning Wheel? Fight for what you believe. Or, since it's a roleplaying game: Fight for what your character believes. Everything else in the rules tells either how to craft that character's beliefs or how to fight for them.

Burning Wheel's character creation drips with character history. History breeds conflict. Conflict means taking a stand. What will your character stand for?

Burning Wheel's core mechanics, advancement and Artha rules demand more-than-usual attention from the player. Skill or stat advancement isn't an afterthought, but rather a crucial part of the game. The decision to solve a problem with cold steel or silken words isn't just one of better numerical values—it's a question of who you, the player, want your character to become. Every action—pass or fail—is growth. Every decision affects how your character matures, shifts, changes. Even little decisions impact the character in permanent, subtle ways.

The Wheel's Rim, those "crunchy bits" that players like me thrive on, builds tension when the heat is on by putting more control into the player's hands. Burning Wheel is a game, and like all good games, it requires skill to play. To really enjoy Burning Wheel requires some investment in Burning Wheel. You, the player, have to care. You have to believe.

I believe in Burning Wheel.

Like a Burning Wheel character, I'm an amalgam of my experiences: military brat, missionary in a foreign land, veteran of the Iraq War, husband and father, and historical European martial artist. For each of these things, the *why* is built into the *how*. I love each of these parts of my life because of how I lived them. If life is a game, then I love my experiences because of how I played them.

Burning Wheel's why is built into Luke and company's extensive how. The game is meant to be played as written. Each rule has been lovingly crafted—and now, many of them re-crafted—to support player-driven stories of white-knuckled action, heart-rending decisions and triumph against the odds. Burning Wheel Gold is the result of a decade of such stories. It's not a "fix" of Burning Wheel Revised or Classic. It's a new how.

May you enjoy discovering the why as much as I will.

Jake Norwood
March 2011

Jake Norwood is the creator and author of the acclaimed (and out of print) roleplaying game The Riddle of Steel. *He is also a veteran of the 101st Airborne (Rakkasans!), president of the HEMA Alliance (www.hemaalliance.com) and an internationally recognized German longsword fighter and teacher. He lives in Maryland with his wife, daughter and mom-in-law.*

the Hub of the Wheel

But need alone is not enough to set power free: there must be knowledge.

—Ursula K. Le Guin, *A Wizard of Earthsea*

It Revolves on This

The Burning Wheel is a roleplaying game. Its mood and feel are reminiscent of the lands created by Ursula K. Le Guin, Stephen R. Donaldson and JRR Tolkien in their works of fantasy fiction. It is also heavily influenced by the brilliant medieval historical accounts of Barbara Tuchman and Desmond Seward; a dirty, complicated world full of uncertainty, but not without hope or opportunity for change.

Unlike many other roleplaying games, there is no set world in which you play. Burning Wheel is an heir to a long legacy of fantasy roleplaying games, most of which contain far better worlds and settings than could be provided here. Also, it is my strong belief that players of these games are adept at manufacturing their own worlds for gameplay; my own world pales in comparison to what you will create.

In the game, players take on the roles of characters inspired by history and works of fantasy fiction. These characters are a list of abilities rated with numbers and a list of player-determined priorities. The synergy of inspiration, imagination, numbers and priorities is the most fundamental element of Burning Wheel. Expressing these numbers and priorities within situations presented by the game master (GM) is what the game is all about.

Though the game has no world full of ethics and laws, the rules do contain a philosophy that implies a certain type of place. There are consequences to your choices in this game. They range from the very black and white, "If I engage in this duel, my character might die," to the more complex, "If my character undertakes this task, he'll be changed, and I don't know exactly how." Recognizing that the system enforces these choices will help you navigate play. I always encourage players to think before they test their characters. Are you prepared to accept the consequences of your actions?

The in-game consequences of the players' decisions are described in this rulebook. The moral ramifications are left to you.

Using This Book

This book, Burning Wheel Gold, is the updated, revised and combined edition of Burning Wheel Revised. It contains both the Burning Wheel Fantasy Roleplaying System and the Character Burner. These books are identified with wood and flame borders respectively.

The basic rules for play are presented first. We recommend starting by reading the first 75 pages of the Burning Wheel. After digesting the basics, make—or "burn," in our parlance—a character. Then get some friends together and play the game! After you've played, explore the rules further to see what you'd like to add to your game.

Voices in My Head

As you read through the rules, you will encounter three little imps. These imps represent the author's voice in certain parts of the text.

Basic rules text is not preceded by any of the imps. This "rules voice" is used to convey most of the information in the game. The imps offer commentary on the rules.

This character indicates that I am asking the reader to take note. The text following him is written in my voice, rather than the rules voice. I call this guy the *Instructor*. You can call him "Luke" if you want to. For example: "Thanks Luke, that was very helpful!"

This is the *Ranter*. He rears his ugly head whenever I am yelling about something. This usually comes in the form of harsh advice or warnings regarding the limits of Burning Wheel. Take what he says with a grain of salt. For example, "I wish Luke would shut up!"

The *Weeper* is a strange one, prone to outbursts of tears at the oddest times; sometimes tears of sadness, sometimes fear and sometimes tears of joy. He frequently squirts when death or something else very scary is near. "What's he carrying on about now?"

The Flow of the Game

Burning Wheel is best played sitting around a table with your friends—face to face. It is inherently a social game. The players interact with one another to come to decisions and have the characters undertake actions.

One of you takes on the role of the game master. The GM is responsible for challenging the players. He also plays the roles of all of those

characters not taken on by other players; he guides the pacing of the events of the story; and he arbitrates rules calls and interpretations so that play progresses smoothly.

Everyone else plays a protagonist in the story. Even if the players decide to take on the roles of destitute wastrels, no matter how unsavory their exploits, they are the focus of the story. The GM presents the players with problems based on the players' priorities. The players use their characters' abilities to overcome these obstacles. To do this, dice are rolled and the results are interpreted using the rules presented in this book.

Sheets of Paper

Each player is required to keep a written record of his character. Character sheets are provided on our website at www.burningwheel.org for just this purpose. Characters in Burning Wheel evolve and grow as play progresses, so I recommend using a pencil to mark the sheet. There are a few other sheets used in play to keep track of moment to moment stuff, but they'll be discussed later down the line.

The GM has the responsibility to keep notes on the characters and monsters that he uses. These don't need to be fully fleshed out—a few numbers usually suffice. But there are certain characters that will need to be described fully in order to give them their due in play.

Dice

D6

Burning Wheel uses common six-sided dice for all rolls. From here on out, these dice are referred to as D6 (which is gamer-talk for "six-sides"). Groups of them are referred to as 3D6, 4D6, 5D6, or 3D, 4D, 5D for short. How's that for confusing gamer parlance?

Difficulty Number

Dice in Burning Wheel are rolled in handfuls (or pools) of usually three to six dice. In each roll, every die is counted as its own result, either a "yes" or a "no." The more "yeses" the better. Any die that comes up as a "no" result is a traitor to your cause and doesn't count toward success.

The number needed for the die to achieve the "yes" result is called the *difficulty number*. For the purposes of explaining the rules, a "yes" result is a 4, 5 or 6 on a die. A "no" result is a 1, 2 or 3. (Traitors!) There are only two instances where this changes, and they will be discussed later.

Successes

When a die rolls a "yes" result, we call it a success. After the dice are rolled, count up all your successes.

Rolling a handful of five dice, my dismal luck gives me a 1, 2, 2, 4, 5 result. Two of the dice came up 4 or higher. Thus I rolled two successes.

When a player rolls dice, he needs enough successes that his character passes the tests set before him in the game.

Ability Ratings

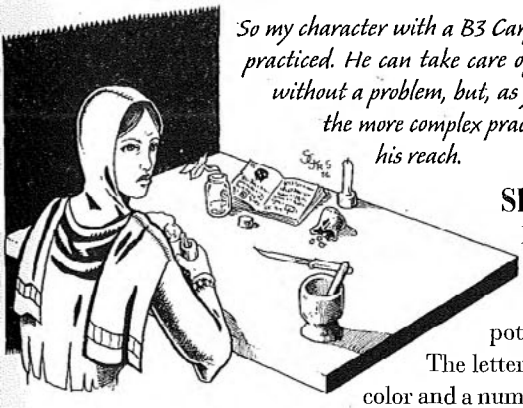
Exponent

The number next to your character's stats, attributes and skills indicates how many dice to roll when that ability is called upon. We here at Burning Wheel HQ call that number the exponent of the ability because it is the representative of the character's actual ability in that area (not because it stands for X to the Nth power). Throughout the text, you'll see me refer to an ability as exponent 3. That's just me saying, "You roll three dice for that, bub."

Expertise by Exponent

Below is a list of exponents (exp) in Burning Wheel and what they imply about the ability they represent. Hopefully, this will help you get a feel for the system:

Exp 1 is naturally disinclined, crippled or utterly incompetent
Exp 2 is untrained, raw, weak or unpracticed
Exp 3 is nominally trained and practiced
Exp 4 is competent; everyday stuff doesn't pose a challenge
Exp 5 is expert
Exp 6 is near mastery
Exp 7 is excellence
Exp 8 is total mastery, complete understanding
Exp 9 is uncanny; incomprehensibly good
Exp 10 is as near perfection as the system allows



So my character with a B3 Carpentry is considered trained and practiced. He can take care of all the basic stuff of his trade without a problem, but, as you will see, with just three dice, the more complex practices of his profession are beyond his reach.

Shade

Every ability number in Burning Wheel is accompanied by a letter. This letter indicates the "level of potential," or shade, of that ability. The letters, in turn, correspond to both a color and a number. B is black shade and means the player rolling for that ability needs 4s or better for successes. G is gray shade and needs 3s or better for successes. Gray shades indicate heroic potential. W is white shade and needs 2s or better. White shade is for supernatural potential.

Having a G or W shade ability is the only time the difficulty number for a roll varies from 4 (or B shade). Changing an ability's shade is discussed in the Character Burner and Artha sections of this book.

When to Roll

Burning Wheel is very much a game. While players undertake the roles of their characters and embellish their actions with performance and description, rolling the dice determines success or failure and, hence, where the story goes.

Tests

You make tests during dramatic moments, when the outcome is uncertain.

The Orcs are coming. I need to reinforce this door to hold them off (even for just a little while). I test my Carpentry skill.

Shade

Carpentry B 3 — Exponent

Ability (In this case, a skill)

When I want to test my character's Carpentry skill—my character must reinforce this door before the Orcs come!—I roll three dice.

Tests are the teeth of the gears of this game. Without tests, nothing catches and moves forward. In fact, in a situation involving conflict, a test is required. A player cannot affect another character without testing an ability to back it up.

Testing abilities is a good thing! Not only do tests drive the story by providing tangible results for our actions, they allow the character a chance to improve his abilities and attain greater heights.

Obstacles to Overcome

So now we know how to test an ability—roll the number of dice indicated. 4s or better count as successes, the more successes the better.

Players need to generate successes in order to pass more difficult tests—tests that require multiple successes to overcome. The number of successes needed to pass a test is called the *obstacle (Ob)*. It is the GM's role to assign appropriate obstacles based on the inherent complexity of the task at hand.

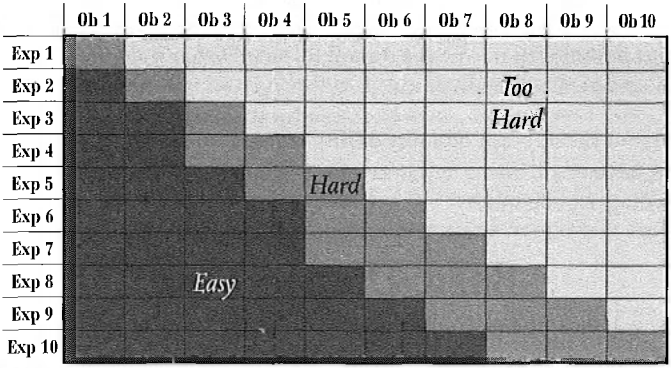
The GM refers to the Carpenter skill and determines that reinforcing a door is a routine task. Therefore, it's an Ob 2 test. I need to roll two successes on the three dice of my character's Carpentry skill.

The higher the obstacle, the more difficult the test, and the more skilled and lucky the character will need to be to pass it.

Difficulty by Obstacle

Obstacles range from 1 to 10 (only occasionally getting higher): 1 is the easiest, 10 the most difficult. According to the exponent list, a character who is competent in an area has four dice to roll for that ability. Four dice requiring 4s or better means that he can routinely pass tests of obstacle 1 or 2. He can pass obstacle 3 and 4 tests with some difficulty. Anything higher than obstacle 4 is too difficult. Since he can only roll four successes on four dice, Ob 5 or higher is out of his range. A character with an ability at exponent 5—an expert according to our list—can routinely hit obstacles 1 through 3, but will find obstacles 4 and 5 a bit difficult. Still, he can hit an Ob 5 unassisted, while a skill exponent of 4 cannot. A character with a master level ability—exponent 8—can achieve great things rolling six, seven or eight successes, but even he can't reach Ob 10 unaided.

This simple table below visually depicts the range of difficulty by ability level in Burning Wheel. Light gray is easy. Medium gray is hard. Dark gray is too hard for an ability of that exponent to accomplish unassisted.



It is the philosophy of the system that some tasks are either too complex to accomplish without help or simply too difficult to accomplish at all. Sometimes, high obstacles will force players to be creative and think of another way around.

Absolute Difficulty

The difficulty of a test does not vary according to the skill of its user. The difficulty is set and the user must muster his skill and advantages to overcome it.

- Ob 1 A simple act done with little thought
- Ob 2 An act performed routinely at your job
- Ob 3 An act you can accomplish if you concentrate
- Ob 4 A risky act
- Ob 5 An act that requires expertise
- Ob 6 An act that requires a heroic effort
- Ob 7 An improbable feat
- Ob 8 An act requiring preternatural ability or a lot of help
- Ob 9 An act deemed nearly impossible
- Ob 10 A miracle

Increasing Difficulty

Obstacles can be increased by problems like carrying a baby in a papoose on your back in a sword fight. That's +1 Ob to running around and fighting. Obstacles, once set, aren't reduced by the workarounds, tricks or fixes from the players. Those elements add dice to the ability to overcome the obstacle.

Open-Ended Rolls

Certain rolls in Burning Wheel are described as "open-ended." This means that any 6s rolled allow the player to pick up another die. If you hit your difficulty number or higher, it's a success. If you don't meet your difficulty number, the die is a traitor. If you roll a 6, it counts as a success and you get to roll another die!

Tests for Steel, Faith and any ability considered "magical" (Dwarven Arts, Elven Skill Songs or Sorcery, for example) are all open-ended rolls. Anything can happen.

Basic Dice in Brief

- We roll dice when a conflict arises.
- The number of dice rolled is determined by the character's relevant ability that applies to the conflict. You don't use Cooking to win a brawl. Know what I mean?
- The number of dice rolled is equal to the number next to the ability. This is called the exponent.
- For the majority of tests, 4s and better are successes. 3s and lower are traitors. This difficulty number is determined by the ability's shade.
- The obstacle is the inherent difficulty of the task being attempted. You need successes equal to the obstacle to pass the test.
- Open-ended rolls— 6s on Faith, Steel and magic-type tests—allow you to pick up another die and roll it again, hopefully adding more successes.

Elements of Character

Burning Wheel is a gritty game. It is designed so the characters appear and feel like human beings (or a similar analog). They bleed, strain and sweat—they have limitations, but are also lucky and miraculous.

Characters are the most important part of Burning Wheel. They are the players' incarnations in the game, and nothing happens in the game world that doesn't involve a player character.

Let's take a look at what comprises a character in this system: He has stats, attributes and skills; Beliefs, Instincts and traits; Resources, relationships, reputations, affiliations and Circles; and of course, he's got his gear and stuff that he totes around with him.

All of these elements affect how the character is played, and thus how the game is shaped by the character's actions. To help you get a feel for the system, these aspects are described in general terms in the following section. Individual uses of these abilities are detailed in later sections.

Stats

There are six stats that describe a character's basic mental and physical composition in Burning Wheel: Will, Perception, Agility, Speed, Power and Forte.

Will

Will is the social stat—it represents the character's strength of mind, empathy and social intelligence. It is the basis of a number of skills and attributes.

Perception

Perception is the awareness and mental acuity stat. It's rolled all the time in game. Players always have their characters searching for information or clues, and this is the stat tested in those situations.

Agility
Agility represents the hand-eye coordination of the character. It is tested when a character must keep hold of something, snatch something or toss an object. It is also the basis for many martial skills.

Speed
This quirky stat represents how fast the character moves and how coordinated he is overall. It's rolled all the time in game, from fleeing your enemies to ducking a blow. It is also the basis for the Dancing, Stealthy and Climbing skills.

Power
Power represents physical strength. It's rolled in game when the character has to push something over or grapple with someone. It is also the basis for damage in melee attacks.

Forte
Forte (pronounced "FORT") represents the character's physical mettle—how tough and durable he is. Forte is rarely rolled in game, but it is a part of two crucial attributes: Health and Mortal Wound.

Attributes
Attributes are derived from stats and are used for more subtle tests than the raw instances described above. They can also be avenues to additional abilities, available only to certain characters.

Health
The Health attribute is derived from Will and Forte. It is used in game to recover from injury and resist the effects of pain and fatigue.

Reflexes
The Reflexes attribute is calculated from Perception, Agility and Speed. It is used to determine how often a character acts during a fight. Reflexes isn't tested like other abilities.

Steel

Steel is a complex attribute that combines elements from different stats and the character's background to determine how steady a character's nerves are. Steel has its own section and is discussed in detail there.

Emotional Attributes

Some characters possess an additional ability tied into their emotional makeup: Faith, Grief, Greed and Hatred are a few examples. These attributes are factored by answering questions about the character, and are tested by special circumstances in game. Emotional Attributes have their own chapter and are further detailed in the individual lifepath chapters.

Mortal Wound

Mortal Wound combines Power and Forte to set the point at which the character dies in the injury mechanics. Mortal Wound is never tested; it is just a marker.

Shade

It is possible to gain abilities beyond the mundane. Your character can have a heroic Power stat or a supernatural Dance skill. These special abilities are denoted by a different shade—gray or white.

Skills

In Burning Wheel, a skill is a specialized field of knowledge or particular technique known by the character. A skill allows a character to achieve his goals more easily than by using stats. Examples of skills include: Animal Husbandry, Mending, Sorcery, Sword and Ugly Truth.

Characters tend to have many skills—from four to twelve is normal. Twenty is not unheard of.

Beliefs

A player must determine the three top priorities for his character. These are fundamental ideas important to the character. They are a combination of the outlook of the character and the goals of the player.

I must prove my worth to my companions, so I will guide them through these caverns.

Beliefs are discussed in their own chapter in this book. Creating them is described in the Character Burner.

Instincts

Instincts are similar to Beliefs—they are player-determined priorities and reactions for the character. They are based on the character's experiences and have a tangible function.

An Instinct is essentially an "if/then" or "always/never" statement for the character's behavior. "If surprised, I draw my sword." The player is allowed to program these actions and reactions into his character. Therefore, he can be assured that his character will react within certain parameters whether the player explicitly states it or not at that moment in play.

Think of them as hardwired reactions from training and experience (and a little insurance the player takes out against the GM).

Instincts have their own section in this book. Creating them is discussed in the Character Burner.

Traits

Traits are quirks and odd abilities that the character acquires through the course of his life. A player starts by purchasing traits in character burning, but they will also be earned in play.

Traits affect a character's personality, his appearance, and even grant him special abilities. Where Beliefs and Instincts are relatively loosely defined, the role of traits in game is mechanically fixed.

Using traits is discussed in the Burning Wheel, creating and purchasing them is talked about in the Character Burner.

Resources and Circles

Resources

Whether wealthy or destitute, every character is assigned a Resources ability. Its starting exponent is determined by how the player spent his character's resource points in character creation. Thereafter, it is used like a skill in game. Its function is to determine how economically and financially solvent a character is: Can he afford to buy property? Can he keep his equipment in repair? Is he forced to beg for food and lodging? The Resources ability allows all of this to be determined by a roll of the dice.

Circles

Who does the character know from his days as an apprentice? Can he call on his former gang mates for help? Such questions are answered using the Circles ability. It's a measure of the character's social influence, and its scope is shaped by the character's lifepaths.

Gear and Stuff

No fantasy roleplaying game would be complete without *stuff*: Swords, armor, books, spells, clothes, shoes, lanterns, etc. All of the bits and pieces to make you feel right. In this game, gear augments an ability or reduces (or increases) a penalty. Swords augment your Power stat when your character is trying to kill someone. Lanterns reduce penalties for Perception tests in darkness. Clothes keep those social skill test obstacles down.

Gear is initially acquired in character burning. In play, gear is purchased via a Resources test or even just granted by the GM during appropriate scenes: a knight is granted a new sword and suit of armor by his liege, or a magic helmet is found in the burial mound of a long-dead god, for example.

Mostly though, gear is window dressing that adds detail to your world.

Magic

The last element of the game that needs to be mentioned is magic. In Burning Wheel, it comes in many forms.

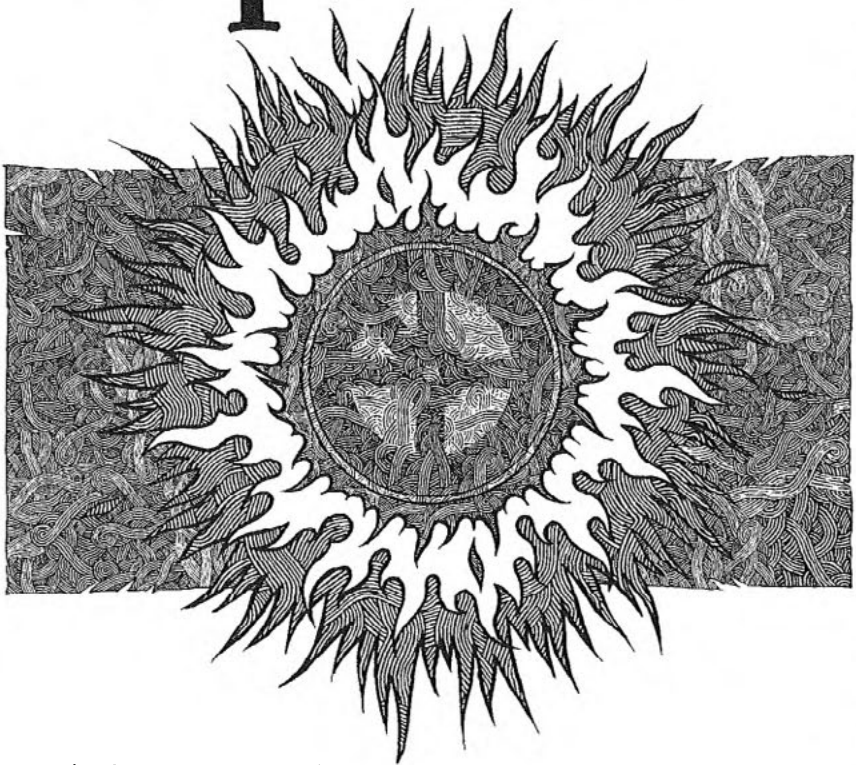
Magic makes possible what could not normally be done by human physical means or ingenuity. Not simply building the pyramids or preserving bodies for thousands of years, but sealing tombs with unbreakable spells and cursing those who desecrate them to die inexplicable deaths.

It is the unexplainable and the potent—mystical power over the elements. In game, this process is represented by Emotional Attributes—Faith, Grief, Hatred and Greed—and various magical skills like Summoning, Enchanting and Sorcery.

From Hub to Spokes

The rules for the elements touched on in this chapter are discussed in their individual sections. In the next section, we're going to look at the next level of the rules: how to test your abilities, how to advance, how to tell the other players what you want and how to get rewarded.

the Spokes



Who then may trust the dice at Fortune's throw? Who joins in worldly struggles such as these will be, when least prepared for it, laid low.

—Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*

Testing Your Abilities

Burning Wheel is very much a game to be played and manipulated for fun (and profit, sort of). Dice rolls called for by the GM and players are the heart of play. These are tests. They determine the results of conflicts and help drive the story.

Tests involve the character's abilities. Whether it's a Health test to recover from an injury, a Sorcery test to learn a new spell or a Perception test to spot a pursuer, these are the very fabric of the game. Characters + Situation + Tests = Game.

In the system, there are a few ways to roll dice to overcome obstacles. How the successes are counted depends on the desired outcome and the type of conflict. The following section discusses the basic test mechanics, plus the other ways we manipulate dice pools and obstacles.

Let's start with the core of the Burning Wheel system. We call it "Intent and Task."

Intent

What do you want do and why do you want your character to do it?

"I want to kill him!"

Great. "I kill him" is an intent. When declaring an action for a character, you say what you want and how you do it. That's the intent and the task.

When a player states "I kill him!" we know his intent. By describing how his character will undertake this intent, he defines the task. Clearly stating and linking the task and intent allows player and GM to determine what ability needs to be tested.

The result, whether or not the target actually dies, is determined by the results of a dice roll. Roll well and the character comes closer to accomplishing the stated intent.

Descriptions of the task are vital. Through them we know which mechanics to apply; acknowledging the intent allows us to properly interpret the results of the test.

Task

A task is a measurable, finite and quantifiable act performed by a character: attacking someone with a sword, studying a scroll or resting in an abbey. A task describes how you accomplish your intent. What does your character do? A task should be easily linked to an ability: the Sword skill, the Research skill or the Health attribute.

Inappropriate tasks are: "I kill him!" or "I convince him." Those are intents. After such pronouncements, the first question any Burning Wheel player asks should be: How? By what means? The answer, "I stab him with my knife," is an appropriate task description for a murderous character. "I persuade him to take my side by explaining his wife's affair with the cardinal." is appropriate in the second case.

What Ability Do I Roll?

Once the description of the intent and task has been stated at the table, the ability needed to complete that action is usually pretty obvious. Stabbing someone is going to require a Brawling or Knife test. Convincing another character requires a Persuasion or Falsehood test.

When adjudicating a test, start with the descriptions in the Elements of Character. If you need more detail, refer to the Character Burner and the skill list.

If it is ever unclear what ability to roll, the GM should question the player. Get him to describe his action in detail, until what needs to happen is clear to both parties. Once the ability to be tested is established, then the dice are rolled.

Standard Tests

In a standard test, the GM sets the obstacle based on the skill listing, the conflict interaction or his own judgement. A player rolls his character's ability and needs to come up with a number of successes equal to or greater than the obstacle. Doing so passes the test.

The player wants his character to pick a lock. The GM consults the skill list to find the obstacle. He sets the obstacle at 3 based on the type of lock. Thus, the player needs to roll three or more successes from his character's skill in order to successfully pick the lock.

Versus Tests

When two characters come into opposition, a versus test is made—one ability against the other. The character with more successes wins the contest.

Moqtada is haggling with a shipwright. I test his G5 Haggling against the shipwright's B5. I roll four successes on my dice. The GM rolls three successes for the shipwright. My character, Moqtada, wins the test.

If one character is an aggressor by intent and one is a defender, ties go to the defender. If both characters are aggressors, a tie means that neither side has gained an edge and they are deadlocked. Either the tie must be accepted as the result, a trait must be called on to break it or the contest must be continued in another arena. Do not reroll the test.

If an assassin is sneaking into a compound, he tests his Stealthy skill. A night watchman tests his Observation skill to spot him. If a tie results, the watchman wins the test—he is the "defending" character.

If, on the other hand, a burglar is caught in a raid at his favorite local bar, the player tests his Inconspicuous versus the watch's Observation. If a tie results, the burglar is the defending character, and he wins the test.

Graduated Tests

Occasionally, a test has no fixed obstacle. It is simply a matter of testing an ability and noting how many successes are generated. This is often the case for research, searching an area or other knowledge-based skills. The amount of information distributed by the GM is directly dependent on the number of successes generated.

Thor asks the GM what his character can remember about the layout of his home village. Can he find the doctor's residence in the dark? He tests his character's Village-wise skill and comes up with two successes. This is pretty routine knowledge, so the GM nods the affirmative and describes the residence.

The information available in graduated tests is rated and judged along the standard obstacle difficulty paradigm. One success is obvious stuff, five successes is expert knowledge, and ten successes is a miraculous understanding. GMs can call for graduated tests if they want to use a skill to measure how well the character performs a particular action.

Linked Tests

Once in a while, the player characters will find themselves in a long-term or complex operation that requires many skills or abilities to overcome.

Sneaking out of a harbor and sailing through pirate-infested waters to a remote island, for example.

Linked tests can be performed by a single character with many skills, but more often they are undertaken by multiple characters complementing each other.

Note that in linked tests, the task happens across time—each test of skill comes at a certain juncture and leads to the next. It doesn't all happen at once.

Failure Behind, Success Ahead

When rolling for a linked test, if the character who tested before your character merely met his obstacle, you gain no benefit. If he exceeded his obstacle, your character gains a +1D advantage for his portion of the test. If the character who tested before you failed his test, then the obstacle for your portion is increased by one.

In the example above, the GM determines that this intent is going to require three tests: The Orc pirate must pass a Piloting test, the Priest Navigator must then pass a Navigation test and the Temple Guardian will test his Observation as he watches for pirates. In this case the Orc-player barely meets his obstacle. This doesn't affect the Navigator, who fails anyway. Luckily, the aged Temple Guardian passes his test, despite the increased obstacle.

The final result is that the ship finds its way to the island (success) but approaches from the wrong angle (failure)—she's spotted by pirates in the bay at the same time she spots them (success). The chase is on!

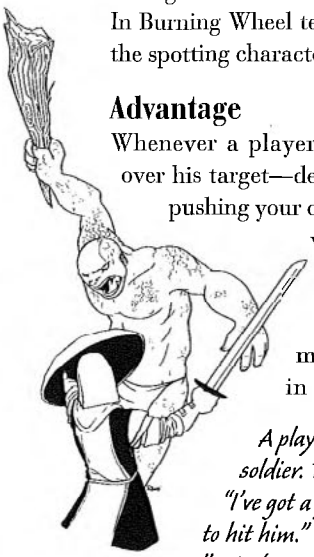
Time and Linked Tests

As you can see, linked tests are also a device that allows players to use the task resolution system to accomplish goals of a broader scope. Rather than just maneuvering a ship, a linked test can be used for a whole journey—which can be resolved within just a few minutes play.

Advantage and Disadvantage

The conditions surrounding a test can modify the base obstacle. Trying to shove someone off a roof is a versus Power test. If the roof is slippery, this is an advantage to the pusher. Such advantages give a bonus to the attacker.

Conversely, it's pretty easy to spot someone sitting quietly in the corner of a room. But if the room is dark, and there is a howling wind blowing through the windows, these conditions make it harder to spot that person. In Burning Wheel terms, the darkness and wind are disadvantages for the spotting character.



Advantage

Whenever a player can claim his character has a clear advantage over his target—definitively favorable conditions like higher ground, pushing your opponent onto an ice patch or a weight advantage in wrestling—he gains +1D to the ability being tested.

A player may only lobby for one +1D advantage per test. In order to gain this advantage, he must state how and why he deserves such a boon in one clear sentence—no situation lawyering.

A player wants his character to throw a rock and hit a nearby soldier. The character has an Agility of B4. The player declares: "I've got a good advantage standing on this cart. It's much easier to hit him." The GM agrees to this +1D advantage. Thus the player rolls 5D (4D+1D) vs Ob 2 (he needs two successes to hit the soldier).

In the case of social skill tests, good roleplay, keen description or just good timing can earn the advantage die.

The GM has final say over what is and isn't an advantage. If he thinks the target of such a leveraged attack has equally beneficial advantages, then no bonus need be granted. The GM can also add additional advantage dice if he thinks the character is in a strong position. If he disagrees with the player regarding the nature or benefit of an advantage, then no bonus is granted. Only one to two advantage dice should be granted to each roll (at maximum).

Disadvantage

Any time the GM feels that conditions put a character at a disadvantage, he must increase the obstacle of the test. Disadvantages come from myriad sources—the character is moving quickly, the light is dim, the air is smoky, the ground is slippery, the character doesn't speak the language well or he's dressed inappropriately. All disadvantages are cumulative—each one increases the obstacle by one.

Normally, hitting someone with a rock at such close range is an Ob 2 test. But there is smoke from funeral pyres partially obscuring the character's vision (+1 Ob). This disadvantage bumps his obstacle up to 3.

The final test would be Agility of B4 +1D (5D total) vs an Ob 3 from the smoke disadvantage.

Mixing Advantage and Disadvantage

As you may have noticed in the example above, advantages and disadvantages can be mixed. In fact, they should be. For each test, let players state their case for advantages. At the same time, the GM should lay out all the disadvantages present.

Also, advantages do not cancel disadvantage. They are both added into the test before the dice are cast. Obstacles go up to make tests harder; dice are added to make it easier.

Double Obstacle Penalty

Some rolls are penalized with a double obstacle penalty. This means you double the obstacle or the amount of successes your opponent rolls and then add modifiers. That's your final obstacle. Don't double the modifiers!

Carefully, Patiently, Quickly: Allocating Successes

There are four methods a player may use when testing abilities: A test may be made *carefully*, *patiently* or *quickly*, or by default, a test may be taken normally. Testing normally uses the standard rules described above. The other three methods each have a different effect on the roll or obstacle.

Carefully

Working carefully increases the time for a test by half, but it grants a +1D advantage. If a player wishes his character to work carefully, he must state this before the dice are rolled.

If the player fails a test in which he is working carefully, the result indicates he has run out of time—the bomb goes off, the guards burst in, the old man dies, etc. By working carefully, the player is allowing the GM to introduce a serious complication upon failure.

Patiently

Working patiently allows a player to allocate extra successes to the quality of the finished product. Extra successes can be used to embellish

a description or add a flourish. They are largely a narrative device. However, many skills have their own rules for allocating extra successes and their effects. These are described in their individual sections.

Extra successes may be allocated to working patiently after the dice are rolled.

Quickly

Working quickly allows a character to complete a task in a shorter amount of time. Successes over the obstacle allocated to working quickly reduce the overall time by 10% each—three successes over the obstacle reduces time by 30%. Successes may be allocated to working quickly after the dice are rolled. Time for tests is discussed a little further on in this chapter.

Mixing Methods

Players may have their characters work carefully, patiently and quickly all at once. To do so, they must describe their actions and inform the GM how they're allocating extra successes. If a player desires his character to work carefully, this must be stated before the dice are rolled. Each extra success can be applied to working either patiently or quickly.

Success

Now we have a grasp on a variety of ways to manipulate the dice pools for a test, but what happens after the dice have come to rest and the successes are counted? If the successes equal or exceed the obstacle, the character has succeeded in his goal—he achieved his intent and completed the task.

This is important enough to say again: Characters who are successful complete actions in the manner described by the player. A successful roll is sacrosanct in Burning Wheel and neither GM nor other players can change the fact that the act was successful. The GM may only embellish or reinforce a successful ability test.

"I kill him!" Rich shouts. The GM responds, "Test your Sword skill. That's what you're using, right?" Rich rolls his B5 Sword skill and produces an amazing five successes. The GM consults the Weapons chapter and Anatomy of Injury chapters. "Yep, that does it. He's a goner. Describe it for us, please!" Rich jumps from his chair, "I decapitate him like so and then stand rigid while making Bruce Lee noises."

Or: Pete announces, "I want to poison the wizard." The GM arches his eyebrow, "How so?" Pete's got a plan: "I'll sneak into the kitchen disguised as a Hound

Sergeant, then I'll Intimidate one of his slaves to take him poisoned tea in the guise of herbal medicine." The GM considers for a moment, "That's pretty good. You'll need to make a linked test with: Disguise, Inconspicuous and Intimidation, plus Hound-wise, I think." Pete nods and gets ready to burn some artha. If his rolls are successful, the wizard will be poisoned even though he didn't drop the poison directly in his mouth. Why? Because Pete stated his intent, described his task and the dice came up in his favor.

The most important criteria for passing a test is that play moves in the direction of the success, even if only momentarily.

"I want to humiliate him. They can't ignore me!" shouts Andy, enraged.

"How?" inquires the GM.

"I raise my voice and insult him in front of the entire party. I use my Conspicuous skill."

"Roll. Your obstacle is 3 to gain the attention of the crowd and be heard. Extra successes will go toward incensing them with the spectacle."

"Four successes."

"Your insults are heard flung across the room. Some eyebrows are raised. He stops walking away from you and turns, red in the face. It seems you have a moment in which you are the center of attention."

In this example, the player states his intent and task straight away: humiliate his opponent using shouts and insults while testing his Conspicuous skill. The GM embellishes on the result with the successful test. The target is humiliated and the GM tells the player how.

Failure

When the dice are rolled and don't produce enough successes to meet the obstacle, the character fails. What does this mean? It means the stated intent does not come to pass.

"I pick the lock quickly, before the guards come!" This is an easy intent to judge a failure for: The character doesn't get the lock open. Simple, right?

But what if that's changed a bit. Failure doesn't have to mean the lock doesn't open. Look at the intent: "before the guards come." What if the character opens the lock just as the guards arrive? Suddenly, you have trouble—drama and action!

Two Directions

When a player sets out a task for his character and states his intent, it is the GM's job to inform him of the consequences of failure before the dice are rolled.

"If you fail this..." should often be heard at the table. Let the players know the consequences of their actions. Failure is not the end of the line, but it is complication that pushes the story in another direction.

Once that is said, everyone knows what's at stake and play can continue smoothly no matter what the result of the roll is.

Failure Complicates the Matter

When a test is failed, the GM introduces a complication.

"You can try to pick the lock, but you don't have much time. It is highly likely that the guards will return before you finish."

Try not to present flat negative results—"You don't pick the lock." Strive to introduce complications through failure as much as possible.

Death should only be the result of failure in the rarest, most dire situations. The GM must present the players with varied, twisted, occult and bizarre ramifications of their decisions. Death is only the last resort. And more often than not, a player will let everyone know when he is prepared to risk his character's life for success.

Lastly, the rules for specific subsystems, like fighting, injury and sorcery, will guide you in adjudicating the severity of a failure result.

Let It Ride

One of the most important aspects of ability tests in game play in Burning Wheel is the Let It Ride rule: A player shall test once against an obstacle and shall not roll again until conditions legitimately and drastically change. Neither GM nor player can call for a retest unless those conditions change. Successes from the initial roll count for all applicable situations in play.

A GM cannot call for multiple rolls of the same ability to accomplish a player's stated intent. Nor can a player retest a failed roll simply because he failed. Tests must be distilled down to as few rolls as possible. The successes of those rolls ride across the entire situation, scene or session.

If a player failed a test or generated no successes, the result stands. If he was hot and got seven successes, those stand for the duration.

Time

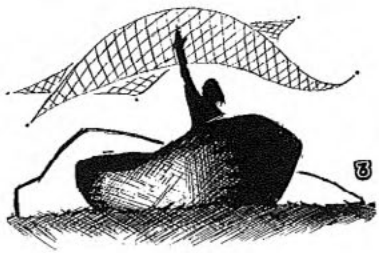
How long does a test take? Whatever the precise answer is, the time required for a test must be stated before any dice are rolled. Either the GM must inform the player of how much time is needed, or a player must state how much time his character is willing to spend.

Length of Time

Tests in Burning Wheel often mimic real world counterparts. The game is meant to evoke a living, breathing world, so there are hours, days, nights, seasons and years to account for as the characters' lives are played out. Using real world analogies for tests is a good place to start. Listed below are some guidelines for judging time.

Length of Stat Tests

Most stat tests are instantaneous affairs: catching a ball, leaping a ditch or noticing a shadow. Some stat tests are longer affairs: climbing a cliff face, escaping from bindings, moving a boulder. Generally, the latter type takes minutes to hours to accomplish. The exact interval of time is up to the GM.



Academic

Time for Academic skill tests falls into two categories—either instantaneous recall of a subject based on a successful skill test representing character knowledge, or time spent on research. Research requires days at minimum, but more often spans months and years.

Artist

Artistic skills like Painting and Sculpture require time in weeks. Sometimes they can expand into years for particularly ambitious tests.

Craftsman

Time for tests of skills like Blacksmithing, Weaver and Carpenter are measured in days and weeks. It takes a day to make a batch of horseshoes; it takes a few weeks to make a mail shirt.

Forester

Forester skill tests—Stealthy, Tracking, Hunting, Orienteering, etc.—are measured in minutes, hours and occasionally days.

Martial

Martial tests are nearly all sudden actions.

Medicinal
Medicinal skill tests—Surgery, Field Dressing, Herbalism, Bloodletting, etc.—are measured in minutes and hours. These times are described in detail in the Anatomy of Injury section.

Military
Military skills—Strategy, Tactics, Logistics, Skirmish Training and Formation Fighting Training—generally follow the same guidelines as the academic and physical tests to which they are cousins.

Musical
Musical composition takes weeks and months to perfect. Musical performance takes as long as it takes.

Peasant
Peasant skills are varied and complex—from Animal Husbandry to Farming. One thing they all hold in common is that they take a while. Farming is a seasonal affair. Animal Husbandry tests span a few hours to a few years.

However, in play, peasant skills can be used in the short term—to determine why a crop died or to calm a frightened animal. These tests usually take just a few minutes.

Physical
Physical skills like Climbing are very situational. Usually the time of the task is based on how far the character has to go. Use common sense.

Schools of Thought
Doctrine and Philosophy tests obey the same rules as academic skills.

Seafaring
Seafaring skills—Rigging, Knots, Navigation—obey the same rules as peasant skills. Some tests take days or weeks, others only a few moments.

Social
In Burning Wheel, a social skill test is made for a single interaction. This is heavily dependent on roleplaying, but these tests can require a few moments of banter or a hours of negotiations.

Sorcerous
Times for sorcerous skill tests are discussed in the Sorcery section.

Special/Miscellaneous
For skills that fall in the Special/Miscellaneous category, use the closest analog from the list above.

Breaking up a Test

If the GM feels a test is going to take an inordinate amount of time, but that bits and pieces can be accomplished separately, he can break up the results of the test. Only one roll is made, but the GM then parcels out the results across the allotted time. The character may leave and return to the test as appropriate, each time gaining the next set of results.

A young lady has found an ancient Elvish text. The GM tells the player that it will take many months to read. The player passes her Reading test and digs into the tome. Each session, the GM gives the player another clue to the content of the volume—describing facets of Elvish history and lore.

Time and Failure

A character must spend the same time failing a test as succeeding. Even when the character fails, he doesn't always know. If he missed by a lot—completely messed it up—then he can give up right away and not lose too much time.

Time and Play: Meanwhile

If a player undertakes a test that's going to occupy his character a couple of hours, other players have a few hours to kill with their characters. The GM turns to the next player and says, "Meanwhile, what are you going to do?"

Keep going around the table like this. Allow players to fill up the gaps of "downtime" with stuff like research, exploration, scouting, practice, etc. They can undertake activities that can be resolved with a roll or two and that can be narrated to have occupied the in-game time frame.

Help

Players may have their characters help one another in the game. When two or more characters are acting together, only one player rolls. His character is considered the primary character for the test. He accepts much of the risk, though he shares the reward.

Conditions of Help

In order to help, three social conditions must be met at the table. First, the acting player must willingly accept the help from his compatriots. Help cannot be forced or surreptitious; it must be open and agreed upon. The acting player is free to turn it down. Second, any player who is helping must then physically give the acting player one of his dice to roll. This is so we know if you're helpful or not!

Lastly, the helping player must participate in the scene: He describes how his character is helping the other.

How Can I Help?

Once help has been accepted, you have to determine if and how other characters can help. First Rule of Help: Skills may help skills and stats. Stats may help stats. Stats may not help skills. Circles may help Circles (if appropriate). Resources may help Resources.

Second Rule of Help: The helping ability must be related in some way—similar skills are the best candidates for help. Often this is situational, but the help must make sense to the players. The FoRK listing for skills is a good guide, but not the definitive source. The GM is the final arbiter of who can and can't help. See the next page for more on FoRKs.

Helping Dice

If the exponent of the helping ability is 4 or lower, one die is given to the acting player as help. If the exponent of the ability is 5 or higher, two dice are granted.

A soldier with Field Dressing is helping a midwife with Herbalism treat his wounded friend. They are trying to treat a severe wound to the leg (Ob 5 for Herbalism). The two players decide that the midwife is the primary for this test, and the soldier will help. The soldier has a Field Dressing skill of B4 and thus adds one die. The player hands the helping die over to the midwife's player who adds it to her Herbalism skill of B5 for this test.

Fields of Related Knowledge

A player may have his character use his varied experience to help himself. We call this using your Fields of Related Knowledge or FoRKs.

When testing a skill, each related skill the character possesses can be used like help to add an additional die (+1D) to the roll. FoRK dice are different than helping dice. If the related skill is exponent 7 or higher, add +2D.

Meg is testing her Elven Loremaster's History skill. She's looking for information about Dwarven culture, so she can add a die from her character's Dwarf-Wise skill.

Or Rich's Orc Great One is laying waste to his inferiors with his Axe skill. Rich wants to fight dirty, so he adds a die from his Brawling skill—he describes his Orc throwing elbows and knees and generally being a bastard.

FoRKs are situational. The players suggest them through roleplay, and the GM arbitrates which are applicable and which are not. Players describe how their FoRK affects their actions. GMs then incorporate the FoRKs into the results of the test.

Also, just to be clear, stats and attributes may never FoRK.

Exponent 0

If your stat, skill or attribute is currently exponent 0 you may not test this ability. You may not receive help. FoRK into it or spend artha on it. It is unavailable until you advance it, replenish it or recover.

Unskilled Tests

Beginner's Luck

If a character does not have an appropriate skill for a test, he may test using a stat instead. Every skill has a stat on which it is based. We call this its root. However, when rolling a root stat in place of a skill, double the base obstacle of the test. Ob 1 tests become Ob 2. Ob 4 tests become Ob 8. Easy stuff won't be too much of a problem, but more complex tasks will be all but impossible. When testing for Beginner's Luck, double the base obstacle and then add disadvantages to that. Don't double the disadvantages.

Tools

Some skills are listed with a requirement for tools. Tests made without the necessary tools suffer a double obstacle penalty. This can be combined with the Beginner's Luck penalty!

When using expendable tools, roll a Die of Fate each time they are used after the first. A result of 1 indicates the tools have been used up and must be replenished by the appropriate means.

Replenishing Tools

The Resources chapter lists obstacles for purchasing certain tool kits. The Scavenging skill can also be used to replenish tools, if appropriate. The Blacksmith and Black Metal Artifice skills can both be used to make various types of tools.

Written Instructions

Occasionally, a character will stumble across a set of instructions in game—an item or some information that can aid him.

All instructions must be given a complexity obstacle by the GM: Simple and clear stuff that can easily be transmitted through text and illustrations is Ob 1 or 2. More complex instructions, like those that teach a martial art or how to build a trebuchet, are Ob 3-5. Really arcane stuff only goes up from there.

The character reading the instructions must pass a Reading or Research test against the obstacle. If successful, the instructions grant a helping die to an applicable skill test (+1D). If unsuccessful, the instructions are confusing and give a +1 Ob disadvantage to the skill test they refer to.

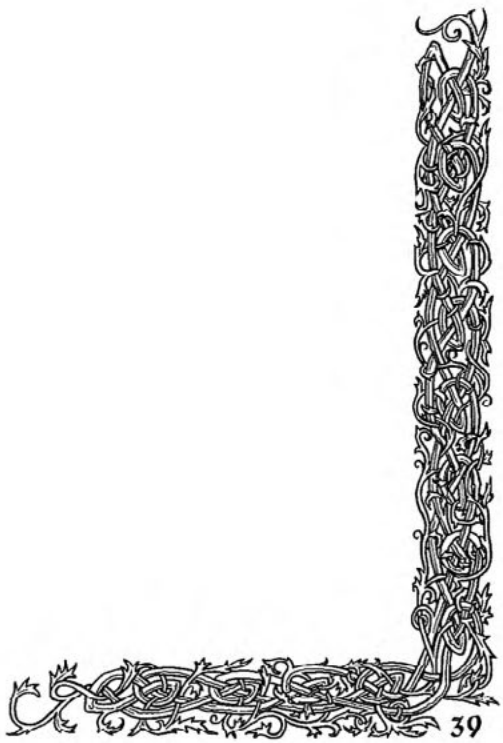
The Written Word as Practice

Alternately, written instructions can be used as practice. Passing the Reading test and lets the player count the time spent reading as practice for the skill.

Testing Abilities in Brief

- Intent—Announce the goal of the action.
- Task—Indicate how you want your character to carry out an action. Incorporate a skill or stat into your description.
- Standard test—An ability rolled against an obstacle set by the GM. Meet the obstacle and pass the test.
- Versus test—A test where two characters are pitted against one another. Highest number of successes wins the test. Ties go to the defender.
- Graduated test—A test with no fixed obstacle; more successes means more information/results.
- Linked test—A series of tests where, if the character before you exceeded the obstacle, you get +1D. If he failed, you get +1 Ob.
- Advantage—A favorable condition present in the game that benefits a character. +1D to the test.
- Disadvantage—An unfavorable condition that raises the obstacle of a test.
- Carefully—+1D advantage, +50% to time; introduces complication.
- Patiently—Extra successes go into quality.
- Quickly—Extra successes reduce time by -10% each.

- Success—The character completes the task laid out by the player in the manner of the stated intent.
- Failure—The player fails to achieve his intent. The character either does not complete the task or completes the task but new conditions are presented by the GM.
- Time—GM sets the time of the test. If the test is successful, time can be reduced by extra successes applied to working quickly.
- Let It Ride—One test per ability stands for the situation.
- Help—Exponent 4 or lower gives +1D. Exponent 5 or higher gives +2D.
- FoRKs—+1D for related, applicable skills. Exponent 7 or higher gives +2D.
- Beginner's Luck—Use root stat in place of skill; double obstacle penalty.
- Instructions—Test Reading or Research against Instruction obstacle. Success grants +1D to appropriate test. Failure gives a +1 Ob disadvantage.



Advancing Abilities

Advancement Is Lifeblood

Advancement is the lifeblood of Burning Wheel. The advancement system gives the feeling of a living, sweating, breathing, bleeding being in the game. It allows players to shape their characters in a variety of ways. It is vital that characters in Burning Wheel grow and change as they are played.

In order for the game to run, the GM must provide the players with obstacles. Obstacles demand tests. Tests earn advancements as well as help fulfill Beliefs.

As the characters are tested, players mark the ability's experience log. Mark enough tests of varying difficulty, and the ability advances.

Routine, Difficult and Challenging

Each test falls into one of three levels of difficulty for advancement: routine, difficult and challenging. The difficulty of a test is found by comparing the number of dice rolled against the obstacle. And it's not just about a skill exponent compared with the obstacle. Advantage, helping and FoRK dice all influence advancement.

Difficulty of Test by Dice Rolled

Total Number of Dice Rolled	Test for Adv.:	Routine	Difficult	Challenging
	1D	Ob 1*	Ob 1*	Ob 2+
	2D	Ob 1	Ob 2	Ob 3+
	3D	Ob 1-2	Ob 3	Ob 4+
	4D	Ob 1-2	Ob 3-4	Ob 5+
	5D	Ob 1-3	Ob 4-5	Ob 6+
	6D	Ob 1-4	Ob 5-6	Ob 7+
	7D	Ob 1-4	Ob 5-7	Ob 8+
	8D	Ob 1-5	Ob 6-8	Ob 9+
	9D	Ob 1-6	Ob 7-9	Ob 10+
	10D	Ob 1-7	Ob 8-10	Ob 11+
	11D	Ob 1-8	Ob 9-11	Ob 12+
	12D	Ob 1-9	Ob 10-12	Ob 13+
	13D	Ob 1-10	Ob 11-13	Ob 14+
	14D	Ob 1-11	Ob 12-14	Ob 15+
	15D	Ob 1-12	Ob 13-15	Ob 16+
	16D	Ob 1-13	Ob 14-16	Ob 17+
	17D	Ob 1-14	Ob 15-17	Ob 18+
	18D	Ob 1-15	Ob 16-18	Ob 19+

Obstacle of Test

*For an Ob 1 test on one die, the player may choose whether the test is routine or difficult.

An obstacle 2 test counts as routine for exponent 4 abilities, but it's difficult for an exponent 2 ability. Obstacle 3 tests are routine for exponent 5 abilities, but they're difficult for exponent 4 and challenging for exponent 2.

Number of Dice Rolled vs Obstacle

It is important to always use the number of dice rolled for a test, not just the ability exponent. Extra dice that make a test easier for the character also mean that he learns less when using such crutches.

"Wait a minute," you're saying, "I can't roll five successes on four dice! My character is automatically going to fail that test." To this I say: "You're correct, but read on, read on. The Artha chapter will show you some tricks."

Number of Tests Required for Advancement

To advance an ability exponent one rank, a player must accumulate a certain number of routine, difficult and challenging tests.

Advancing Skills

Exponent 1-4

Advancing an exponent 1-4 skill requires a number of routine tests equal to the exponent. Also, for exponent 1-4, a character needs difficult tests equal to half the exponent, or challenging tests equal to his exponent divided by three (rounded up).

Exponent 5+

For skill exponents 5 and higher, a character needs difficult tests equal to half of the skill exponent and challenging tests equal to one third of the exponent rounded up. Routine tests are not used to advance a skill exponent of 5 or higher.

Tests Required to Advance Skills

Type of test: Skill Exponent	Routine		Difficult		Challenging
1	1	and	(1	or	1)
2	2	and	(1	or	1)
3	3	and	(2	or	1)
4	4	and	(2	or	1)
5	—		3	and	1
6	—		3	and	2
7	—		4	and	2
8	—		4	and	3
9	—		5	and	3

number of tests required

In order to advance Carpentry B3, I'd need three routine tests (Ob 1-2) plus either two difficult tests (Ob 3) or one challenging test (Ob 4). To advance a B6 Sword skill, I'd need three tests at Ob 5 or 6 to meet my difficult test

requirements, and two tests at Ob 7 to get my challenging tests. This is not easily done! Tests of that difficulty don't come along very often, and when they do, they are usually life and death.

Advancing Stats

Routine tests don't count for the advancement of stats. Players must get high obstacle tests in order to advance them. Difficult and challenging tests are required, even at low exponents.

Tests Required to Advance Stats

Stat Exponent	Routine	Difficult		Challenging
1	—	1	and	1
2	—	1	and	1
3	—	2	and	1
4	—	2	and	1
5	—	3	and	1
6	—	3	and	2
7	—	4	and	2
8	—	4	and	3
9	—	5	and	3

number of tests required

Pass or Fail

With few exceptions, tests for advancement are earned whether the character was successful or not. Pass or fail, a test is earned.

The Exceptions: Perception, Resources and Faith

Perception, Resources and Faith tests must be successful to count toward advancement.

Advancing Attributes

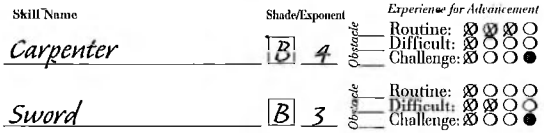
Reflexes and mortal wound advance as their parent stats increase the applicable average. Health and Steel advance as skills and are not dependent on their parent stats after character burning. Faith, Grief, Greed and Hate all advance as skills—requiring routine tests to advance exponents 1-4. Greed has a special rule: Routine tests always count, even for Greed exponents 5-10. And filling up any two of the three test categories advances Greed.

Advancing Circles and Resources

Circles advances like a skill. When advancing your base Circles ability, be sure to tally all the affiliation and reputation dice rolled to determine the actual level of the test. Resources advances like a skill as well, but only successful tests count.

Experience Log

Listed with each ability on the character sheet is an experience log. Use this to note the tests earned for advancement for individual abilities.



Handing Out Tests

Both the GM and players are responsible for remembering tests. However, sometimes things get hectic during the game. It's often best to take five minutes to review the session after it's over and make sure that players noted their tests.

Applicable Situations

Tests are only awarded to players when their characters act in appropriate and applicable in-game situations. Everything else counts as practice.

Soliciting Tests (Test Mongering)

Tests are very important to the game, but badgering the GM for them is very bad form. Can I test? Can I? Sometimes, a player will wish to have his character roll dice for something at an inappropriate juncture in play. It is the GM's role to pace events and keep play flowing evenly. Therefore, he can have a player hold off on making a test until the appropriate time or have him stay his hand entirely.

Test mongering also involves pestering the GM for a particular test. "I need a routine. Can I make a routine test?" "Dude, it's a *dragon*. I don't think there are going to be any routine tests." The GM's job here is to say flat out: "No." Let the difficulty of the tests arise organically, not at the player's request so his character can advance. It makes for a much more interesting game.

Series of Rolls = One Test

Occasionally in game, we have situations where players are testing the same ability over and over again—martial and social conflict being the prime examples. In any instance where an ability is tested multiple times to determine the outcome, only one test is earned toward advancement. Do not note a test for every punch thrown.

A player generally takes the highest obstacle test from the encounter. However, if the character is in need of a particular test to advance the ability, a test for advancement should be noted as soon as the appropriate obstacle comes up. This is only done for series tests during which the character would advance (i.e., one test away from going up).

I Just Learned Something!

When the requirement is met, the exponent immediately advances. It doesn't matter if it's in the middle of a sword fight or while researching a new spell. Once the test is earned, the ability increases one rank. There's nothing more pleasing to my ears than a player crowing, "I just learned something!"

Wipe the Slate Clean

After the ability has advanced, all extra tests are discarded. You start over with a clean slate.

Converting or Substituting Tests

What if my character is one routine test from advancing his skill, but has tons of difficult tests? I can just convert a test, right? *No*. Hard and fast rule: Players cannot convert or substitute tests, ever.

Advancement for Graduated Tests

When logging graduated tests for advancement, the obstacle is always 1. These tests always count as routine.

Advancement for Versus Tests

For versus tests, use the number of successes your opponent generated plus any obstacle penalties as the obstacle for the test when consulting the Dice vs Obstacle table at the beginning of this chapter.

Helping and Advancement

Helping dice add to the dice total for the acting character, making it harder to earn difficult or challenging tests for advancement.

For example, my character's got to patch up this hole in the cistern before all the water drains out. The GM sets the obstacle at 2. I want to get this done as quickly as possible and ensure success, so I ask one of the other players, "Can you help?" His character has Engineering B2. The GM agrees that this is an applicable skill. The player passes me a die and I add it to my skill.

Without his help, the test would have counted as a difficult for advancement—3D vs Ob 2. With his help, the test counts as a routine—4D vs Ob 2.

Helpers Learn

Though he doesn't roll any dice, a character who helps earns a test for advancement—for stats, skills or attributes. The level of the test is the same as if he had tested against the obstacle with his own ability.

If your skill is B2 and you help with an Ob 5 test, you earn a challenging test for advancement regardless of how many dice the player you're helping rolls.

If helping with a stat on an unskilled test, the player does not earn a test toward his aptitude for learning the skill. Since he is helping with his stat, he earns a test for advancing his stat if the obstacle is appropriate.

FoRKs and Advancement

Like helping dice, FoRKs can reduce the difficulty of a test for purposes of advancement. FoRKs count toward total dice when consulting the Dice Rolled vs Obstacle table. Relying on FoRKs all the time can stymie character growth. And the abilities that are FoRKed into another do not earn tests toward advancement. Only the primary ability earns the test.

Advantage Dice and Advancement

Advantages and bonus dice count toward the dice total when determining the difficulty of tests for advancement.

I have a B4 Crossbow skill. This means that Ob 3 tests are normally difficult for me. My superior quality crossbow gives me +1D to my skill tests. The addition of the bonus die increases my die pool to B5. When rolling five dice an Ob 3 is routine, not difficult.

Artha and Advancement

Dice from artha never count toward the total dice rolled for purposes of advancement.

If you have a skill of B4 and add three dice from artha, the test still counts as if you rolled four dice.

Social Skills and Advancement

Sometimes we get so wrapped up in our performances we neglect the dice. Well, this heading is here to remind you to roll the dice. After an impassioned speech, set an obstacle and test a skill. Then note the test for advancement! Roleplaying performance is part of this game but not independent of the die mechanics.

Practice

In Burning Wheel, characters can undertake a practice regimen to polish their skills. This aids characters in advancing their skills. Practice helps fill in the gaps in a character's active experience. The drawback to practice is that it requires substantial in-game time investment.

Practice Times *hours per day to earn a test...*

Skill Category	Cycle	Routine	Difficult	Challenging
Academic	6 months	2 hours	4 hours	8 hours
Artisan	1 year	4 hours	8 hours	12 hours
Artist	6 months	3 hours	6 hours	12 hours
Craftsman	1 year	3 hours	8 hours	12 hours
Forester	6 months	3 hours	6 hours	12 hours
Martial	1 month	2 hours	4 hours	8 hours
Medicinal	1 year	4 hours	8 hours	12 hours
Military	6 months	2 hours	4 hours	8 hours
Musical	1 month	2 hours	4 hours	8 hours
Peasant	3 months	1 hour	4 hours	12 hours
Physical	1 month	2 hours	4 hours	8 hours
School of Thought	6 months	3 hours	6 hours	12 hours
Seafaring	3 months	2 hours	4 hours	8 hours
Social	1 month	2 hours	4 hours	8 hours
Sorcerous	1 year	5 hours	10 hours	15 hours
Special/Misc.	3 months	3 hours	6 hours	12 hours

Practice time comes in many forms: exercising, studying and even trying out your skills on your friends. These tables list the practice cycles for the different categories. The *Cycle* is the length of time that a character needs to practice in order to earn one test. *Hours* indicates the actual time per day that the character must spend practicing during the cycle.

Stat/Attribute	Cycle	Routine	Difficult	Challenging
Will	1 year	4 hours	8 hours	16 hours
Perception	6 months	3 hours	6 hours	12 hours
Agility	3 months	2 hours	4 hours	8 hours
Speed	3 months	3 hours	6 hours	9 hours
Power	1 month	2 hours	4 hours	8 hours
Forte	2 months	4 hours	8 hours	16 hours
Faith	1 year	5 hours	10 hours	20 hours
Steel	2 months	1 hour	3 hours	9 hours

If a character maintains the daily time requirement for one practice cycle, he earns the listed test for that skill for the purposes of advancement. You cannot practice the same skill more than once per cycle.

For example, if my character practices his Carpentry (a Craftsman skill) for 3 hours every day for a year, he earns a routine test for advancement at the end of a year. Being a craftsman is hard!

Rich has his knight character work out every morning and practice doing hand drills to test his Agility. He'll need four hours a day for three months of game time in order to earn a difficult test for advancement.

Maximum Practice

A character may only be forced to practice for a number of hours equal to three times (3x) his Will exponent per day. The most a character can practice in a day, no matter the Will exponent, is 20 hours in a day. But sleep deprivation is an excellent source for Forte tests to resist fatigue and stress.

Using Practice in the Game

Sometimes a player will indicate that his character is undertaking some long task like wandering the countryside, working on the farm or meditating in the hills. These periods count as practice for applicable skills and abilities.

Any time a player indicates some action for his character that is cool but otherwise has no direct effect on driving the game forward, the in-game time should be logged toward practice for the applicable abilities.

Practice can also help bridge time for a character when a player has been absent from the table and wishes to reintroduce his character. "Okay, you've been gone for about a year of game time. Why don't you spread a year's practice among your skills? Nothing can advance more than one." Alternately, a character might only get a week or two to practice—not enough time to earn a test. Log the segments of time practiced. Once they equal a full cycle, take a test toward advancement.

Learning New Skills

Root Stats

Every skill has a stat or combination of stats on which it is based. This is called its root. Skills are listed with their roots in the Character Burner.

The root for Sword is Agility.

Beginner's Luck

As mentioned in the Testing Your Abilities section, when a character doesn't have an appropriate skill, he may test against his Beginner's Luck at a double obstacle penalty. Beginner's Luck dice are equal to the root stat of the skill (not half the stat, the full dice). For skills with two roots, choose which stat to take the test on.

Take note that the first test toward learning a skill listed as sorcerous type must come from Instruction rather than practice or beginner's luck. Once you've earned that test you can use beginner's luck and practice.

Aptitude

Aptitude in Burning Wheel indicates the number of tests a character needs in order to gain a new skill. Aptitude is equal to 10 minus the *root stat.* If the root is a combination of two or more stats, the aptitude is 10 minus the average of the root stats rounded down.

A character with a B4 Agility has a 6 Aptitude for learning the Sword skill (10 minus his exponent 4 Agility).

Beginner's Luck for Learning

When using Beginner's Luck, it is possible to learn new skills. However, the obstacles for advancement are factored slightly differently. When

testing the root stat, note the obstacle before doubling. If the obstacle would count as routine (and thus not actually count) for advancing the stat, you note a test for learning the skill. If the Beginner's Luck test, before doubling, would count as difficult or challenging for the stat, note a test for advancing the root stat. If there are disadvantages to be applied to the test, add them to the base obstacle for determining the test for advancement, but don't double them. Add them to the final obstacle after doubling, when making the test.

I have a B4 Agility. I am shooting unskilled at an Orc with a hunting bow. It's an Ob 2 test doubled to 4 due the Beginner's Luck rules. An Ob 2 test counts as a routine test toward Agility, so the test is logged toward learning the Bow skill. If the test had been Ob 3, that'd be a difficult test for Agility. I'd take that toward advancing the stat. If the Orc was carrying a shield, that would add +1 Ob to my test. So the obstacle for advancement would be 3—difficult—but the obstacle to hit him would be 5 (2 doubled +1).

Opening the Skill

Once you meet the Aptitude requirement, your character opens the skill. Write it in the skills section of your character sheet. The starting exponent for all skills is half of the root, or the average of two roots, rounded down.

With a B4 Agility, I open a Sword skill after six Beginner's Luck tests. The skill opens at half of the root stat. That's a B2 Sword for my character.

Once the skill opens, it advances normally like any other skill.

Shade and New Skills

A new skill opens with the same shade as its root stat. If the root has two shades, the skill opens at the darker shade, but you add two to the total before factoring the root. The Monster Burner chapter, Gray and White Math (pages 367–368), is the definitive source for all things shaded. See also the Heroic and Supernatural chapter in this book.

Learning from Another

Characters may learn from each other in game. To teach, the character must have the skill to be taught. The exponent of the skill must be equal to or higher than the student's.

Instruction Obstacles

To begin the process, the instructor must pass an Instruction skill test. The obstacle for the Instruction test depends on the level of the test the Instructor wishes to give to the student: 1 for a routine test, 2 for a difficult test and 3 for a challenging test. Add a penalty for the type of

skill: +2 Ob Medicinal and Military, +3 Ob for Sorcerous and Special, +1 Ob for Artist and School of Thought. Other skill types do not carry a penalty.

If the test is failed, then time spent with the instructor merely counts as practice. Furthermore, either the student is at +1 Ob to his next test in that area or the Instructor suffers a +1 Ob penalty to further instruct this student. GM's call.

Test Me

Instructors can give their students tests for advancement or tests for learning a new skill. The obstacle of the test to be given to the student can't be higher than the Instructor's skill in the area.

If you have Sword B4, you can only teach up to Ob 4 tests. That means that you can't give challenging tests to anyone with a skill exponent of 4 or higher. Nor can you give difficult tests to a character with a skill of 6 or higher.

Students don't roll in this process. They accept instruction and either note the test for advancement or note the practice time.

Instruction Time

The time for each Instruction test is days equal to 10 minus the instructor's Will, plus 10 minus the student's Will, plus the obstacle of the test on offer. The instructor can offer his student obstacles for a test equal to or less than his skill level.

An instructor with a Will B5 (5 days) can teach a student with a Will of B4 (6 days) one test in 11 days plus days equal to the obstacle of the test. If he was schooling his student's B4 Sword skill and wanted to give him a difficult test (Ob 3), the total time would be 11 days plus the 3 from the obstacle: 14 days altogether.

After the required time, the student earns a test for advancement.

All Day, Every Day

Instruction eats up all of the character's free time. He may not practice other skills during that time.

Learning Training Skills

A character may learn Training skills, such as Armor Training or Formation Fighting, in the course of his life. Aptitude requirements are the same as for normal skills, but tests can only be earned via practice or instruction. You can't use Beginner's Luck to learn a training skill.

Advancement in Brief

- The number of dice rolled compared to the obstacle of the test determines the difficulty of the test for advancement. Consult the table for details.
- Exponent 1-4 skills must be advanced by filling up the routine test requirement. Then, meeting either the difficult or challenging test requirement will push the skill to the next exponent level.
- Exponent 5+ skills only advance via difficult and challenging tests. Routine tests no longer count for advancement.
- Stats only advance via difficult and challenging tests, regardless of their exponent.
- Attributes— Steel and Health advance as skills.
- Experience Log— Note the level of the test on your experience log.
- A series of rolls in a single scene or conflict equals one test for advancement.
- Graduated tests— A test with no fixed obstacle counts as a routine test.
- Versus tests use your opponent's number of successes as the obstacle.
- Help and Advancement— Helping dice count toward the total number of dice rolled for a test, thereby making the test easier to pass, and less significant for advancement.
- FoRKs and Advancement— FoRKs count toward the total dice rolled. They make the test easier and usually lower the difficulty.
- Advantage and Advancement— Advantages count toward the total dice rolled and potentially reduce the difficulty of the test.
- Social Skills and Advancement— Be sure to set obstacles and roll dice after a good performance.
- Practice— Daily time devoted to a skill nets a test after a number of months or a year. Any character actions that don't count as a test count as practice.
- Learning new skills— To learn a new skill, a player must make a number of tests equal to his aptitude for the skill. Aptitudes are 10 minus the root stat of the skill. Once the required tests are earned, the new skill is opened at half the root stat (rounded down).

Beliefs, Instincts and Traits

In the introduction to the game, I mentioned that each player is obliged to set out a series of priorities for his character: priorities that describe the player's goals for his character and how he means to achieve them.

There are three sets of player-chosen priorities: Beliefs, Instincts and traits. Each has a different effect on how you play your character and how you're rewarded.

Beliefs

When a player brings to life a new character in Burning Wheel, he furnishes that character with three Beliefs. In essence, these are the top three priorities for the character in play.

These are not general beliefs, like "God" or "Country." They are explicitly stated drives that tie directly into the world and setting. Examples of Behefs are "I must serve the Etharch so that I might be redeemed for my crime," or "I will protect my friend's sister at any cost."

When sculpting your character's Beliefs, think: What do I want out of this character and this situation? How can my character's Beliefs reflect that? Then shape your character's Beliefs to reflect those priorities.

Creating Beliefs for your character is discussed in detail in the Character Burner.

Anchored Beliefs

Beliefs are not arbitrarily chosen. You relate each one to what is going on in the game. They bind your character into the world. As they are challenged, they give you the chance to express what your character is about.

Beliefs in Play

By openly and honestly setting down your priorities, you help the GM and the other players get the most out of the game. Now that they all know what you're after, they can help you get it.

Stating a Belief for a peasant, "I'm the true king of this land," does not make it factual in game. But by getting that out in the open, you are letting other players know you want situations revolving around that theme—a mad peasant rebel rising to challenge the established order. Other players are in on both the irony and drama, and they can help you get the most of them. You might not succeed, but playing out that struggle is what the game is all about. Of course, this doesn't mean the characters are aware of each other's Beliefs. We're talking about a strict separation of player and character here.

Beliefs are meant to be challenged, betrayed and broken. Such emotional drama makes for a good game. If your character has a Belief, "I guard the prince's life with my own," and the prince is slain before your eyes in the climax of the scenario, that's your chance to play out a tortured and dramatic scene and really go ballistic.

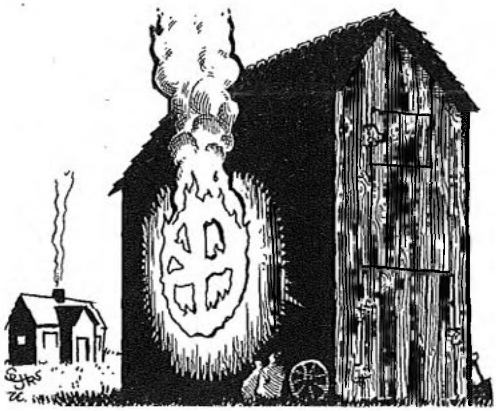
Conversely, if the prince is killed right out of the gate, the character is drained of purpose. Note that the player stated he wanted to defend the prince in play, not avenge him. Killing the prince in the first session sucks the life out of the character. He really has no reason to participate any longer. But if the prince dies in the grand climax, c'est la vie. The protector must then roll with the punches and react to this new change. Even better, if the prince dies due to the actions or failures of his own guardian—now that's good stuff.

Another example: We once had a character with the Belief: "I will one day restore my wife's life." His wife had died, and he kept her body around, trying to figure out a way to bring her back. Well, mid-way through the game, the GM magically restored his wife to the land of the living. I've never seen a more crushed player. He didn't know what do! He had stated that the quest and the struggle was the goal, not the end result. "One day!" he said But the GM insisted, and the whole scenario and character were ruined for the player.

Lastly, there is more to Beliefs than just melodrama. In fact, they are used most with the artha mechanics. Players manipulate their character's Beliefs and the situations of game play in order to earn artha. Artha is discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Changing Beliefs

A player may change his character's Beliefs as he sees fit. Characters are meant to grow and change through play. Changing Beliefs is a vital part



of that growth. However, the GM has final say over when a Belief may be changed. If he feels the player is changing a Belief to wriggle out of a difficult situation and not as part of character growth, then he may delay the change until a time that he sees as appropriate.

Danny's Strider has the Belief, "One man can make a difference." At the end of the adventure, Danny realizes his character spent all of his time helping his friends and holding the group together. He announces that his character's outlook has changed and so has his Belief. He changes it to, "Only together shall we be victorious over our enemies."

Another example: Pete's and Chris's characters have an argument in the game. Pete's smuggler character is ensorcelled by an enchanted bell. He asks Chris's wizard to destroy the device. Chris refuses, intimating that the bell could be useful in the future for controlling the smuggler! Pete's character has the Belief, "The sorcerers who ruined my life must pay—with their lives!" He is so livid after this argument, he turns to the GM: "I'm changing my Belief; I'm expanding it. 'All sorcerers are evil, foul creatures. They must be purged from the earth.'" That includes Chris's wizard. Sweet!

Instincts

Instincts are also player priorities for a character, but they have a different mechanical application than Beliefs. Rather than reflect who or what the character is, Instincts help define how the character acts.

What's been drilled into the character's head? What life lessons has he been forced to learn? What has he taught himself in order to survive? These are Instincts in Burning Wheel. Players choose three for their characters.

Always, Never, When or If/Then

The best Instincts are defined as clear statements—either "Always do X," or "Never do Y," or as "If this condition arises, then take this action."

What an Instinct does is set a condition and a reaction to that condition for the character. And this reaction/behavior of the character is sacrosanct: So long as the conditions are met, the action is done. The player doesn't even have to announce it. It either happens behind the scenes or instantly, without hesitation.

A common Instinct is something like "When on patrol, always have my bow ready and an arrow nocked." Even if the player never states this, so long as it's written on the character sheet, it is fact.

Instincts allow players to set conditions for their characters that might otherwise break the rules. Do you have a "draw sword" Instinct? Well then, your character's sword is drawn at the start of combat without having to spend actions. Instincts cannot allow you to bypass a test, but they can ensure you made the test at some time before trouble started.

Insurance

Instincts can also be described as player character insurance vs GM onslaught. They are a mechanical way to ensure that your character behaves in a certain manner which can't be contravened by the GM.

But instincts don't need to be adversarial. In fact, they work better when the player and GM cooperate, using the Instincts to drive the character in play.

Like Beliefs, Instincts can be used to earn artha. See the next chapter, The Artha Wheel, for more on that.

Changing Instincts

A player may change his character's Instincts as he sees fit—as the character's experience in play changes him.

Rich's insurrectionist watched his friend's mind get warped and twisted by a foul wizard until he was nothing more than a drooling thrall. As soon as the scene ended, Rich turned to the GM: "I'm changing one of my Instincts. I'm losing 'Always scrounge for weapons after a battle,' and changing it to 'If I am ensorcelled by a wizard, I plunge my sword into my throat and kill myself.'" Quite a brutal Instinct, but it was something he felt very passionately about.

However, the GM has final say over when an Instinct may be changed. If he feels the player is changing an Instinct to be a munchkin and power gamer and not as part of character growth, then he may delay the change until a time that he sees as appropriate.

Traits

Beliefs and Instincts are personality and behavior priorities for characters. Traits are also a kind of priority. By choosing traits, a player is stating to the world, "This is what's most important to me about my character; these are his most prominent aspects."

There are three kinds of traits, *character* (including cosmetic traits), *call-on* and *die* traits. Each type affects the game in a different way.

Character Traits

A character trait illustrates a prominent aspect of a character's psychological or physiological make-up—something that affects how the character will be roleplayed at the table, something that says, "You're not just someone, you're *it*." Anyone can say his character is hairy, but unless he pays the trait point, it's hairy with a lower-case "h." Pay the point, and he's the hairiest guy around.

These are guide posts that help the player navigate play with the character. By choosing these traits, the player is stating that he is going to do one of two things: Either he's going to play those traits to the hilt—he's going to exemplify them—or he's saying that his character is starting with these traits, but he's about to change. In the second case, character traits are used as the crux for creating all sorts of problems for his character in game. He's going to use his traits to get his character into situations where he has to make hard decisions. Do I go with my nature, or do I fight against it? This is fuel for some very fine play, and the system supports this behavior.

Flighty, Determined and Brutal are examples of character traits.

Character traits also serve another important role: They add necessary color to the game. They help capture our imaginations and immerse us in the story.

Cosmetic Traits

Cosmetic traits are character traits that describe how a character looks. Not every character needs to have cosmetic traits to describe his appearance. Without them, we assume the character is normal-looking within typical variations. A cosmetic trait is used to describe something on the character that really stands out.

Call-On Traits

This type of trait is powerful and subtle. When its conditions are met, traditional game mechanics are set aside either to break a tie (in the call-on-trait-having character's favor) or to allow the player to reroll failed dice on one test.

Revered is a call-on for Oratory. When delivering speeches to the faithful or gullible, the player may call on this trait to reroll failed dice once per session.

Players decide when and how they'll "call on" this type of trait (hence the name). Call-ons may only be invoked once per session. They are a powerful aid, representing an unpredictable edge the character possesses.

Die Traits

Die traits modify an ability in the same way every time they are used. Either they add a die or two, change a game mechanical number—an obstacle, or hesitation—or grant a new ability/new way to roll dice.

Mechanical Reward

Traits are more mechanical in nature than Beliefs and Instincts, but they too can be used to leverage artha. And, as you know, that's all discussed in the next section, The Artha Wheel.

Changing Traits and Earning New Ones

It is important that characters grow and change through play. In Burning Wheel, the outward perception of how the character was played is just as important as the player's inward perception of what he thinks the character is all about.

Trait Vote

The way the character is played changes him. This can be a deliberate effort on the part of the player—to change his character via his roleplaying—or an unintended side effect.

At the end of a campaign or extended adventure, the GM and the players nominate characters to receive new traits. Going around the table, players discuss each character who participated in the adventure. Possible traits are suggested for all the characters. After all characters have been discussed, the players vote on the traits suggested for each character. The owning player doesn't vote for his own traits. A unanimous decision grants the trait. Character, call-on and die traits can be awarded.

For short adventures and scenarios, I recommend that characters be allowed only one new trait from the vote. For longer, epic stories, two or three traits is a fair limit.

Characters can be awarded traits that change their bodies—scars, a limp or even missing digits—to reflect their in-game experiences. They can (and should) be awarded character traits according to how the other players perceive their personalities in the course of play. This shouldn't be a punishment, but an honest outward reflection of what's been happening at the table.

You can invest in earning certain traits by spending artha to accomplish your Beliefs and Instincts. Artha is discussed in the next chapter, The Artha Wheel.

Voted Off the Island

In addition to voting for new traits for a character, the GM or owning player may propose that a character lose a trait. If the GM proposes the loss of a trait, a unanimous result is required for the trait to be voted off. If the owning player suggested it, a simple majority will do.

Evolving Beliefs and Instincts

Beliefs and Instincts are meant to evolve into traits throughout the course of play. Spending artha—which is discussed in the next chapter—on a Belief or Instinct is a good benchmark for the type or power level of a trait. The more artha spent, the more potent the trait.

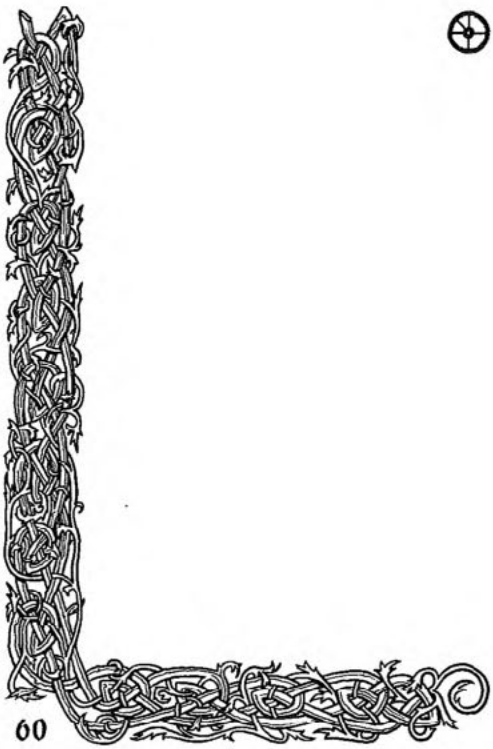
Rate of Change

The group can change the rate of development for their characters by increasing the frequency of trait votes. The default setting is to vote after 6-12 sessions. Voting after every goal is accomplished, rather than after

a series of goals, causes the characters to grow quickly and potentially become more powerful. If the group wishes to play like this, it should be discussed and announced before characters are burned so everyone can tailor their play style to this mode.

Beliefs, Instincts and Traits in Brief

- Belief— A short statement of ethical or moral priority the player assigns to the character.
- Instinct— An *if/then*, *always*, *never* or *when* statement that the player assigns to his character to dictate a reaction or course of action.
- Character trait— A guidepost for roleplaying that announces to the group, "This is what is important to me about my character."
- Call-on trait— Breaks ties or allows for a reroll on a failed test once per session.
- Die trait— Adds dice, adds/reduces penalties or allows access to additional abilities the character would not otherwise have.
- Trait Vote— At the end of an adventure, players vote on the other characters traits based on how they were played.



The Artha Wheel

You've heard so much about it, and here it is: *artha.* If the mechanics are the fuel, then players are the fire, and artha is the spin on the wheel and the coruscation of the flames. It's an interface between GM, player and system. GMs reward players for driving the story forward, and players reward themselves by using their characters to further complicate the story at hand.

Spiritual Rewards in a World on Fire

Burning Wheel uses a point-based reward system. Most often, the points are awarded for creating interesting situations by playing out, on and off a character's Beliefs and Instincts.

Artha

The points awarded are called artha. It's a Sanskrit word that means something equivalent to a person's power and success in his community or immediate surroundings. It is the middle ground between obsession with self, enlightenment and transcendence. In the game, it helps the character overcome obstacles and eventually hone abilities to mythical levels of excellence. There are three types of artha—fate, persona and deeds—each with their own effect on the game.

Interface

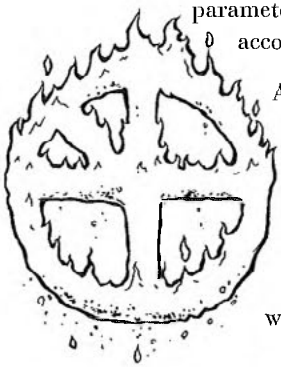
While it's cool to be rewarded for doing something neat, there is another, more important aspect to the process. The flow of artha creates a connection between player, character and GM based on themes and issues important to their game.

Beliefs, Instincts and traits (BITs) are the primary conduit between the player, his character and the artha system. Setting out BITs for his character, a player states to the GM and the group what his goals in play are for this character. He lets everyone know how and when he wants to be rewarded for playing his character.

For example, a player creates a rebellious peasant character with a Belief that "Class is meaningless." When this character encounters his "noble betters," everyone can expect trouble; he's going to create it! And because it's one of his Beliefs, he'll be rewarded for creating interesting, meaningful and difficult situations in this vein.

GM's Role

The GM has a heavy role in the artha game. He's got to create situations to challenge the players' Beliefs. He also is allowed to create his own parameters for the story. Players that work with the GM and accomplish great deeds earn even greater rewards.



At first, the arrangement may seem a little too carrot and stick. But it is more subtle than that. Players state their goals and how they want to be rewarded. They can earn these awards without ever moving for the carrot. But the GM also has the power to provide greater rewards for epic deeds. All in all, we've found this interface—this revolving wheel, if you will—to work very well.

Fate, Persona and Deeds

As mentioned above, there are three types of artha: fate, persona and deeds. Fate is earned simply by walking the character's destined path. It can be spent on minor boosts and aids. Persona is earned by idiomatic roleplaying, breaking out of the mold of the aforementioned destiny and by accomplishing personal goals. It can be spent to modify die rolls. Lastly, deeds artha marks a character's accomplishments beyond his immediate and personal goals—going beyond what is desired to what is needed. Deeds points are the hardest to earn and can be spent to heavily modify die rolls.

Onward and Upward

As the player spends artha to improve his character's chance of survival, he moves toward an epiphany. Every time a player tests one of his character's skills or stats and spends artha on the test, that ability gets one step closer to the next shade. When the requisite number of artha-enhanced tests is completed, the ability automatically and immediately shade-shifts one step lighter. See the Epiphany section toward the end of this chapter.

Earning Artha

Artha is awarded at the end of the session by consensus according to the criteria described in this section.

Players may nominate one another for artha awards—specifically fate and persona points, not deeds. Also, players may nominate the GM's NPCs for artha awards as they see fit. The GM is obligated to accept.

Fate artha is rather common—a few points are earned every session. Persona points are gained as personal goals are accomplished, so their frequency of award is entirely up to the game play—but usually only one per session. Deeds are awarded at the end of a long series of personal goals that result in the character accomplishing "the really big thing."

Fate

Beliefs

Fate points are earned for manifesting the character's Beliefs in a convincing and entertaining manner. Entertaining doesn't only mean funny—we all enjoy a good dramatic performance now and again. This award is given when playing a Belief serves a purpose and drives the game forward. It is a very open condition, so there's a lot of room to get a character's Beliefs involved.

Andy's crime lord, Omi-yori, has the Belief, "It is always better to smooth wrinkles than ruffle feathers." At the table, Pete and Ian are having a row between their characters. Andy interposes his character and, making conciliatory gestures to both parties, diffuses the situation. Andy will earn a fate point for that Belief at the end of the session.

Instincts

Fate points are earned for playing Instincts when such play gets the character in trouble or creates a difficult or awkward situation.

A character with the Instinct "Draw my sword at the first sign of trouble" is at court pleading his case. Suddenly, in walks his nemesis! The player doesn't have to draw his sword. He can resist the Instinct because it's going to cause trouble. But if he plays it out, he gets a fate point.

If the GM and other players feel a player is being disruptive with his Instincts, then artha does not have to be awarded. However, if you're playing your game for humor, by all means grant the reward.

Traits

Fate artha can be earned for using traits, but only if invoking that trait alters the direction of the story in an unforeseen way or makes life difficult for the character.

If a player's character has the Clumsy trait and he opts to fumble the MacGuffin at the absolutely "wrong" time, that's worth a fate point.

Humor

A fate point is earned if a player can stop the table dead with humor while in character. Dramatic play gets even greater rewards. See Embodiment and Moldbreaker below.

Right Skill, Right Time

Lastly, if a character has the right skill (when no one else does) to keep the story moving, he should be rewarded with a fate point. Consider it a reward for clever character burning. Keep this award rare.

Persona

Embodiment

When a player captures the mood of the table perfectly and further drives the story onward, one persona point is awarded. Moments like great speeches, desperate decisions or gruesome revenge fall into this category. This is a tough award to get, as a player really must go above and beyond in his roleplaying.

Moldbreaker

If a player comes to a point in the story where his Beliefs, Instincts and traits conflict with a decision he must make—a direction in which he must go—and he plays out the inner turmoil, the conflict within his own guts, in a believable and engaging manner, then he earns a persona point.

Other players, as well as the GM, may nominate each other for this award. A majority vote at the table awards the point. To earn the reward, the player must really push his character.

Personal Goals

Characters who accomplish personal goals—revenge, promotion, seduction, victory, etc—earn a persona point. These goals should either be clearly described in a character's Beliefs, or should be an explicitly stated goal for the group. This is the award for accomplishing all the various parts of an adventure—the assassinations, the betrayals, the kidnappings, recovery of lost artifacts, learning of ancient secrets, etc.

Workhorse

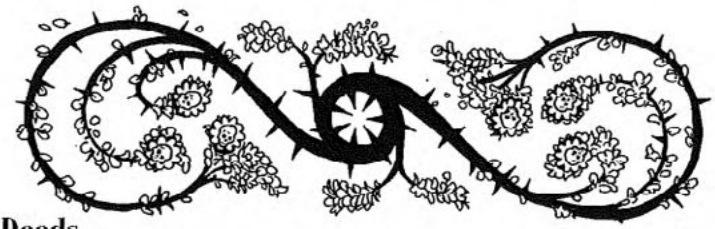
Being the workhorse character—the most relied upon in a given scenario—is worth a persona point. This is for the mundane stuff—having that piece of gear to make a scene go, having that skill to get the other character safely through danger and just generally slaving away behind the scenes to make it all work.

MVP

Being voted the "most valuable player" for a scenario earns a persona point. MVP is for the character who drives the story to its conclusion, the character who shines in the last moments and about whom everyone agrees, "Damn, we couldn't have done it without him!"

Voting for Workhorse and MVP

These awards are generally given at the end of a scenario, adventure or campaign, and they are not granted by the GM. Once a scenario is concluded, all participating players vote for whom the Workhorse of the scenario was and whom the MVP was. The GM gets one vote like all the other players.



Deeds

Deeds artha points are rare and are reserved solely for accomplishing goals larger than a character's personal agenda. To qualify for this reward you must do something that benefits more than just the character, and do it for reasons other than personal gain. Such an accomplishment must come with some cost or sacrifice—it's got to hurt a little to attain this level. Exacting revenge on your enemies through a brilliant plan is great, but it's only worth a persona point. Hitching yourself to a cause that transforms the setting—but doesn't directly benefit you or your friends—is worth a deeds point. Also, helping another character accomplish goals that are anathema to your goals, Instincts and Beliefs can earn a deeds point.

My players all had personal reasons to infiltrate a particular city, foment a rebellion and overthrow the government. Accomplishing that task, however grand, is worth a persona point. But in the end, they not only overthrew the slaver-tyrants ruling the city, but they handed control back to the rightful government when they could have taken power themselves. That's worth a deeds point.

Spending Artha

When spent at appropriate junctures in game, artha modifies the outcome of dice rolls, and thereby allows characters to perform heroic acts they would otherwise not be able to perform.

Artha must always be spent on a roll. It cannot just be dumped into a skill or stat. Something dramatic has to be happening. The dice have to roll, then the artha can flow.

Warning: Some of the artha expenditures explained below contain mechanics yet to be discussed. Skim them for now and come back to them later after you've read through the Rim of the Wheel section.

Fate

Luck— A player may spend a fate point to make the dice of a single roll open-ended (6s rerolled as new dice for additional successes). If the roll is already open-ended—Perception, Steel, Faith, Sorcery—then the player may reroll a single traitor (which is not open-ended). Luck is purchased after the dice have been rolled.

Shrug it Off— Faced with the pain and discomfort of cuts and scrapes, a player may choose to have his character Shrug Off +1 Ob of wound penalties. Basically, this temporarily mitigates the effects of a single superficial wound. This is exactly the same as the Shrug it Off rules in the Injury, Treatment and Recovery section, except that no Health test is necessary, and the time required is reduced to one action.

Persona

Boon— A player may choose to spend up to three persona points on a skill or stat test. Each point spent grants a bonus die (+1D) to roll on the test. A Boon must be announced before the dice are cast.

Grit Your Teeth— For a persona point, -1D of wound penalty can be temporarily shrugged off. This is exactly the same as the Grit Your Teeth mechanics in the Injury, Treatment and Recovery section, except that no Health test is required, and the time is reduced. Even spending a persona point, Gritting Your Teeth during a Fight costs two actions, and one action during Range and Cover.

Focus— A player may spend a persona point if he fails his test when using the working carefully rules. This doesn't pass the test, but it does counteract the effect of a time complication.

Will to Live— Players whose characters have been struck down with a mortal wound must spend a persona point in order to earn the Will to Live. The player decides whether or not he wants to continue on with his character. If the player does not spend a persona point, then no art nor magic can save the character from the mortal wound: He has exhausted his life. If the persona point is spent, then the character is allowed to attempt a Recovery test against the mortal wound after being tended to. See the Anatomy of Injury.

Deeds

Divine Inspiration— One point of deeds artha may be spent to double the exponent of a single stat, skill or attribute test. Reflexes and equipment dice may not be doubled in this manner. When spending a deeds point on a test that gains additional dice from FoRKs, helping, stances or other means, only double the base skill/stat and then add in the extra dice. Divine Inspiration must be announced before the dice are cast.

Saving Grace—A deeds point may be spent to reroll all dice that failed to come up successes on any given test. This may be used for equipment dice like armor, shields and guns. Obviously, Saving Grace is announced after the dice have been rolled.

Spending Limits

Players may only spend 1 fate, 1-3 persona points and 1-2 deeds points per roll. (2 deeds would come from doubling your dice and then rerolling traitors.)

Optional Rule: Persona Point Complications

If a character has just failed a test and gotten himself into deep trouble—killed, captured or something similarly horrible—the player can spend a persona point to redirect the narrative from "certain death" into further complications. As a rule, the player may choose his new fate. It's got to be bad or costly, though. Otherwise, the GM can simply declare that the initial failed test result stands.

A ranger sneaks into a bandit camp to investigate. His player fails the roll miserably and thus his character will surely be caught. To mitigate his failure, the player spends a persona point on a complication. As the bandits come out to investigate, they find a bow and quiver hanging curiously on a thin branch!

Convinced that they are being spied on, they search the area around camp, forcing the ranger to take refuge in the cesspit in order to avoid detection.

Complications must have a tangible cost. For martial or physical tests, that cost should be material, as in the ranger's bow in the above example. Or, for example, a player can spend a persona point on a failed Block test to ward off a Superb blow. The blow is deflected, but his sword snaps.

Or it can be even more complicated: A player's knight is about to be crushed under the weight of a troll's hammer. He's failed his Avoid miserably. "Can I spend a persona point to duck the blow, but to have stumbled back and nearly fallen from the ledge? My character would have dropped his sword, and he'd be hanging on for his life as the troll advances. How's that?"

The GM raises his eyebrow. "Sure!"

For social or academic tests, the relationship to the subject must change—it must get complicated. Remember, the test is still a failure; the player does not get what he's after, but he mitigates disaster by spending a persona point. He may then narrate the complication. The purpose of this mechanic is to give the player a little more control over his miserable fate.

There can only be one complication per session per player.

Aristeia

An *Aristeia* is slightly different and much more significant than the other artha feats. In order to enter Aristeia, a character must spend 5 fate points, 3 persona points and 1 deeds point. Once the artha is spent, choose the form of the Aristeia from the choices below:

Minor Epiphany—A player may choose to shade-shift one of his stats or skills one shade lighter for the duration of an entire scene—a fight, a goal, a gauntlet, an argument, etc.

Divine Aura (Aristeia)— By calling on this divine favor, a character may ignore all wound or other subtracted die penalties while he accomplishes one simple goal. The goal must be defined when the Aristeia is summoned. "To escape," "To win this battle" and "To sway the court to my side" are all fine and appropriate goals. Goals like "To kill my enemy" last only so long as the opponents are locked in combat. If the enemy manages to disengage, the Aristeia is lost.

Artha and Advancement

Just a reminder: Dice from artha never count toward the "total dice rolled" number when determining the difficulty of tests for advancement.

Epiphany

By embodying his persona, truly fulfilling his destiny and moving beyond his bounds, a character may undergo an Epiphany—a permanent shade-shift of one of the character's stats or skills.

In order to earn this fantastic boon, a player must push and test one of his character's abilities past its limits. Not only must the ability in question be used at critical junctures in the story, but the player must spend artha on those tests.

To shift to the next lighter shade, a player must spend a total of 3 deeds points, 10 persona points and 20 fate points. If a player has spent this much artha on one of his character's abilities, then the ability immediately and permanently takes on its new shade.

Other Artha Expenditures

Artha spent for an Aristeia counts for an epiphany. Spending artha on armor does not help with an epiphany. Spending fate and persona to shrug or grit a superficial or light wound counts toward a Health epiphany. Spending artha for special effects involving emotional attributes counts toward an epiphany for the emotional attribute and not the ability tested.

Artha and Game Play

As I mentioned at the beginning of this section, artha is the game play interface for Burning Wheel. You act and are rewarded; you choose

which actions are important enough to be rewarded. Not only does it mediate the relationship between player and GM, but it also helps set the tone for the game as a whole.

How Much?

At the end of a session, each player should earn at least a fate point and a persona point: one fate from playing a Belief, Instinct or trait and a persona from accomplishing a goal or earning one of the session awards.

A player who is really on his game can earn fate from each Belief and Instinct, and maybe a few from traits and Right Skill Right Time. That could be eight fate in one session! Or a player could accomplish three goals and earn three persona points, plus artha from Instincts and session awards.

If no artha is earned in a session, something is wrong. Players and GM are not engaging with the system and everyone is missing out on a lot of good stuff. Next session, examine your Beliefs and try to align them better with the story so your character is driving the action.

Starting Artha

I recommend each character start with one fate and one persona point.

If you'd like a bigger cushion for a starting game, try starting characters with three fate and two persona.

You can start characters with a deeds point if you'd like a very heroic, epic feeling game. I don't recommend this, though. I think deeds points are best when earned.

NPC Artha

Named villains and allies should start with one fate and one persona point each. Thereafter, they can earn artha if the GM writes and plays beliefs for them.

Archnemesis characters should be given at least three fate and three persona.

I advise against giving villains deeds points. Burning Wheel is meant to be a player driven game, and deeds points are rewards for actual game play. No matter what we'd like to think, those villains haven't played the game. There's little more demoralizing to the players than hearing the GM announce, "The Giant King doubles his G6 Hammer skill."

Artha in Brief

Spending Artha

Name	Cost/Type	Effect
Luck	1 *Fate*	Open-ends 6s
Shrug it Off	1 *Fate*	Temporarily negates +1 Ob penalty
Boon	1 *Persona*	+1D to a stat or skill for one test; max three points per roll
Focus	1 *Persona*	Counter a time complication
Grit Your Teeth	1 *Persona*	Temporarily negates -1D wound penalty
Will to Live	1 *Persona*	Allows player to test Health so their character may recover from a mortal wound
Divine Inspiration	1 *Deeds*	Double dice for one test
Saving Grace	1 *Deeds*	Reroll failed dice from one test
Aristeia	5 F, 3 P, 1 D	Gray skill/stat, or ignore wound penalties
***Optional*: Complication**	1 *Persona*	Cheat death!

Earning Artha

Name	Earns/Type	Description
Belief	1 *Fate*	Driving the game forward with a Belief
Instinct	1 *Fate*	Playing an Instinct that makes the character's life difficult
Trait	1 *Fate*	Invoking a trait that sends the story in an unforeseen direction
Humor	1 *Fate*	For an in-character game-stopper
Right Skill, Right Time	1 *Fate*	For having a skill to make the story go
Embodiment	1 *Persona*	For really good or distinctive roleplaying
Moldbreaker	1 *Persona*	For going beyond the bounds of character
Workhorse	1 *Persona*	For doing all the work for the scenario
MVP	1 *Persona*	For being the crucial element of success
Personal Goals	1 *Persona*	Revenge, triumph, seduction, victory
Greater Goals	1 *Deeds*	Accomplishing goals bigger than you!
Beyond the Call	1 *Deeds*	Helping, no matter the cost

The Spokes in Play

Vincent's Admonition

In his game, *Dogs in the Vineyard*, Vincent Baker articulates a convention of Burning Wheel so well that I'd rather use his words than my own. He says:

Every moment of play, roll dice or say "yes."

If nothing is at stake, say "yes" [to the player's request], whatever they're doing. Just go along with them. If they ask for information, give it to them. If they have their characters go somewhere, they're there. If they want it, it's theirs.

Sooner or later—sooner, because [your game's] pregnant with crisis—they'll have their characters do something that someone else won't like. Bang! Something's at stake. Start the conflict and roll the dice.

Roll dice, or say "yes."

Vincent's advice is perfect for Burning Wheel. Unless there is something at stake in the story you have created, don't bother with the dice. Keep moving, keep describing, keep roleplaying. But as soon as a character wants something that he doesn't have, needs to know something he doesn't know, covets something that someone else has, roll the dice.

Flip that around and it reveals a fundamental rule in Burning Wheel game play: When there is conflict, roll the dice. There is no social agreement for the resolution of conflict in this game. Roll the dice and let the obstacle system guide the outcome. Success or failure doesn't really matter. So long as the intent of the task is clearly stated, the story is going somewhere.

Setting Obstacles

It is the GM's role to set obstacles. By presenting obstacles where he sees fit—by calling for tests—he builds the mood of the game. For example, making even the simple things difficult can give the game an air of oppression and weight. This isn't a bad thing, and sometimes that's the mood necessary for conveying the situation. Setting obstacles low, or only asking for tests at moments of high drama, gives the game a heroic and grandiose feel.

The players have some role in setting this mood, but by far it is the GM's job to sculpt, pace and nudge the atmosphere in a certain direction. And not just through beautiful descriptions, he uses the game mechanics to reinforce those descriptions.

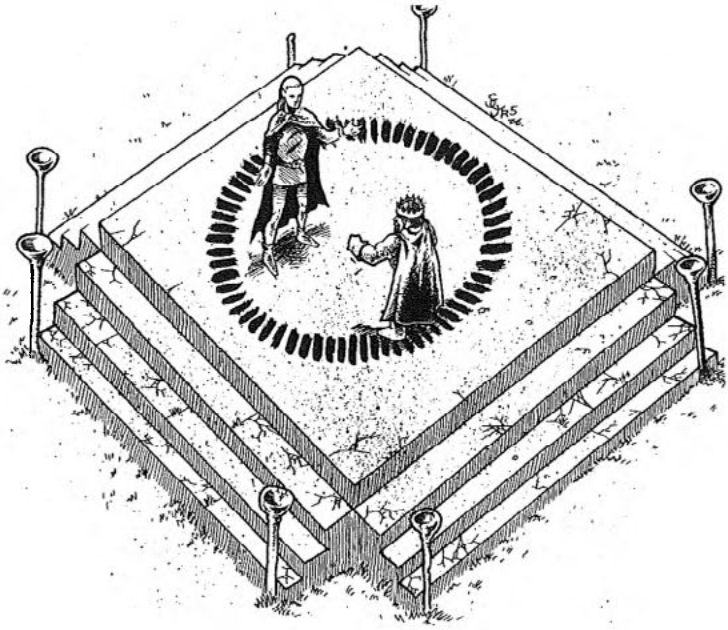
Versus Tests Revisited

Whenever there is a contest between two characters, make a versus test. This is the method of solving disputes in Burning Wheel: We roll for it. Two players want their characters to grab something? We roll to see who gets it. One player wants his character to hurt another? We make a versus test—attack vs defense. Attacker gets more successes, he injures his target. Defender gets more successes, and he protects himself. Now what's he going to do? Want to remain hidden in a crowd? Roll. I'm going to roll to spot you. Want to win an argument? We roll after we've each stated our case.

By using versus tests to resolve conflicts, we keep the game fair, the action moving, and allow the players a chance to legitimately influence events. Players can spend artha on rolls: They can call for help, use traits, use FoRKs and just plain do the unexpected. All of this is necessary for an evolving, engaging game. The players are both the actors and the audience, so they need to be involved in, and enjoying, the events as they transpire. Versus tests go a long way toward creating an engaging experience.

Why roll at all? Why not just agree on what's happening? We're all fair-minded adults, right? Well, social agreement is a fantastic ideal, but it is subject to bullying, blustering, intimidation, manipulation, cajoling, persuasion and lying: all things that are separate from the characters—part of a social dynamic that is apart from the game. By relying on the dice, everyone is on a level playing field. Burning Wheel is a game, not acting class. The versus tests get everyone playing the game. Besides, your characters only advance if you roll the dice!

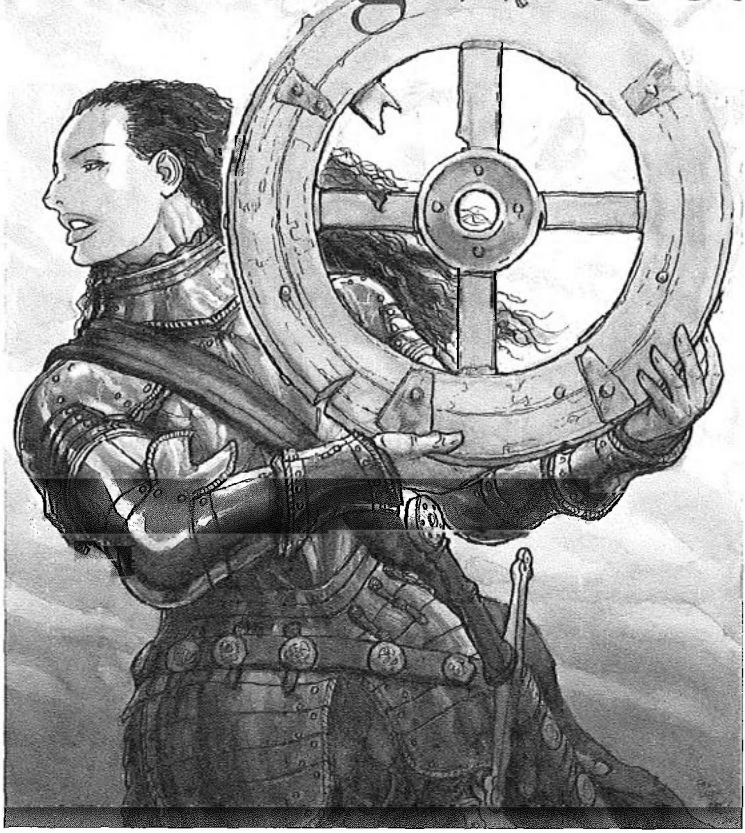
Roll, and you'll find that dice in Burning Wheel actually support and bolster the players' actions—even if they fail! Dice help you get what you want, not frustrate your goals. There's a process to it, sure, but I'm confident that the mechanics of this game drive dramatic, intense play. Roll the dice. You'll see.



Make Characters and Play Now

At this point, I strongly urge you to make a character. Get a friend or two together, and take the system you've just read for a spin. Nothing big; a small, one-goal scenario would be best. Play out social and physical altercations using the versus tests rules. Get some tests for advancement and some artha from the stingy GM. As questions arise about detailed resolution, make a few notes and, after the game, start reading through the chapters in the Rim of the Wheel.

the Burning Wheel



Character Burner

the Garden is Burning

...Under his burning wheels the steadfast Empyrean shook throughout...
—John Milton, *Paradise Lost*

Fire in the Garden

Characters are the foundation of Burning Wheel. Nothing matters so much as the character, and nothing happens without a character being involved—either directly or indirectly.

The Character Burner contains the instructions for building these essential components in Burning Wheel. It's a detailed process and practically a game in and of itself. Players are presented with myriad options that they knit together into a shape and form that is manifested at the table and in the game.

Making a character in Burning Wheel is not a free-form "this is what I want and this is what I get" process. Players must make decisions about what is important to them, and these choices have consequences. Opting for certain paths excludes others; more importantly, some choices scar or change the character. Don't like the ramifications of your decisions? Make different ones. There's no set way to build any one character in Burning Wheel, but there are consequences down each path.

This system is designed to make characters complex and give them the weight of experience and personality. Personally, I want my characters to feel like they've lived a little—full of bruises, prejudices, invisible scars and little victories. It's all fuel for the fire—to drive them on to greater heights.

One benefit of this depth is that the character's backstory is built as you design him. By the time you hit the table with all your skills, traits, Beliefs and Instincts in place, you have before you a product of an imagined past—a glimpse into another time and another place—ready to spring to life and grab fate by the throat. Ready, in fact, to join forces with your imagination to power intense and enjoyable game play.

Good luck, and enjoy.

From the Day You Were Born...

A character is built step-by-step, from birth through the tumult of life, up to the day he starts his new calling—the adventure, whatever it may be.

In Burning Wheel, the basic currency of character creation, or "character burning" as we like to call it, is the lifepath.

Lifepaths

A lifepath (LP) is a short slice of life, usually just a handful of years. It teaches skills, bestows traits, toughens a character and can make him richer or poorer.

Ultimately, the character is the sum of his lifepaths. The total of this experience can be prosperous and fruitful, miserable and painful or a combination of the two. It is up to the player to determine the exact paths walked.

Setting

Lifepaths are grouped together in loose categories called settings. A setting is a segment of the character's culture that contains many related lifepaths. The relationship between lifepaths is often indirect. The bounds of a setting are usually geographical. For example, the City Dweller Setting has paths reaching into all levels of society, from wealthy ministers to sturdy sailors to lowly beggars, whereas the Noble Court Subsetting encompasses all those you might meet at the palaces and castles of the nobility—from angry governesses and quiet gardeners to haughty courtiers and mysterious sorcerers.

A character may only choose lifepaths from the setting he was born into—unless, of course, life leads him in another direction.

Character Stock

The Character Burner provides players with four fantasy character stocks to choose from: Dwarves, Elves, Men and Orcs.

Each character stock has a unique culture, with a variety of settings and dozens of lifepaths. A player may never choose lifepaths outside of his chosen character stock.

The various character stocks also grant access to particular traits, certain skills and cultural artifacts. Each stock has its own list of material possessions and spells, but all characters use the core rules for Resources, Circles, relationships, affiliations and reputations.

The Elements of a Lifepath

Each lifepath ages the character and grants him time, traits, trait points, resource points, stat points, leads, skills and skill points. These are the building blocks of every character.

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Farmer	8 yrs	5	+1 P	*Villager, Soldier, Servitude*

Skills: 8 pts: Farming, Mending, Animal Husbandry, Weaving, Cooking, Sewing, Firebuilding, Sing

Traits: 1 pt: Hoarding

Time

The Time column indicates how long in years it takes to walk this particular path. After all lifepaths are chosen, years are totalled to determine the age of the character.

Resources (Res)

Players use resource points (rps) to purchase material possessions, land and spells, and to build relationships and acquire affiliations.

Statistics (Stat)

Stat points are garnered from two sources: lifepaths and age. Once all of a character's lifepaths have been chosen, his age is determined and used to find his Starting Stat Pool. Also, many lifepaths give the character a bonus point toward either a mental or physical stat.

Leads

Opportunity is strange and unpredictable. Often a person cannot directly decide the paths he must walk—he must follow life's leads.

Social mobility in the Middle Ages was not the same as it is now. It was very difficult to break out of one's station. Most people were born into their lot and had no chance of doing better (or worse). To help represent this in a fantastic Middle Ages world, each lead costs one year added to the character's age.

In character burning, a lead is a possibility, an opportunity to change. It can be a chance at something good, or a chance of calamity. Either way, the leads allow characters to move on to other settings and lifepaths. In fact, the only way to get from one setting to another is to take a lead.

A Farmer in the Peasant Setting can take a lead to the Villager Setting and become an Apprentice Craftsman. While in the Village, he might be conscripted into the king's army. After a term as a Conscript, he then

decides he likes the life and becomes a Foot Soldier in the Professional Soldier Setting. But he is caught in a great defeat and taken as a Captive of War in the Servitude Setting. The leads from Peasant to Villager, from Villager to Soldier and from Soldier to Servitude add three years onto the character's starting age.

Skill

Each lifepath presents a set of skills that may be learned. The player will mostly choose skills from the lifepaths his character has walked. If a player wants different skills for his character, he has to choose lifepaths that offer those skills.

Trait

Traits are details that differentiate characters—quirks, affectations and odd abilities. Burning Wheel is designed so that players can take on heroic personae—traits help to give them depth and life.

Traits will affect game play. Some will do so often and drastically; these cost the most points. Others will affect game play infrequently or in subtle ways; these are less expensive.

Dwarves, Elves and Orcs have certain traits that all members of their *race have. They are free and mandatory.*

Character Burning

The steps to creating a character in Burning Wheel can be broken into three categories: developing a concept, choosing lifepaths and spending the points earned on those lifepaths. Each step is crucial as we try to meld our ideas with the hard reality of the numbers on paper and produce a satisfying result.

There are twelve steps to this process. This chapter walks you through them. It's really just one big example.

Once you run through the process a few times, you'll be an expert and be able to whip up characters in 15 minutes. For players new to the game, the process usually takes about 45 minutes to an hour.

1. Character Concept

When designing a character for a Burning Wheel game, it is best to start with an overall, rough idea: a wily former slave hawker, a young headstrong wizard, a brutal knight, a cunning Orc chieftain, a joke-cracking adventuring Dwarf or a sorcerer-hunting Elf.

Players have many detailed options in the character creation process, so it's best not to start with too rigid a concept. Ideas that can twist and bend a little bit tend to be the ones that work best.

Concepts should abide by two guidelines: They should be feasible for the genre/style of your group, and they should be tied into the *situation at hand.*

Situation

The situation is the conflict in progress. Your group should have an idea for the type of game they'd like to play—and what is going to happen in that game. Tie your character concept into that idea.

If a player chooses a concept that has nothing to do with the game at hand, then he has already set himself up with a great hurdle. A wizard-killing Elf isn't the best choice if the party consists solely of sorcerers; a young headstrong wizard is problematic for games without magic; and a Dwarven adventurer might not fit in too well with an Orc clan.

Situation in Reverse

As you read the above, you might be saying to yourself, "I can think of a dozen ways to tie those threads together!" And you're right. That's a little secret to developing a character concept—the type of character you choose affects the situation. So choose a character concept with an eye toward owning a part of the situation.

If the GM proposes a game without magic, there's always that one player who's got to play the last mage. And you know what? That's good. Before the game has even started, we have a spark of conflict—we have the player getting involved in shaping the situation. Discuss the situation as you present your character concept. Tie them both together—a dying world without magic, the last mage, the quest to restore the land. In one volley of discussion you've got an epic in the making. Start mixing in the other character concepts—they should all be tied to the background—and you have the makings of a Burning Wheel game:

The cult priestess sworn to aid the last mage... and then spill his blood so that the world can be reborn; the Lord High Inquisitor whose duty it is to hunt the Gifted, but whose own brother is the last hope. Now we're talking.

2. Choose Lifepaths

A character's numbers are generated by choosing a series of lifepaths. These are short segments of the character's life—usually centered around an occupation, a diversion or a class role. Each lifepath gives the player an amount of points with which to build his character.

Starting Lifepath Limit

Once the rough concept is in place, the GM will set a lifepath limit. The limit is based on the character concepts and the situation.

Two-lifepath characters are rank novices. While playing them can be fun, I don't recommend it for first time players in Burning Wheel. They are challenging characters to play. Three-lifepath characters are a good place to begin. Their choices are fairly narrow, but they do get some options to play with. Four-lifepath characters also make very good starting characters—they tend to be competent and well-rounded without being expert in any one field. Five-lifepath characters are veterans. They'll have a couple of expert-level skills and a host of choices to really maximize their starting positions. Six- to eight-lifepath characters are often potent and experienced. They have plenty of points to play with and many options. The hitch is that the more

lifepaths you choose for your character, the slower advancement will be once play begins. Characters with fewer lifepaths tend to rapidly expand their knowledge in a number of directions at once, while characters with more lifepaths tend to advance in just one or two directions (because they already know all the basic stuff). Neither is better than the other. Choosing one is just a matter of play style and preference.

I'm joining Anthony's ongoing Burning THACO campaign. My friends have been playing a traditional fantasy game—monsters, adventure, treasure—for a while. They invite me to join in. They have a priest, a sorcerer and a Dwarven warrior. Their group needs someone with some practical skills, either social or wilderness-based. They don't really need any combat heavies as they can all knock heads with sword (or axe or spell). According to Anthony, the GM, I have to start with three lifepaths for that "first-level character" feel. This is going to be a very simple character.

Choose Character Stock

Decide if you want your character to be a Dwarf, Elf, Orc or Man. You may only choose lifepaths, skills, spells and resources from your own character stock.

I'm going to make a young Elven Exile, banished from his land for a crime he certainly did commit.

Pick 'Em

Once the GM and the players have agreed on a limit, players choose lifepaths for their characters.

Born

Each character starts *Born* somewhere. The first lifepath chosen must be a Born lifepath. This represents not only the character's actual birth, but where he spent his childhood. Choosing a Born lifepath starts the character off in a particular setting.

Born Setting

Once the Born lifepath is chosen, the player may choose any lifepath in that setting in any order as long as it isn't governed by a requirement.

Requirements

Some lifepaths are listed with a requirement. You may have to choose another path before you can take the one you want. Sometimes, you'll have to choose a whole chain of lifepaths. This is especially true for upper-echelon paths like Bishop, Etharch or Troll Lord. Sometimes you'll have to be of a certain age or have a particular trait. You must meet the requirements before you can take the path.

Leads: Moving to a New Setting

Most lifepaths have a list of leads. The leads tell the player where the character may go from his last lifepath. Leads jump the character into another setting. Once in the setting, the player may choose any lifepath in any order, so long as it isn't governed by a requirement.

Any time a player chooses a lead for his character, add one year to the character's starting age. Also, note that a player may choose not to take leads and remain in his setting.

Skills and Traits: Make a List

As you decide on the various paths, make a list of the points provided in the Time, Resources, Stat, Skill and Trait categories. The first skill and trait of each path is required. The others are optional.

Here's what I choose for my Elven Exile. I take Citadel Born because I need him to be from the Elven citadel Alfheim so that my backstory works.

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Citadel Born	20 yrs	7	—	*Wilderlands*

Skills: 5 pts General; 2 pts: Elven Script, Sing

Traits: Elven common traits plus 1 pt: —

I take a Lead to the Wilder Elf Setting.

Huntsman	45 yrs	9	+1 P	*Citadel, Protector*

Skills: 7 pts: Call of the Wild§, Javelin, Bow, Tracking, Stealthy, Observation

Traits: 1 pt: Watchful

Wanderer	75 yrs	5	+1 P	*Citadel*

Skills: 6 pts: Song of Paths and Ways§, Air of Gates§, Foraging, plus any Wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

§ This is an Elven skill song. It costs 2 pts to open and always counts as open-ended. Descriptions can be found in the skill list.

Repeating Lifepaths: The Law of Diminishing Returns

You can repeat a lifepath as many times as you like. The second time a path is taken, time, resources, stat and skill points are earned as normal. The second skill and trait on each lifepath are required. If there is no second trait, subtract one trait point from the path. The third time a character walks a lifepath, he only receives half of the skill and resource points but no trait or stat points. If a lifepath is taken a fourth time, the character only earns half of the resource points and nothing else aside from years.

3. Age

After you're finished choosing your character's lifepaths, total up the Time category. Add one year for each lead taken. This is the character's starting age.

My Elf is 140 years old from his lifepaths. I add one to his age because I took that lead from the Citadel setting to the Wilder setting. His starting age is 141 years. Young, but not too young.

4. Stats

Age Chart

Take the character's starting age and consult the stat pools for the appropriate stock. The age charts follow at the end of each lifepath section, right before the descriptions begin.

Consulting the table for Starting Stat Points for Elves by Age, I see that my Elf falls into the 126-160 years range.

Mental and Physical Pools

Look up your character's starting age on the table and note his mental and physical pools. Add in any bonus stat points earned on the lifepaths: +M goes in the mental pool, +P goes in the physical. If you took a lifepath that had a +M/P, that means you can put one point in either mental *or* physical. If you took a path that had a +M, P, that means you can put one point in both the mental and physical pools.

I get 10 mental points and 16 physical points from my age. Huntsman and Wanderer both give me +1 P—that's two bonus points to my physical pool. So my starting physical pool is now 18 points (which is quite good). My mental pool remains at 10 points.

Divide

Mental points may be spent on Perception and Will. Points raise the exponent on a one-for-one basis. If you put five points into Will, the character starts with a B5 Will.

With 10 mental points, I have some options. I could put 6 in one, 4 in another. But I decide to play it safe and give my Elf a Will 5 and Perception 5. I need him to be strong in social conflicts (which Will factors into), but I also need him to have a decent Reflexes (which Perception factors into).

Physical points are divided between Agility, Speed, Power and Forte. Players may divide the points as they see fit, so long as they abide by any common trait restrictions from their character stock. I recommend that

until you become familiar with the game, physical stats start no lower than exponent 3 and no higher than 6. See the Starting Limits section at the end of this chapter for more.

When I divide my physical points, I always like to start by dividing them as evenly as possible and then tweak the ratings with any extra points or other considerations. So I divide 18 into Power, Forte, Agility and Speed. That's 4 for each with two points left over. Heaving a heavy sigh, I keep my Power and Forte at 4 each and put my extra points into Agility and Speed. I'm shooting for a nimble, fast character who has room to grow.

Shade

Black is the default starting shade for stats. If a player wishes to have a gray shade stat for his character, it costs five points from the appropriate pool.

In addition, all gray-shade stats must be cleared by the GM and the group. Without their approval, the player may only choose black shade abilities. For more about shades, check out the Heroic and Supernatural chapter.

My character has all black shade stats. I can't afford the five point premium.

My starting stats are as follows: Will B5, Perception B5, Agility B5, Speed B5, Power B4 and Forte B4.

5. Skills

Set General Points Aside

Total up any general points earned from the lifepaths. Set them aside for a moment.

I received 5 general points from my Citadel Born lifepath. I dutifully set them aside.

Skill Points

Total up the skill points earned from all of the character's lifepaths (except general points).

I have 15 skill points from my lifepaths (not including my general points).

Skill Choices

Each lifepath comes with a variety of skills that combine to make a master skill list for the character. The player may only spend his lifepath skill points on these.

According to my lifepaths I can spend my skill points on Elven Script, Sing, Call of the Wild[§], Javelin, Bow, Tracking, Stealthy, Observation, Song of Paths and Ways[§], Air of Gates[§], Foraging and any Wise skill I want.

Required Skill

The first skill listed with each path is required. The player must open the skill, but he does not have to advance it. If the character already has the skill from another, previous path, the next skill in the list is required (and so on).

My required skills are Elven Script, Call of the Wild[§] and Song of Paths and Ways[§]. All of the other skills on those paths are optional.

Skill Descriptions

Skills that are unique to the character stock are described in the individual lifepath chapters. All other skills can be found in the General Skill List. Each character stock has access to a mixture of their own unique skills and the general skills as their starting base. In fact, most of the skills come from the General List. Wises are generally not described. They all fall under the rules governing Wises described in the Wise entry in the General Skill List.

Opening Skills: Roots

It costs one point to open a standard skill. New skill exponents start at half the root stat rounded down. If a skill has two roots, half the average of the root stats rounded down. Root stats are listed with each skill.

Elven Script is rooted at half my Perception rounded down—B2. That costs one point. I decide to buy Bow, Tracking, Stealthy, Observation, and a Wise skill. Opening five more skills costs me five more points. The roots for all of them are B2—half of any of my stats rounded down is 2.

Special skills like songs or arts cost two points to open. These are noted in the lifepaths.

Call of the Wild, Song of Paths and Ways, and Air of Gates are all special Elven abilities—two skill songs and a spell song. It costs two points to open each. Which is expensive!

I have to open Call of the Wild since it's required for Huntsman. I'll also open Song of Paths and Ways because it's useful to have an orienteering skill. I decide not to open Air of Gates—the spell song—because I want to represent my exile. I was banished before I could begin formal training in Elven magic.

That's four more points—these special skills cost two points each to open. I get them each at my root of B2. I have five skill points left.

Training skills cost two points to open and are not advanced (they have no exponent ratings).

Opening Skills at Gray Shade

It costs five skill points to open a skill at its root with a gray shade.

Advancing a Skill

It costs one point to advance a skill exponent in character burning (one point adds one die).

I have five points left and a bunch of B2 skills—which is very low. I need to gain some competency. I decide to advance Stealthy, Call of the Wild, Song of Paths and Ways, Tracking and Lost Places-wise. They each advance from B2 to B3.

Spending General Skill Points

General skill points represent natural talent or additional experience not detailed in the lifepaths.

Skill points from lifepaths can only be used to open and advance skills gained from your lifepaths. General skill points can open or advance any skill not subject to restrictions. Skills opened with general points may not be advanced using regular skill points.

I have five general points. I think I'm going to need them to advance a few of my lifepath skills. But I also want to spread out my experience. I decide that my time living among men has forced me to be a bit of a social creature. I open up the Persuasion skill using a general skill point. Even though it's not on my lifepath list, I can open it with a general point. Rooted from my Will, it opens at B2.

Talking to the other players in the group, I discover that they're a bit short on medicinal skills. So I buy the Song of Soothing—an excellent Elven medicinal skill—to help out. It costs me two points since it's a magical Elven skill song.

I decide I'll use my last two general points to advance Song of Soothing and Persuasion. I could buy other skills like Sword or Climbing, but I'd rather learn them in play and earn some juicy stat advancement tests along the way.

My final skill list is as follows: Elven Script B2, Bow B2, Tracking B3, Stealthy B3, Observation B2, Lost Places-wise B3, Call of the Wild[8] B3, Song of Paths and Ways[5] B3, Song of Soothing B3 and Persuasion B3.

Why did I only open Bow and Observation but not advance them? I figure I'll get plenty of chances to use them during play. They'll advance as I do. I want to start marginally competent in other areas that might be harder to advance.

6. Traits

There are two types of traits available for purchase in character burning: lifepath traits and special traits. Lifepath traits are listed in the individual lifepaths and are purchased in a similar manner to skills. Special traits are purchased using extra trait points not spent on the lifepath traits. They are selected from the character stock special trait list or the general trait list.

Trait Point Pool

Total up the trait points earned from the character's lifepaths. This is the trait point pool.

According to my lifepaths, I get three trait points—one from each of my paths.

Required Lifepath Trait

Like skills, the first lifepath trait on each path is required. The player must purchase this trait. It costs one point. If the character already has this trait from a previous path, the next trait listed must be purchased (and so on). If a player already has all of the traits listed, the points on the path are free of requirements. If a lifepath is listed with no points or requirements, no trait points are gained on that path. If a lifepath is listed with a "1 pt:—" notation, that indicates there is no requirement for this path: One point is granted to be spent at the player's discretion.

Common Traits in Character Burning

If your born lifepath lists common traits, you must take them. They are required, but they are free. Consult the Common Traits section of the appropriate character stock chapter. Copy the list to your character sheet.

The Elven Common Traits are free, but the Watchful trait costs 1 point.

Lifepath Traits

Lifepath traits cost one trait point to purchase—no matter what their cost would be in the general or special list.

Watchful is a lifepath trait; it costs one point.

Special Traits

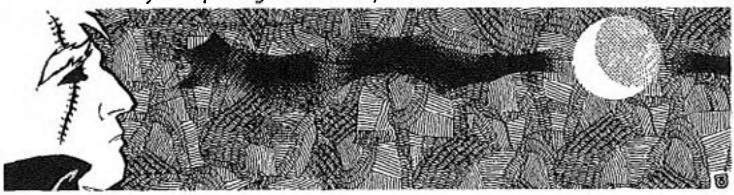
Trait points left over after purchasing required and optional lifepath traits may be spent on special traits. These traits either come from the special trait list in each character stock chapter or from the General Trait List in the back of this book. Each is priced from 1-10 points.

Trait points cannot be saved. Spend them all now please.

After the Watchful requirement, I have two trait points left. Checking the Elven special traits, list I see the Exile trait. It costs two points. Perfect!

Being an exile is integral to my concept. If I couldn't afford this trait, I would have gone back and rejiggered my lifepaths to get two free trait points. At this point, I think it's more important to have the trait than any particular lifepath.

Thus my starting traits are Watchful (a character trait) and Exile (a die trait that adds to my Grief and gives me a reputation).



7. Attributes

Attributes are derived from the stats and, in the case of Health and Steel, from answering a few questions.

Mortal Wound

A character's mortal wound tolerance is the average of his Power and Forte, rounded down plus 6. If Power and Forte are black shade, mortal wound is black shade. If Power and Forte are gray shade, the mortal is gray shade. If one of the stats is gray shade and one is black, add two to the total before averaging, but the shade of the mortal wound remains in the black.

My Power and Forte are both B4, thus the average is B4. No rounding necessary. Added to six and that's a B10 mortal wound.

Reflexes

A character's Reflexes exponent is the average of Perception, Agility and Speed, rounded down.

Ah hah. Here my choices begin to pay off. My Perception, Agility and Speed are all B5. Thus my Reflexes is B5. That's good. Hopefully it'll give me an edge to compensate for the relative inexperience (and poverty) of my character.

Reflexes Shade

If all three stats are gray shade, the character starts with a gray shade Reflexes. If any of the stats are black shade, Reflexes is black shade. However for each gray-shaded stat, add two to the total before averaging.

Health

Starting Health is the average of Will and Forte. Round down. Health may be modified by the player's answers to the following questions:

Health Questions

—Does the character live in squalor and filth? Subtract 1 die from the starting Health.

—Is the character frail or sickly? Subtract 1.

—Was the character severely wounded in the past? Subtract 1.

—Has the character been tortured and enslaved? Subtract 1.

—Are you a Dwarf, Elf or Orc? If so, add 1 to the character's starting health due to their mystical/immortal nature.

—Is the character athletic and active? Add 1.

—Does the character live in a *really* clean and happy place, like the hills in *The Sound of Music*? Add 1.

My answers to the Health questions: Though I'm a wanderer, I don't live in squalor and filth. I am not frail or sickly. I haven't been wounded or tortured (unless you count being forced to live among men). I am an Elf. Sweet. Athletic and active? I guess I am. I'm a hunter by trade. But I certainly don't live in paradise, so I don't get that last bump. That's +2 to my starting Health.

Health Shade

Health is black shade unless both Will and Forte are gray (in which case, Health is gray). If one stat is gray, add two to the total before doing the average.

My Will and Forte are B5 and B4 respectively. That averages to B4. Add two and my starting Health is B6. Not bad!

Steel

Base starting Steel is B3. Players should answer the following questions regarding their character's history. Each answer can raise or lower Steel. Also, five "yes" answers can be used to buy a gray shade.

—Has the character taken a conscript, soldier, bandit, squire or knight type lifepath? Add one to Steel.

—Has the character ever been severely wounded? If the player was and was a soldier, knight, bandit, etc., raise Steel by one. If he was wounded but was not a soldier, lower Steel by one.

—Has the character ever murdered or killed with his own hand? If he has done so more than once, raise Steel by one.

—Has the character been tortured, enslaved or beaten terribly over time? If yes and his Will is 5 or higher, raise Steel by one. If yes, and Will is 3 or lower, reduce Steel by one. If Will is 4, there is no change.

—Has the character led a sheltered life, free from violence and pain? Reduce Steel by one.

—Has the character been raised in a competitive (but non-violent) culture—sports, debate, strategy games, courting? Raise Steel by one.

—Has the character given birth to a child? If so, raise Steel by one.

—Is the character Gifted or Faithful or an equivalent? If so, raise Steel by one.

—If the character's Perception is exponent 6 or higher, raise Steel by one.

—If the Will stat is exponent 5 or higher, raise Steel by one; or if the character's Will is exponent 7 or higher, raise Steel by two.

—If the character's Forte is exponent 6 or higher, raise Steel by one.

My answers: I'm not a soldier. As I answered for the Health question, I have not been wounded. Hm. I have murdered, hence my exile, but only once so no boost there. As I said with the Health questions, I haven't been tortured; I certainly have not lead a sheltered life. The competitive culture question is tough—I don't think I have been raised in such an environment; I'm not Gifted or Faithful. My Perception is B5; my Will is B5, so that gives me a point; and my Forte is only B4. Thus my starting Steel is B4. I'm going to have to advance that quickly if I want to be a productive member of this group.

Hesitation

Your character's hesitation is 10 minus his Will exponent. There is no shade for hesitation.

My Elf's hesitation is 5 (10 minus my Will exponent of 5).

Emotional Attributes

Certain characters may have access to an emotional attribute like Faith, Grief, Greed or Hatred. The rules for starting scores for those attributes are described in each applicable character stock chapter.

As an Elf, I have the Grief emotional attribute. Consulting the Elven Grief section, I answer the questions there. Briefly, I don't know any lamentation songs (there are none on my paths), my history definitely includes tragedy and I've lived among non-Elven people. That makes my Grief B3—one exponent point for each of those answers. However, I also have the Exile trait. That increases my Grief by one. Thus my starting Grief is B4.

My character is really starting to gel in my mind: a young hothead who committed a murder and then was cast out of his homeland. It's satisfyingly classic—nothing fancy—kind of like mac and cheese.

Stride

Stride indicates how fast you move. It isn't rolled or tested. The number is compared to that of other characters to see who gets relative advantage. Stride for Dwarves is 6, Men and Orcs is 7, Elves is 8. There is no shade for stride. Stride may be modified by traits.

Woohoo: I have the longest stride!

8. Spending Resource Points

Total your character's resource points (rps) from the Res column of the lifepaths. This is how many points the character may spend on relationships, gear, property, spells, affiliations and reputations.

I have 21 resource points to spend.

Gear

A character's possessions are purchased with resource points. Each character stock chapter has a list of available purchases. Purchases are described generally but include any extras or accoutrements the character might need: arrows, extra knives, saddles, etc.

Consulting the Elven resources list, I buy the basics: a run of the mill bow, clothes, shoes and traveling gear. That's 10 points so far—11 to go.

Next I glance through my skill list. Do any of my skills require tools? Song of Soothing does, as does Call of the Wild and Elven Script. Tools are really useful. Without them, I suffer a double obstacle penalty to use those skills. I can't compensate for that with such low skill exponents.

But Elves also have sweet Elven magic items they can start with. Screw tools; I'll find them on the road. I decide to buy Elven Mirrorwine (8 rps). I'll never be able to find that outside of the Elven lands. And it'll impress my new friends when I bust it out.

Relationships

A relationship is a background character who the player absolutely wants involved in an important recurring role in the game. He is family, a friend, an ally or an enemy. By adding this character to the game, the player implicitly agrees to bring him into play and the GM knows the character is important. Once a relationship is paid for, it becomes part of the plot.

- A relationship with a character who is considered powerful and who plays a large role in the game setting costs 15 rps.
- A relationship with a character who is considered significant or important to the game setting is 10 rps.
- A relationship with a character who plays a minor role in the setting or situation costs 5 rps.

There are no insignificant relationships! Every one of them is important. However, you can reduce the cost by introducing interesting complications to the nature of the relationships. Relationships have a minimum cost of 1 rp.

- Immediate family relationships are -2 rps.
- Other family relationships (cousins, aunts, etc.) are -1 rps.
- Relationships involving bonds of romantic love are -2 rps.
- Forbidden relationships are -1 rps (the bishop who pals around with the bandit king, for example).
- Relationships that are hateful, are rivals or are extremely unfriendly to the character are -2 rps. (Enemy of the king? 13 rps.)

Any non-player characters not bought as relationships—secondary background characters—fall into the sphere of the character's Circles (described on in Step 9). In fact, it is the intention of these rules that each player only develop one or two relationships important to his character—everyone else is in the Circles.

I create my cousin, Durion, who was complicit in my crime but received a lighter sentence. He's a minor figure—costing 5 rps base. He's family (-1 rp) and I flipping hate him (-2 rps)! Why did I get exiled when he didn't? He costs 2 rps.

That leaves me with one rp left. I could take a close family, forbidden or hateful relationship, but I decide against it. What will I do with this last point?

Affiliations

Each lifepath grants the character a loose membership to a particular group. However, the character has little or no power in these venues. If he wants power, a player may buy his character an affiliation with an organization in his Circles. See Step 9. The amount of points he spends and the dice granted indicate how powerful the organization is and where he stands within it. Lastly, affiliations must be accompanied by a one sentence description from the player. No, "1D army" affiliations. Be specific and detailed.

- **1D, 10 rps.** A small, local or specialized group—a large family, a sorcerers' cabal or a bandit group
- **2D, 25 rps.** A large, regional or expansive group—a trade guild, a manor or estate, an Althingship, pirate fleet or powerful clan
- **3D, 50 rps.** A national, powerful or ruling group—a merchant league, a duchy, a governor, an Etharchy or a wealthy bishopric

Keep affiliation dice separate from your Circles rating; a character may have multiple affiliations, and Circles advances independently of affiliations. Finding your Circles exponent is described in Step 9.

Reputation

The character's reputation refers to his renown and influence. Reputations are governed by their scope. This indicates how broadly you can apply the reputation. A local reputation can only be applied while in the character's home city, neighborhood, village, demesne or a similar setting appropriate to your game. Regional reputations spread the character's fame across the countryside, the suburbs, the province, the duchy, etc. Outside that area, his name ain't worth mud. National reputations indicate the character is known throughout his homeland, and even those who have merely heard about his kingdom might know his fame.

- **1D, 7 rps.** Local or minor reputation— the fastest kid on the street, the drunk, the neighborhood thug, the knowledgeable guide
- **2D, 25 rps.** Regional or notable reputation—an old war hero, a religious figurehead, a well-known Elven Wanderer, a famous army captain, a lord, a notorious bandit, a famous entertainer
- **3D, 45 rps.** National or major reputation—a munificent baron or duke, a wealthy magnate, an infamous sorcerer, a kingdom's undefeated military leader, the head of a massive public business, the tyrannical leader of the country's religion, the king

I can't afford to buy a reputation or affiliation. However, my Exile trait grants me a 1D infamous reputation. It's time to decide what that means. I tell Anthony that I want my crime to be the murder of a Dwarven envoy that was covered up as a "hunting accident." Thus that becomes my reputation—exiled for the murder of the Dwarven envoy. The reputation is local to my homeland and specific to the people aware of the crime or Elven law.

Multiple Reputations and Affiliations

A player may buy three reputations and three affiliations for his character. Each one should be with a specific and different organization. For example, an architect could have affiliations with the artisans guild, the government and a noble family for whom he designed a manor.

Gangs and Crews

If your character concept requires a group of supporting characters, like the staff of a restaurant, crew of a ship or members of your bandit brotherhood, do the following: Purchase a relationship with the senior member of the group (if that's you, choose a second-in-command), then buy an affiliation to the group and a reputation within that affiliation.

Bodyguards, Squires and Apprentices

Some character concepts require a bodyguard, squire or assistant to accompany the PC at all times. Such characters must be bought via the relationships rules. They cost 10 rps. Period. These characters must be burned up as full player characters with the following limits: They must take two fewer lifepaths than the limit imposed on the PC and they must use a lower starting exponent cap. If the PC started capped at 6s, bodyguards are capped at 5s. These relationship-characters must pay for a 10 rp relationship with the PC as well, and pay for all their own gear. The burden for creating and managing such characters is on the player who brought them into the game.

Spells

Using resource points, Orcs and Men can purchase spells for their sorcerer-type characters. The actual cost is listed with each spell.

Stray Resource Points

Sometimes you'll end up with a stray resource point. You can always buy a minor close family, forbidden or hateful relationship. We recommend it. It's one point for a fun skeleton in your closet. Or you can buy a piece of armor—a gambeson—for one point. You can buy spikes, weights and beaks for your weapons. You can also buy a leaky shack if you're of Mannish stock, or Elven arrows if you're an Elf with an Elven bow.

I decide to buy a gambeson. It's armor and it'll cover my chest with 2D of protection. According to the armor costs list, it only costs 1 rp to buy a single piece of this type of armor.

9. Resources and Circles Abilities

A character has two additional attributes called Resources and Circles. All characters start with these abilities. These abilities each have their own chapters in the Rim of the Burning Wheel section.

Starting Resources Exponent

The Resources attribute represents wealth, favors and assets. Total the resource points the player spent on his character's property, reputations and affiliations—not relationships, spells or gear. Divide by 15. Round down. This is the character's starting Resources ability exponent. A gray shade may be purchased by spending five exponent points. This requires GM permission.

I'm a poor Elven wanderer. I haven't spent anything on property, reputation or affiliation. My starting Resources is B0.

So Close!

If a player is just a point or two shy of the next exponent for his starting Resources and he really has spent all his rps, then let him round up. And never let me hear you say I'm not a generous man!

Zero Resources

Some characters are going to start with a B0 Resources. In order to advance this, the character will need help or a loan. You can't test zero dice, so someone's got to give him one to start with.

Starting Circles Exponent

Circles represents the character's sphere of influence in his community—through his profession, class and family. All characters have it, and it is tested in the game.

The Circles exponent starts at half the character's Will rounded down, minimum of 1. The shade is the Will shade. The scope of the base Circles is determined by the character's lifepaths—anyone he could have met throughout the course of his life can be approached with Circles. Players may add to that scope with affiliations and reputations.

Starting Circles Bonus

If a player spends 50 or more resource points on property (not gear) and relationships, his base starting Circles is raised by one.

My Circles is rooted from my Will of B5. So it starts at B2. I'm going to have to work at improving it.

10. Physical Tolerances

Physical Tolerances are used to determine how badly injured a character is when he's struck with a weapon or spell. The mechanics for weapons and injury are discussed in the Burning Wheel. There are six tolerances: superficial, light, midi, severe, traumatic and mortal.

Mortal

We've already determined your character's mortal wound in step 7. That attribute is a coordinate on the physical tolerances grayscale (PTGS) located on your character sheet. Place the mortal wound tolerance on your character's PTGS now.

Superficial

The superficial wound tolerance is equal to half Forte rounded down plus 1. Yeah, I know it's funky, but it's necessary.

Light, Midi, Severe and Traumatic

Place the other wound tolerances in order left to right between superficial and mortal. They may be set apart by up to half the Forte exponent (rounded up). Typically, the only gaps are between superficial and light, and light and midi. Severe, traumatic and mortal all tend to fall together.

My physical tolerances look like this:

Tolerance			Su		Li		Mi	Se	Tr	Mo						
Coordinate	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8	B9	B10	B11	B12	B13	B14	B15	B16
Injury	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○

11. Beliefs and Instincts

Beliefs and Instincts are the most important part of your character, because they are the method by which we breathe life into all those numbers and lists.

Beliefs

A player must design Beliefs for his character. He may take up to three, but no less than one.

A Belief is three things: it is characterization, a goal and an indication of how you want to be rewarded for playing your character.

When writing Beliefs for your character, make sure that at least one of them is an active goal—something your character can accomplish.

I will topple my brother the duke no matter the cost.

Note the action: topple. And the condition: no matter the cost. This Belief could have been written as "I don't like my brother, the duke," but that's a terrible Belief. Great, you don't like him. Is that going to make a good game? What are you going to do about it? How would we create an interesting story around your dislike? It's weak, but toppling a duke, now that just drips with good fantasy roleplaying possibilities.

Types of Starting Beliefs

- If you have a secret about your character, make a Belief about it. It seems counter-intuitive, but in order to make a secret work in this game, you have to tell everyone about it!
- If you have an object or artifact that is very important to your character, write a Belief about it.
- If there is an NPC who is important to you, write a Belief about him or her.
- If you are interested in or care about another player character, write a Belief about him or her.
- If there is something your character wants to learn or gain, write a Belief about it.
- If you have a philosophy for your character, write a Belief about it.

Beliefs and the Setting and Situation

At the beginning of the character burning process, you and the GM discussed the setting of the game and the situation—the problem or action—that is starting off your campaign. Use this in your Beliefs! Incorporate what you care about, you hate or what you want to change into your Beliefs.

Little Goals

When writing goals, try not to make them too big. Try to create goals for yourself that you can at least try to accomplish this session. Don't write goals for things you'll get to in the future. If you have a big goal, break it down into steps and write a Belief about the step you can take a shot at right now.

Broad Statements Are Bad

Broad, vague statements make bad Beliefs. "This world is doomed" is a crap Belief. It's a broad statement, and it doesn't involve the character in the action. A simple change, "This world is doomed if I

should fail to save the princess," makes a world of difference. Now we all know that you are going to try to save the princess. We also know how you can be rewarded—if you work toward saving the princess, if you turn aside from the perfidious princess or if you save the princess.

Be Colorful

It's easy to write simple direct Beliefs: "I will save the princess." Unfortunately, such simple direct statements often lead to simple or flat play. The more colorful—the more in character—you can write your Belief, the more fun you're going to have in the game.

Work Together

During a session, not all players are going to get all of their Beliefs into play at the same time. That's okay. Tie in one or two Beliefs at a time—from different characters—and use the other Beliefs as hooks for additional sessions.

Beyond that, not all of the players' priorities are going to be appropriate to one game. That's cool, too. Negotiate with the GM and the other players about what is important and relevant to the story/game/situation at hand. Incorporate Beliefs based on those criteria. Save the rest for another character in another game.

I consult with Anthony, the GM, and ask him about the ongoing game. How will I come in? He tells me that the group is about to raid the secret lair of a wizard nemesis. They're searching for clues to some mystery they have been investigating.

I know that I'm going to have to bond with the group quickly. My character needs a purpose—a reason to stick with them. I come up with an idea and ask, "Can my exile be due to the murder of Rich's character's family?" Rich is playing a Dwarven axe bearer, last of his clan. Anthony thinks it's a great idea. I check with Rich and ask if he's good with that, too. He's all for it.

I explain that my past will be a secret, but I'm here to redeem myself. This bit of history makes my first Belief obvious, "I will ingratiate myself to Dvalin (Rich's Dwarf), and make myself useful to him at any cost."

My second Belief is about the situation: "I will aid these adventurers and make short work of this wizard and his bandit minions."

I'm at a loss for my third Belief, but Anthony steps in and helps me out. He tells me that they're looking for a lost magical city. Can we tie my history into that? Sure. We decide that there's a lost Elven artifact in this fabled city. My Elf has heard of it. Perhaps by recovering it, he can redeem himself in the Althing's

eyes. I write: "I must find a path to this lost, fabled city so that I might recover the legendary Silver Hunting Horn."

Instincts

A player may choose one to three Instincts for his character. Almost the opposite of Beliefs, Instincts are game-mechanical priorities that a player describes for his character. When a player sets an Instinct, he's telling the GM, the players and even the system, "This is how I want my guy to act in this situation."

An Instinct should be a declaration of action, ideally an if/then statement. Describe exactly what the character is doing and when: "If I sense trouble, I draw my sword." Simple enough.

Simple is key. Instincts, in general, should be actions that be can accomplished in one glance, one sweep of the hand.

If there's a cave-in, then I push the youngest to safety.

If confronted, I take Aggressive Stance.

You can use *always*, *never* and *when* statements:

Always cast spells carefully and patiently.

In the deep tunnels, always Assess (listen) at every junction.

When surprised, I draw my knife.

Never work quickly.

Taste food before serving or eating.

Always have enough ingredients for noodle soup.

Instincts must be tight and narrowly focused. This makes it possible for players to actually use Instincts in play, and it makes it easier for the GM to introduce conflicts where those Instincts generate complications.

Instincts Break Rules Before We Roll, Not After

Instincts allow players to set conditions for their characters that otherwise bend the rules. Do you have a "draw sword" Instinct? Well then, your character's sword is drawn at the start of combat without having to spend actions. Instincts cannot allow you to bypass a test, but they can assume you made the test some time before trouble started. Any time you can slip in a "my guy would have already done that" based on a written Instinct, you're on the right track. Once you are in the middle of trouble—once events are being narrated moment to moment—it's too late for most Instincts to have an effect.

"So Instincts are Action-Oriented Macros?"

Absolutely, that's one way of looking at it; think of it as the mechanical level. At this level, my Instincts tell the group that "my guy" functions in a slightly different manner than the baseline rules. For example, he's so aggressive that he actually starts combat in Aggressive Stance, even though other characters have to take an action to do that. Or he's so cautious in the deep tunnels that he Assesses at every junction, even if I don't actually state that when it comes up. In fact, that's so important to my character that if the players all forget and suddenly turn a corner and run into something dangerous, we'll back up a step so I can roll my Perception to see whether I became aware of it or not.

Then there's what I'll call the character level. This works on the principle that actions speak louder than words. Instincts are the most primal, compact way of telling everybody at the table what your character is about. Sure, my character has a few Beliefs that do that too, but those are more of a big picture thing. If my Dwarf has the Instinct, "If there's a cave-in, I push the youngest to safety," that tells the entire group a lot about who my character is and what he values. First, he's careful and aware of the dangers that come with being underground. Second, his first thought is to protect someone else, not himself. And third, that someone else is the "youngest"—meaning that he puts some sort of value on youth. And the group might rightly come to the conclusion that since he's the oldest Dwarf in the party, and has taken the Husband lifepath, this Instinct stems from a desire to protect children. Good grist for the roleplaying mill.

Finally, there's the story level. On this level, an Instinct is a direct statement to the GM, "I want to showcase this aspect of my character." If I have the "cave-in" Instinct, I'm telling the GM that I want at least some of the game to happen underground in caves or tunnels, and I want to have a cave-in.

Specific Response to Specific Stimulus

"Protect my friends from harm" is not an Instinct. It's too vague. How do you protect your comrades from harm? What defines harm? It could be a sword strike, a falling rock or a *faux pas* at a ball. Ways to protect comrades are equally undefined. Therefore, it's too much ground for an Instinct to cover. Instincts are split second actions/decisions/reaction. If something requires even a moment of thought, it's probably not an Instinct. Remember: specific response to specific stimulus; simple, direct, focused. Following this rule will help you create better characters and better games.

My Instincts are: Never wear shoes. Always make sure Dvalin has what he needs. Always scout ahead.

12. Name Him and You're Finished

Think of a name and you're done! Here's my character:

I decide my character's name is Varda, but he's traveling under the assumed name of Fletcher.

Varda, 141 year old Wilder Elf

Stats: Will B5, Perception B5, Agility B5, Speed B5, Power B4, Forte B4

Attributes: Mortal Wound B10, Reflexes B5, Health B6, Steel B4, Hesitation 5, Grief B4, Stride 8

Resources: B0 *Circles: B2*

PTGS: Superficial B3, Light B5, Midi B7, Severe B8, Traumatic B9, MW B10

Skills: Elven Script B2, Bow B2, Tracking B3, Stealthy B3, Observation B2, Lost Places-wise B3, Call of the Wild[§] B3, Song of Paths and Ways[§] B3, Song of Soothing[§] B2 and Persuasion B2.

Traits: Watchful (char), Exile (Dt: 1D rep, +1 Grief)

Gear: gambeson (chest only), run of the mill bow, clothes, shoes, traveling gear and mirrorwine

Relationship: Durion, cousin, hateful

Reputation: 1D (infamous) exiled from Alfheim as murderer of Dwarven Envoy

Beliefs: I will ingratiate myself to Dvalin (Rich's Dwarf), and make myself useful to him at any cost.

I will aid these adventurers and make short work of this wizard and his bandit minions.

I must find a path to this lost, fabled city so that I might recover the legendary Silver Hunting Horn.

Instincts: Never wear shoes. Always make sure Dvalin has what he needs. Always scout ahead.

Rules of Thumb in Character Burning

Basic, Naked Characters

Characters start the game naked and stupid. Literacy is earned through skills. Clothing is purchased with resource points. However, it is up to the player to decide whether or not his character can whistle. That's not a skill.

Setting Your Game's Starting Power Level

Choosing how many lifepaths each character may take is one step in limiting the power level of your game. However, the exponent cap is a more potent tool.

The default setting for the game is: No character may start with a skill or stat exponent higher than 6. Period. Unless the group decides to change

this, consider the "6" switch automatically flipped on. This allows a great range of characters—from the incompetent to the masterful—but holds back the major munchkinisms. You can cap attributes—Steel, Resources, Circles, Greed, etc.—if you'd like, but in general, attributes aren't subject to this cap.

You can get a lot of mileage out of the game by raising or lowering this number. Before starting a game, the whole group should discuss the power level and decide what is appropriate for them.

Exponent 7 and 8

Raising the starting cap to exponent 7 or 8 allows players to create very powerful characters—they can focus on being the best at something right out of the starting gate. This cap is preferred when jumping into the middle of a epic level campaign. Characters will be potent, but they won't change as dramatically as characters with lower exponents. Five or more lifepaths per character are recommended for this cap.

Exponent 5

Capping starting exponents at 5 creates a grittier, "more human" game. Characters can be experts, but none of them has truly mastered anything. It provides a lot of room for growth and development. This is my personal favorite starting power level. Dwarves and Elves may have trouble keeping their stats at 5 or lower—they might have extra stat points left over! If this is the case, have the Dwarves and Elves start with fewer lifepaths than other characters, or allow them to start with exponent 6 stats, but not skills or attributes. Six or fewer lifepaths are recommended for this cap.

Exponent 3 or 4

Starting exponents at 4 or lower gives the feel of a very mundane world. This is often suitable when characters are young or coming from everyday backgrounds into a life of adventure. This cap is best for long-term games or very focused one-offs—the development in the characters will be spectacular and dramatic. This cap is recommended for five or fewer lifepaths.

Min Max

The Burning Wheel character burning system is basically an intricate point-buy character creation system. It seems that the instinct among players of roleplaying games is to min-max in point-buy games. Focus and gain maximum benefit for your character, right? Not so much in Burning Wheel. Min-Maxing produces some odd results in the system. Such characters are often very unsatisfying to play. Taking a 3 in one

stat to get a 5 or 6 in another is cool. Setting 1s and 2s against 7s and 8s is not cool. Such creatures are more like Frankensteinian monsters than playable characters. A well-rounded character will generate the most satisfying results in play.

The GM may veto a character that he feels has been min-maxed. Simply chant these magic words: "I don't think he really fits in with the game or the other characters." The vetoed character must have his points redistributed in a way suitable to both the GM and the group.

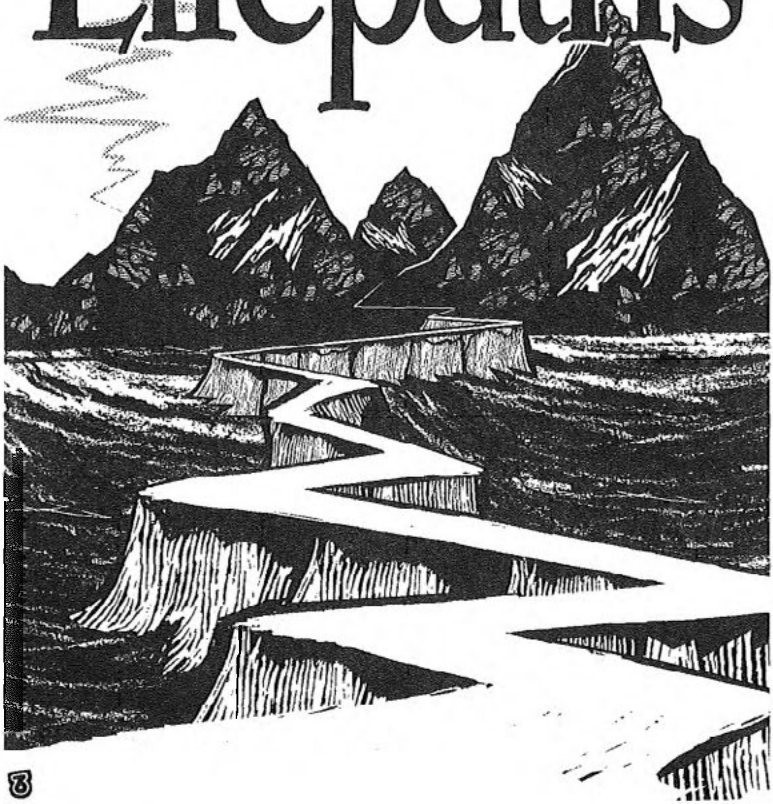
If the group feels that, heaven forfend, the GM has been remiss in his veto duties, they may heckle the offender: "Dude, what is this thing? He's got a G6 Power, a B2 Speed, 200 rps of gear and not a single relationship! You didn't even finish his Beliefs. 'Kill all my enemies' is not an Instinct!"

Above all, be nice to each other. That means don't min-max when you don't have to and don't make a player uncomfortable because he wants to play a powerful character. Make sure the group is comfortable with the overall power level of everyone's characters.

Missing Paths

Obviously, in trying to detail every avenue of life, the system has missed a few streets. If you find something missing, please feel free to draw up a new path based on one of the existing ones. The rules for lifepath creation can be found in the Monster Burner.

Lifepaths



No aspect of society, no habit, custom, movement, development, is without cross-currents. Starving peasants in hovels live alongside prosperous peasants in featherbeds. Children are neglected and children are loved. Knights talk of honor and turn brigand. Amid depopulation and disaster, extravagance and splendor were never so extreme. No age is tidy or made of whole cloth, and none is a more checkered fabric than the Middle Ages.

—Barbara Tuchman, *A Distant Mirror*

The Dwarven Coward

Baruk Blacklock's life changed irrevocably at the utterance of one syllable: No. During the war Baruk's band, led by his cousin Thül, stood at a crossroads. They could quick march to join the host in a great battle, or they could turn aside and raid a rich, unprotected enemy hold. That fateful night, Thül brought the company together to swear an oath of brotherhood—one that would lead them to more wealth than glory. Baruk refused He knew that Thül's greed had overwhelmed him, and it would get them all killed. No. He refused to swear the oath. And swift as a hammer blow, Thül banished him from the company and branded him a coward. To foreswear an oath, to choose pride over the wisdom of your superior, is a great crime. A transgression only overmatched by breaking an oath sworn. No matter how righteous his decision, Baruk must now and forever live with his choice as an outcast among his people.

BELIEFS

I will prove Thül wrong if it takes my last drop of blood. I'll take any job, undertake any task, to make a living now. Good fences make good neighbors.

OATH

None. Cowards don't swear oaths.

INSTINCTS

Always tell the (ugly) truth. Never attract attention to myself. Always keep my mule happy.

LIFEPATHS: *Born Clansman, Herder, Banner Bearer, Coward*

59 years old

STATS

Will	B5	Perception	B4	Agility	B4
Speed	B4	Power	B4	Forte	B5

ATTRIBUTES

Health	B6	Mortal Wound	B11	Reflexes	B4	Resources	B0
Greed	B5	Hesitation	5	Stride	6		
Steel	B5	Circles	B2	Reputation	1D, Coward		

SKILLS

Animal Husbandry B3, Flock-wise B2, Fence Building B2, Climbing B3, Conspicuous B2, Banner-wise B2, Intimidation B3, Inconspicuous B3, Ugly Truth B3, Oratory B2, Hypocritical Bastards-wise B3

DWARVEN COMMON TRAITS

Accustomed to the Dark, Bearded, Greed, Oathsworn, Shaped from Earth and Stone, Stout, Tough

TRAITS

Booming Voice, Resigned to Death, Branded a Coward, Artful Dodger

GEAR

Pack mule, clothing, sturdy shoes, traveling gear, Dwarven Fence Building tools, Dwarven Climbing gear

RELATIONSHIP

Graybeard, Thül (Minor, Hateful)

Dwarven Lifepaths

Clansman Setting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Born Clansman	20 yrs	10	—	*Guilder*

Skills: 3 pts: General

Traits: Dwarven Common Traits plus 1 pt: —

Tender	20 yrs	7	+1 P	*Guilder, Host*

Skills: 5 pts: Farming, Crop-wise, Hills-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Cursing

Herder	15 yrs	9	+1 P	*Guilder, Host*

Skills: 5 pts: Animal Husbandry, Flock-wise, Fence Building, Climbing

Traits: 2 pts: Booming Voice, Affinity for Sheep and Goats

Tinkerer	35 yrs	15	+1 M	*Guilder, Outcast*

Skills: 4 pts: Stuff-wise, Mending, Scavenging

Traits: 2 pts: Curious, Tinkerer

Delver	20 yrs	10	+1 P	*Host, Guilder*

Skills: 4 pts: Tunnel-wise, Gas Pocket-wise, Excavation§

Traits: 1 pt: Deep Sense

Miller	30 yrs	30	+1 M	*Guilder, Host*

Skills: 6 pts: Grain Appraisal, Miller, Mending, Brewer, Grain-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Brewer	40 yrs	40	+1 P	*Guilder, Host, Outcast*

Skills: 5 pts: Beer Appraisal, Nogger§, Miller, Beer-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Miller, Longbeard, Seneschal, Captain or Drunk

Foreman	35 yrs	25	+1 P	*Guilder, Host, Artificer*

Skills: 5 pts: Ore-wise, Vein-wise, Engineer

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Delver, Artificer's Ardent or Engineer

Husband/Wife	70 yrs	18	+1 M	*Guilder, Host, Outcast*

Skills: 5 pts: Clan-wise, Family-wise, Haggling, Soothing Platitudes

Traits: 2 pts: Dispute-Settler, Pragmatic Outlook

Restriction: Husband/Wife cannot be the character's second lifepath.

§ This is a special, magical Dwarven skill. It costs 2 pts to open and is always open-ended.

Longbeard 77 yrs 30 +1 M *Host, Outcast*

Skills: 6 pts: Coarse Persuasion§, Ugly Truth, Guilder-wise, Host-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Folksy Wisdom, Oath-Swearer

Requires: Foreman, Graybeard, Artificer, Trader, Seneschal, Adventurer or Husband/Wife

Guilder Setting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Born Guilder	21 yrs	5	—	*Clansman*

Skills: 4 pts: General

Traits: Dwarven Common Traits plus 1 pt: —

Wordbearer 15 yrs 10 +1 P *Clansman, Host*

Skills: 5 pts: Hold-wise, Rumor-wise, Oratory, Clan History

Traits: 1 pt: Quirky, Iron Memory, Quick-Step

Hauler 10 yrs 7 +1 P *Clansman, Host*

Skills: 5 pts: Hauler, Wagon-wise, Cargo-wise, Road-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Lifting Heavy Things

Carter 20 yrs 10 +1 P *Clansman, Outcast*

Skills: 5 pts: Animal Husbandry, Driving, Mending, Mule-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Patient, Iron Nose

Hawker 15 yrs 15 +1 M *Clansman, Outcast, Host*

Skills: 6 pts: Inconspicuous, Conspicuous, Streetwise, Haggling, Spiel-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Apprentice 15 yrs 20 +1 P *Clansman, Artificer*

Skills: 4 pts: Carving, Tanner, Carpentry, Scutwork-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Seen Not Heard

Journeyman 25 yrs 25 +1 M/P *Clansman, Artificer, Host*

Skills: 7 pts: Haggling, Reputation-wise, Cartwright, Mending, Black-Metal Artifice§

Traits: 1 pt: Hungry

Requires: Apprentice or any Ardent lifepath

Craftsman 45 yrs 45 +1 M/P *Clansman, Artificer*

Skills: 4 pts: Appraisal, Shipwright, Artificer-wise; 1 pt General

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Journeyman, Artificer, Artillerist or Engineer

Trader 45 yrs 70 +1 M *Clansman, Outcast*

Skills: 7 pts: Stentorious Debate§, Shrewd Appraisal§, Haggling, Persuasion

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Hawker, Journeyman, Adventurer or Husband/Wife.

Artificer Setting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Born Artificer	20 yrs	15	—	*Clansman*

Skills: 3 pts: General; 2 pts: Dwarven Rune Script

Traits: Dwarven Common traits plus 1 pt: —

Ardent	21 yrs	15	+1 P	*Clansman, Noble, Host, Guilder*

Skills: 4 pts: Firebuilding, Soothing Platitudes, Soot-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Humility, Hard Work

Tyro Artificer	21 yrs	20	+1 P	*Guilder, Host, Outcast*

Skills: 5 pts: Black-Metal Artifice§, Mending, Dwarven Art-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Determined

Requires: Artificer's Ardent or Journeyman

Artificer	30 yrs	35	+1 P	*Outcast, Host*

Skills: 8 pts: Stone Artifice§, Etching, White-Metal Artifice§, Gem Artifice§

Traits: 1 pt: Stolid

Requires: Tyro or Craftsman

Mask Bearer	55 yrs	50	+1 M/P	*Outcast, Host, Noble*

Skills: 6 pts: Jargon, Fire and Steel-wise, War Art§

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Artificer

Master of Arches	75 yrs	75	+1 M	*Outcast, Host*

Skills: 8 pts: Lithography, Sculpture, Hallmaster§, Symbology, Etiquette

Traits: 2 pts: Confident, Patient

Requires: Artificer

Master of Forges	75 yrs	75	+1 M	*Outcast, Host*

Skills: 6 pts: Forge Artifice§, Appraisal, Engineer, Command, Maker's Mark-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Meticulous, Estimation

Requires: Mask Bearer

Master Engraver	100 yrs	60	+1 M	*Outcast, Host*

Skills: 4 pts: Reason of Old Stone§, Stone-wise, Mountain-wise; 2 pts: General

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Master of Arches

§ This is a special, magical Dwarven skill. It costs 2 pts to open and is always open-ended.
† This is a training skill. It costs 2 pts to open and may not be advanced.

Dwarven Noble Setting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Born Noble	21 yrs	10	—	*Guilder, Artificer*

Skills: 4 pts: General; 2 pts: Dwarven Rune Script

Traits: Dwarven Common Traits plus 2 pts: Dvergar

Abecedart	20 yrs	10	+1 M	*Guilder, Artificer, Outcast*

Skills: 4 pts: Chronology of Kings, Etiquette, Obscure Text-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Know It All

Ardent	25 yrs	15	+1 P	*Guilder, Artificer, Outcast*

Skills: 4 pts: Sing, Soothing Platitudes, Accounting, Whispered Secrets-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Humility in the Face of Your Betters

Axe Bearer	20 yrs	25	+1 P	*Host, Outcast*

Skills: 8 pts: Axe, Armor Training†, Shield†, Formation Fighting†, Throwing

Traits: 1 pt: Proud

Requires: Noble Ardent or Banner Bearer

Chronicler	50 yrs	20	+1 M	*Guilder, Artificer, Host*

Skills: 9 pts: Illuminations, Ancient History, Clan-wise, Dwarf-wise, Poetry, Cartography, Etiquette, Symbology, Oath-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Abecedart, Khirurgeon or Graybeard

Seneschal	55 yrs	50	+1 M	*Guilder, Host*

Skills: 5 pts: Etiquette, Command, Estate Management, Hold-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Practical

Requires: Trader, Longbeard, Quartermaster, Chronicler, Khirurgeon or Graybeard

Treasurer	75 yrs	100	+1 M	*Outcast, Host*

Skills: 6 pts: Accounting, Etiquette, Treasure-wise, Administration

Traits: 2 pts: Dangerous Obsession, Rain Man

Requires: Seneschal, Artificer or Warden

High Captain	75 yrs	75	+1 P	*Host, Outcast*

Skills: 5 pts: Command, Strategy, Conspicuous; 2 pts: General

Traits: 2 pts: Muttering, Stentorious Voice

Requires: Noble Axe Bearer and either Captain or Warden

Prince	100 yrs	200	+1 M	*Host, Outcast*

Skills: 8 pts: Conspicuous, Etiquette, Intimidation, Oratory, Command, Burden of the Crown-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Grumbling, Galvanizing Presence, Baleful Stare

Requires: Born Noble and Noble Axe Bearer

Dwarven Host Subsetting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Foot Soldier	10 yrs	6	+1 P	*Clansman, Outcast, Guilder*

Skills: 6 pts: Foraging, Brawling, Hammer, Armor†, Shield†, Cadence-wise
Traits: 1 pt: Salt of the Earth

Arbalester	12 yrs	12	+1 M/P	*Clansman, Outcast, Guilder*

Skills: 5 pts: Crossbow, Mending, Fletcher, Artillery Hand, Windage-wise
Traits: 1 pt: Squinty

Banner Bearer	7 yrs	10	+1 P	*Clansman, Outcast, Guilder*

Skills: 4 pts: Conspicuous, Banner-wise, Intimidation
Traits: 2 pts: Resigned to Death, Obsessive

Horncaller	7 yrs	9	+1 P	*Clansman, Outcast, Guilder*

Skills: 5 pts: Links, Conspicuous, Cadence-wise, Suicidal Bravery-wise
Traits: 1 pt: —

Axe Bearer	15 yrs	15	+1 P	*Guilder, Outcast, Noble*

Skills: 9 pts: Foraging, Axe, Conspicuous, Intimidation, Armor†, Shield†, Formation Fighting†, Throwing
Traits: 1 pt: Swaggering
Requires: Noble Ardent, Graybeard or Banner Bearer

Graybeard 20 yrs 20 +1 M/P *Guilder, Outcast, Noble*

Skills: 5 pts: Intimidation, Field Dressing, Command, Campaign-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Chuffing, Oddly Likeable

Requires: Axe Bearer, Longbeard or three Host lifepaths

Khirurgeon 25 yrs 25 +1 M *Guilder, Outcast, Noble*

Skills: 6 pts: Khirurgy, Soothing Platitudes, Cooking, Infection-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Abecedart, Seneschal or Graybeard

Quartermaster 50 yrs 35 +1 M *Guilder, Outcast, Noble*

Skills: 7 pts: Logistics, Accounting, Strategy, Supply-wise, Host-wise

Traits: 1 pt: No Nonsense

Requires: Seneschal, Treasurer, Trader or Graybeard

Captain 55 yrs 40 +1 M *Guilder, Outcast, Noble*

Skills: 7 pts: Command, Conspicuous, Formation Fighting†, Strategy, Cartography, Graybeard-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Prince or Graybeard

Artillerist 55 yrs 45 +1 M/P *Artificer, Outcast, Noble*

Skills: 5 pts: Artillerist, Mending, Carpentry, Structural Weakness-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Complaining

Requires: Mask Bearer, Craftsman, Foreman or three Arbalester lifepaths

Engineer 60 yrs 50 +1 M/P *Artificer, Noble*

Skills: 6 pts: Jargon, War Engineer§, Scavenging, Leverage-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Estimation

Requires: Artillerist or Mask Bearer

Warden 75 yrs 65 +1 M/P *Outcast, Noble*

Skills: 7 pts: Conspicuous, Oratory, Observation, Strategy, Etiquette, Champion-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Chuntering, Hard as Nails

Requires: Prince, Captain or High Captain

§ This is a special, magical Dwarven skill. It costs 2 pts to open and is always open-ended.
† This is a training skill. It costs 2 pts to open and may not be advanced.

Dwarven Outcast Subsetting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Adventurer	5 yrs	10	+1 M/P	*Clansman, Guilder*

Skills: 12 pts: Survival, Climbing, Knots, Herbalism, Haggling, Firebuilding, Brawling, Knives, Sword, Crossbow, Lock Pick, Appraisal, Obscure History, Symbology, Lost Treasures-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Adventurer, Boaster

Gambler	7 yrs	15	+1 M	*Clansman*

Skills: 5 pts: Games of Chance, Observation, Sleight of Hand, Cheat-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Stone-Faced

Oathbreaker	20 yrs	5	+1 M	*Clansman*

Skills: 4 pts: Ugly Truth, Falsehood, Oath-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Oathbreaker, Bitter

Drunk	10 yrs	5	—	*Clansman*

Skills: 5 pts: Stentorious Singing§, Drunking§, Tavern Tales-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Drunk, Despondent

Coward	15 yrs	5	+1 M/P	*Any*

Skills: 5 pts: Inconspicuous, Ugly Truth, Oratory, Hypocritical Bastards-wise

Traits: 3 pts: Branded a Coward

Rune Caster	20 yrs	6	+1 M, P	*Any except Host*

Skills: 5 pts: Rune Casting§, Foraging, Scavenging, Bad End-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Slave to Fate

§ This is a special, magical Dwarven skill. It costs 2 pts to open and is always open-ended.

Starting Stat Points for Dwarves by Age

Starting Age	Mental Pool	Physical Pool
01-20 years	6 pts	13 pts
21-30 years	7 pts	13 pts
31-50 years	7 pts	14 pts
51-76 years	8 pts	15 pts
77-111 years	8 pts	16 pts
112-151 years	9 pts	16 pts
152-199 years	9 pts	17 pts
200-245 years	10 pts	18 pts
246-300 years	11 pts	17 pts
301-345 years	11 pts	16 pts
346-396 years	12 pts	15 pts
397-445 years	11 pts	14 pts
446-525 years	11 pts	13 pts
526-600 years	10 pts	12 pts

The Halls of the Dwarves

Born under the earth at the dawn of the world and destined to create the greatest works of craftsmanship of this age or any other, Dwarves are an ardent and strange people. On one hand, they possess an innate ability for crafting— their skills take on a magical nature when compared with those of Men, Orcs and even Elves. On the other hand, Dwarven culture is a war between rigid tradition and fierce acquisitiveness.

Dwarven Common Traits

All Dwarf characters begin the game with the following common traits:

Accustomed to the Dark *Dt*

Contrary to popular belief, Dwarves cannot see in pitch dark. However, because they have lived many ages in halls lit by firelight and reflected sunlight, Dwarves do not suffer any penalty for twilight, starlight, candlelight, lamplight or torchlight. They do suffer from complete darkness as Men and Elves do.

Restrictions: Dwarven common trait

Bearded *Char*

A Dwarf's beard is a sign of rank and maturity. No male Dwarf would dare go about with a bald face.

Restrictions: Dwarven common trait

Greed *Dt*

Deep in the heart of every Dwarf lies a terrible seed, a lust for wealth and beauty. Some Dwarves master it; others succumb. It is a powerful emotion that drives many a Dwarf from his comfortable life and compels him to zealously create works of inestimable craft or perform terrible acts. See the Dwarven Greed section in this chapter for more on this emotional attribute.

Restrictions: Dwarven common trait

Oathsworn *Dt*

All Dwarves have stern values hammered into their skulls from a very early age. In fact, Dwarven society is a complex and interlocking network of promises and traditions. The most prime among them is: "Honor the oath." To break an oath is to break tradition that has seen Dwarves through many dark ages. It is a terrible crime and one not easily forgiven or forgotten.

Dwarf characters start the game with an additional (fourth) Belief. This Belief must come in the form of an oath and represents a pre-game bond between the Dwarf and one of his relationships. Oaths that pertain to the situation in play fill one of the standard three Belief slots.

Acceptable oaths are: "I owe Burri a debt of honor;" "I swore to recover the crown for my brother;" "My father's last words were to rule wisely; this I swore;" "I vow never to go near the beer again."

Yes, the requirements of an oath mean a Dwarf character must start with a relationship which must be bought with resource points.

Restrictions: Dwarven common trait

Shaped from Earth and Stone *Dt*

In the first age, when the earth was barren, Dwarves were created by the One Who Most Dearly Loves to Shape with His Hands. Dwarves were born beneath the earth and it was long before they came forth into the light of the sun. In those dark ages, they grew familiar with the ores, veins, rocks and sediments that were their sky, ocean and earth.

Attendant with their appreciation of raw materials is a love of building and shaping. Above all else it is craftsmanship and the beauty of that which is wrought by skill that Dwarves prize most. And since they were Born Under Earth, metals, stones and gems are their first love—far beyond cloth, wood or leather. This trait also gives the Dwarves access to natural magic abilities—open-ended/special skills for most of their crafts and arts.

Restrictions: Dwarven common trait

Stout *Dt*

Dwarves are smaller than Men in stature, but they tend to be a bit thicker around the middle, with broader hands, feet and arms. Though tough and doughty, Dwarves' stout frames also hinder them slightly. Speed must always be lower than their Power or Forte (whichever is higher), even if this limits advancement. Their stride is 6.

Dwarven nature allows for a Forte maximum of 9 rather than 8 and a Speed maximum of 6 rather than 8. All other caps are 8.

Restrictions: Dwarven common trait

Tough *Dt*

Dwarves are durable folk, hewn from the underpinnings of the Earth. Dwarves round up when factoring their Mortal Wound.

Restrictions: Dwarven common trait

Dwarven Special Traits

Only Dwarves may purchase these traits in character burning. They may also be earned via a trait vote in play.

Avarice *Dt* 3 pts

A player may choose to make his Dwarven character especially Greedy. With this trait, he can raise his character's starting Greed to whatever exponent he desires (so long as it is higher than what it would start at). The downside of this is that Greed tests always count as the type of test the character needs to advance, no matter the obstacle. If he needs a routine, the next test counts as routine. See the Greed mechanics for the ramifications of this.

Restrictions: Dwarves only, special trait

Branded a Coward *Dt*

Whether true or not, this character has been branded a coward. In Dwarven society, this stain comes not from breaking an oath, but from refusing to swear the oath in the first place. Branded a Coward grants the character a 1D infamous reputation with either Dwarven Nobles, Clansmen, Guilders, Artificers or the Host. Player's choice. Also, and more important, this Dwarf may not swear an Oath until he has redeemed himself in the eyes of his Longbeard.

Restrictions: Dwarven lifepath trait

Grudgekeeper *Dt* 1 pt

This character contains within him the capacity to maintain terrible enmity for perceived slights. He swears grudges like others swear oaths. The Grudgekeeper trait allows the player to replace his Oathsworn Belief with a Grudge. Rather than a promise or an oath, he swears revenge. Grudges follow the same mechanic as oaths.

If the character has the Oathswearer trait, it combines with Grudgekeeper. He may *only* pronounce grudges—rather than oaths—between two characters. They must write them into their Beliefs as if they were oaths.

Restrictions: Dwarves only, special trait

I shall never forgive Snorri for his insult—I swear to pay him back tenfold.

Virtuous *Dt* 3 pts

This Dwarf is virtuous, honorable and restrained. He may add +2D to his Steel when making tests against Greed. He also may reduce his starting Greed by -1D.

Restrictions: Dwarves only, special trait

Dwarven Arts

Dwarves have a special suite of skills called Dwarven Arts. These skills are Dwarven iterations of standard craftsman and artisan skills. However, they all count as natural magic and are therefore open-ended.

They are restricted to Dwarves only and marked with the § symbol in the skill list.

Dwarven Greed

Lying in the heart of every Dwarf is a terrible seed—one of avarice, lust and greed. It is a strange facet of their nature. Some Dwarves manage hold it in check, others give in to it—acquiring all they desire in a bloody swath of war, murder and betrayal.

Greed is an emotional attribute like Faith, Grief and Hatred. It is not directly tested like Faith, though. Instead it is a factor in many rolls and situations.

Starting Greed

Total the answers to the questions below. This is the character's starting exponent. Alternately, the player may spend five of those points to shade shift his Greed to gray. The remainder equals the current exponent.

— +1 Greed if Will exponent is 4 or lower.
— +1 Greed for every 60 resource points.
— +1 Greed for each of the following lifepaths: Trader, Mask-Bearer, Master of Arches, Master of Forges, Master Engraver, Treasurer, Quartermaster, Seneschal or Prince.
— +1 Greed if the Dwarf has coveted something owned by another.
— Has the Dwarf ever stolen something he coveted? If so, +1 Greed.
— Has the Dwarf ever had his prized treasure stolen from him? +1 Greed.
— Has the character ever been in the presence of the master craftsmanship of the Dwarven Fathers? If so, +1 Greed.
— Has the character witnessed an outsider (Elf, Man, Orc, Roden, etc.) in possession of a work of Dwarven Art? If so, +1 Greed.
— Is the Dwarf over 200 years old? If so, +1 Greed.
— Is the Dwarf over 400 years old? If so, +2 Greed.
— Relationships: Each romantic relationship is -1 Greed. Each hateful relationship is +1 Greed. A hateful immediate family member is +2 Greed.

Greed in Play

In play, the Greed emotional attribute is used by the player to acquire, create or retain wealth, power or beauty. When it is invoked, that which it was used in favor of cannot be willingly relinquished.

What's Your Pleasure?

Once the starting exponent for Greed has been established, the Dwarf player must choose what his character lusts after.

Greed Idiom

Choose three of the four categories: riches (gems, gold, etc.), physical beauty, craftsmanship, power.

She's Magnificent...

Greed makes Dwarves vulnerable to a form of wonderment. Whenever they see something awe inspiring—an ancient artifact, a hoard of gold, a beautifully crafted hall—the GM (or player himself) can call for a *Steel* test. If the Greed exponent is higher than the character's hesitation, use that as the obstacle for the Steel test instead of the character's hesitation. If the test is passed, there is no adverse reaction. The character maintains his composure and restrains his will.

If the She's Magnificent test is failed, the player chooses one of two reactions: Either Stand and Drool or invoke the *I Must Have It* rule.

I Must Have It!

This new reaction allows the character go for it: He must attempt to purchase, steal, barter or kill for the object, person, place or idea in question.

In either case, whether he drools or goes for it, the object of the failed test becomes the focus of his attention—always lingering somewhere in the back of his mind, nagging at him.

Oaths, Beliefs and Greed

Beliefs and Oaths can mitigate Greed. If a character has a Belief or Oath that directly contradicts a situation in which a Greed-induced Steel test is called for, hesitation for the Greed/Steel test is reduced by one.

Greed and Resources

Greed can both help and hinder Resources. If Greed is lower than Resources, the player may FoRK his Greed into Resources tests. The burning desire gives him the edge and urge to acquire more.

If Greed is higher than Resources, the Dwarf is hard put to part with what he has. All Resources obstacles are made at a +1 Ob penalty. If Greed and Resources exponents are the same, no benefit or penalty is incurred.

Fuel the Fires: Greed and Artha

A single persona point can be spent to tap the burning fires of Greed. It can be spent on any test where the character is creating, acquiring or attempting to retain a thing of beauty/wealth/power/craftsmanship.

Doing so allows the player to add any amount of dice from his Greed exponent to an ability test. For purposes of advancement for the augmented ability, the dice act like a persona point spent on a test.

A Dwarf with a B4 Greed can spend a persona point and add up to four dice to a single roll.

Greed and Advancement

Tests for advancement of Greed are earned when the player spends a persona point to Fuel the Fires, when a Steel test is made for the She's Magnificent rule, when I Must Have It! is chosen as a Steel result, when Greed is FoRKed into Resources and when the situational conditions in the list below are met. Note that a failed Steel test in which the player chooses I Must Have It! counts as two routine tests for advancement.

Greed and Routine Tests

Routine tests always count for advancement for Greed. Always. Even though it says otherwise in the Burning Wheel, when the attribute is at exponent 5 or higher, filling up any two of the three test requirements—routine, difficult or challenging—counts toward advancement.

Any time dice are added from Greed to another ability, it counts as a test for Greed. Compare the dice added to your current Greed exponent. The dice used count as the obstacle of the Greed test for advancement.

If your character has a B3 Greed and you spend three Greed dice on the test, you log a difficult test for advancement (for Greed). One die added to a test counts as a routine test.

The Limits of Greed

Once Greed reaches exponent 10, the Dwarf goes mad with his covetous desires and shuts himself in his halls forever.

Situational Greed Test Obstacles

The following are just examples. Feel free to add your own situations.

Obstacle 1— Taking or demanding the biggest portion.

Obstacle 2— Exaggerating an item's quality, whether buying, selling or trading. Coveting another's wealth.

Obstacle 3— Straight out lying about an item's quality, whether buying, selling or trading. Failing to take a risk because you fear the cost. Betraying an Instinct for Greed. Pronouncing a Grudge stemming from Greed.

Obstacle 4— Stealing what you covet. Buying the very best no matter if it might ruin you. Using an opportunity to advance your political aims at the expense of a friend. Betraying a Belief for Greed. Claiming someone else's work or idea as your own.

Obstacle 5— Manipulating the downfall of a rival in order to take his possessions or power. Failing to take a moderate risk in order to increase wealth. Swearing an Oath driven by Greed.

Obstacle 6— Beholding a beauty in nature a Dwarf can never attain: a perfect sunset, a perfect spark of a forge, a glitter on water, an Elf maiden's sweet voice. Breaking an Oath for Greed.

Obstacle 7— Robbing another of his livelihood for your gain. Killing another character to keep one's own wealth. Failing to take a small risk because it *might* cost more than it gains.

Obstacle 8— Killing someone to gain what they possess and you desire.

Obstacle 9— Killing for small gain or petty vengeance. Failing to swear an Oath out of Greed.

Obstacle 10— Ruining the health and prosperity of others so that you might have what you desire.

Dwarven Resources

Shoddy Arms	5	Clothes	1
Dwarven Arms	20	Traveling Gear	1
Shoddy Crossbow	6	Sturdy Shoes	1
Dwarven Arbalest	20	Finery	5
Dwarven-made Light Mail	9	Chronicles	15
Dwarven-made Heavy Mail	10	Keg o' Nog	20
Dwarven-made Plated Mail	20	Dwarven House, Hall, Hold	See Below
Dwarven *Mail*	100	*Workshops*	60
Forge Mask	40	Dwarven Tools	10 per set
Dwarven Shield	20	Shoddy Tools	5 per set
Riding Mount or Pack Animal	8	Carts and Baggage	15

Notes on Dwarven Possessions

Shoddy Equipment— Any gear choice listed as "shoddy" merely means the stuff is not Dwarf-made. It counts as run of the mill gear and provides none of the bonuses of the more expensive Dwarven gear.

Dwarven Arms— All Dwarven Arms are considered *superior quality* items. In addition, they add a +1D balance die to the skill of the wielder. Traditionally, Dwarves use axes and hammers, throwing axes and knives. But swords and maces are acceptable as well. Players may purchase beaks, spikes and weights for their character's weapons at +4 rps per modification, per weapon.

Dwarven Arbalest— The arbalest is a special Dwarven make of the traditional crossbow. It can fire rocks or bolts. It counts as a crossbow but only requires 10 actions to load when firing bolts, or 6 actions when firing rocks. These devices are so well-made they add a +1D balance die to the wielder's skill.

Rocks IMS: I B3, M B6, S B9 VA –. When firing rocks, the arbalest counts as an *arquebus* for Range and Cover and DoF rules.

It can fire bolts using the range and damage of a crossbow.

Dwarven-made Armor— This is *run of the mill* armor made by Dwarves. It obeys the standard rules for armor, except that the first "1" rolled on an armor test per piece may be ignored. After that, it obeys the normal rules for armor failure. Once the 1 is gone, the special ability is gone. Lastly, Dwarven-made armor does not cause a Clumsy Weight Speed penalty (no obstacle penalty or -1D).

Dwarven Mail— This is the most precious of all armors. Dwarven mail covers the bearer in fine and supple chainmail. It gives no clumsy weight penalties except for gauntlets and penalties for Stealthy. The armor counts as *gray shade heavy mail* from head to hand to boot. It is, of course, superior quality. Dwarven mail counts as property when factoring Resources.

Forge Mask— This is a highly coveted piece of Dwarven craftsmanship. Forge Masks are constructed under great secrecy using the most complex and obscure Dwarven forging techniques. Designed to withstand the extreme heat of the Dwarven forge and errant heavy blows of the smithing process, they are requisite protection for every Artificer and Mask-Bearer, as well as a sign of rank and skill. The mask may also be worn as a piece of armor added onto another suit and counts as 4D of *gray shade armor* for the face and head (with

only a +1 Ob clumsy weight penalty). The mask is highly resistant to heat and flame. It allows an *armor* test against flames directed at the head. Also, the mask can cause an opponent to make a Steel test at the time of the wearer's choosing. This fear effect only works once per target, costs one action to activate and can only be used on a target face to face with the Mask Bearer.

Dwarven Shield— This magnificent device counts as a 3D gray shade superior quality shield. Against heat and flame, the shield counts as magical *armor*. The bearer of a Dwarven shield may make an armor test (3D) against any incoming flame attacks. Black shade fire has no VA, gray shade is VA 1, and white shade is VA 2. Use these VAs instead of any spell VA. If the shield bearer is wearing a Forge Mask, he may add +2D to this armor test. When used as a weapon, the shield's weapon shade is that of its bearer's Power.

Riding Mount or Pack Animal— Dwarves tend to ride ponies or mules.

Chronicles— Chronicles add +1D to any history type test about Dwarves.

Keg o' Nog— A Keg o' Nog provides the Dwarf with 12 tall mugfuls of the fabled drink. Each mug is worth +1D to one Health test, but +1 Ob to social skill tests for the scene. (Only one bonus/penalty is in effect, no matter how much of the brew is quaffed by Dwarves.) One sip is enough to get any non-Dwarf drunk.

Dwarven House, Hall, Hold— A small house, 10 rps; large house, 15 rps; a Dwarven hall (a large apartment in a hold), 30 rps; a Graybeard's hold, *40 rps; an Engineer's hold, *45 rps; a Master Artificer's hold, *60 rps; a Warden's hold, *75 rps; a High Captain's hold, *90 rps; a Prince's hold, *105 rps. These all count as property when factoring Resources. *Only Dwarves of the listed rank or higher may take this kind of property.

Dwarven Workshops— Workshops are necessary to completely utilize Dwarven Artificer and Dwarven craftsman skills—without one, the Dwarf may only undertake smaller projects (Ob 3 tests or lower). Also, Dwarven Workshops are required if the character will be building special Dwarven items like masks, shields, arms or mail. Dwarven Workshops include (portable) skill tool kits as part of their cost. Workshops count as property when factoring Resources.

Dwarven Tools— Every Master Artificer builds and maintains his own tools. It is an ancient and proud art passed down from master to student: a vital tradition, for the tools are the Artificer's fingers and hands in the forge. Dwarven Tools (of any type) provide the user with +1D of equipment dice when used with the appropriate skill.

Carts and Baggage— Guilders bring their wares down from the holds in great lumbering carts. Carts and Baggage represents trade and salable goods for Guilder Dwarves. They count as property when factoring resources and may be purchased multiple times for multiple bonuses.

Dwarves in Play

Dwarves in Burning Wheel are potent and emotional characters. They have good stats, good skill point distributions and a host of useful open-ended skills. And, of course, their gear choices are unparalleled.

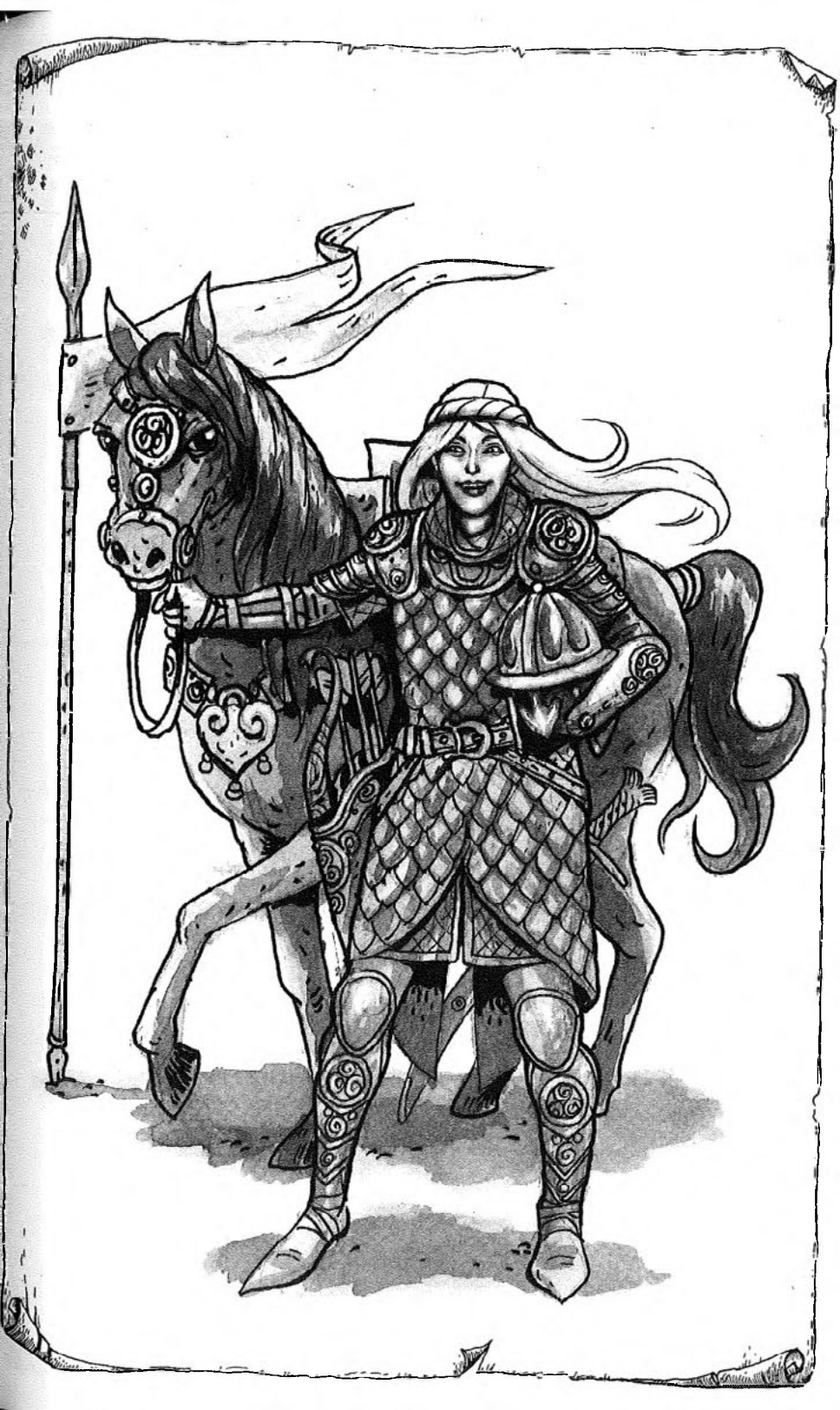
What's more, every Dwarven character is directly tied to the plot by default. How so? Oaths and Greed, my friend. Using these two elements, it is practically impossible to keep them from being intricately involved in the story at hand.

When starting off with a Dwarf in the game, make sure that two of his four Beliefs are oaths. One oath is tied to his past—an obligation or promise hanging over his head. The other oath should be tied to the situation at hand—the promise or oath he made that got him into this mess! It can be made to a PC, a relationship or it can be about something else entirely.

As the GM, don't be afraid to restrict the use of Dwarven Mail. It's very powerful and not for every game.

Greed should not be used outside of its core interpretation. It is not hatred, grief, spite, lust, or jealousy. It is a powerful force for the Dwarves and, frankly, if abused by players it will break the game. Should you find the game suffering from such abuse, I recommend tightening up your definition of Greed and thoroughly restricting it. Interpreting the idiom strictly and literally is a good first step.

Have fun!



The Elven Lancer

Rachmal is a wild, headstrong lancer. She takes pride in her skills, but rarely practices as her talents come to her naturally. She has an easy rapport with horses, loves the swift and daring chases but truly her heart is stolen by battle. Though she is loathe to admit it, the thrill and chaos of combat make her heart sing. But if you asked her, she'd tell that her heart belongs to another—Druath. Yet, her paramour for many ages has fallen to darkness, and Rachmal secretly suspects that not even her songs can save him.

BELIEFS

If Druath cannot be saved, I will end him myself. I will undertake this quest for love and duty. There is no truer measure of a soul than the field of battle.

INSTINCTS

If my horse is dirty, groom her. Always volunteer for a fight. Always look for shortcuts.

LIFEPATHS: Born Wilder Elf, Rider, Outrider and Lancer

111 years old

STATS

Will	B5	Perception	B4	Agility	B4
Speed	B4	Power	B5	Forte	B5

ATTRIBUTES

Health	B7	Mortal Wound	B11	Reflexes	B4
Grief	B5	Hesitation	5	Stride	8
Steel	B7	Circles	B2	Resources	B0

SKILLS

Sing B2, Elven Script B2, Riding B4, Bow B3, Spear B3, Observation B2, Trails-wise B2, Animal Husbandry B3, Stealthy B2, Song of Burning Bright B3, The Gift of Speed B3, Lay of the Horse B3, Lance B3, Mounted Combat: Bowman Training, Mounted Combat Training, Shield Training, Armor Training

ELVEN COMMON TRAITS

Born Under the Silver Stars, Essence of the Earth, Fair and Statuesque, First Born, Grief, Keen Sight

TRAITS

Oikofugic, Daring, Healthy

GEAR

Elven Clothes, Elven Boots, Traveling Gear, Elven Steed, Run of the Mill Bow, Run of the Mill Arms (spear, sword, lance), Heavy Mail

RELATIONSHIP

Druath (Romantic Love, Forbidden)

Elven Lifepaths

Wilderlands Setting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Born Wilder Elf	20 yrs	5	—	*Citadel*
Skills: 4 pts General, 2 pts: Sing, Elven Script				
Traits: Elven Common traits plus 1 pt: —				
Rider	20 yrs	8	+1 P	*Citadel, Protector*
Skills: 6 pts: Riding, The Gift of Speed‡, Lay of the Horse‡				
Traits: 1 pt: Oikofugic				
Harvester	50 yrs	5	+1 P	*Protector*
Skills: 5 pts: Round of Harvest§, Farming, Firebuilding, Husbandry, Mending				
Traits: 1 pt: Seasoned				
Gatherer	40 yrs	3	—	—
Skills: 5 pts: Rhyme of the Gatherer§, Herb-wise, Orienteering				
Traits: 1 pt: Rough Hands				
Fisherman	50 yrs	8	—	*Citadel*
Skills: 9 pts: Hymn of Scales and Fins§, Pilot, Boatwright, Knots, Mending, Cooking, Seamanship, Rigging				
Traits: 1 pt: Wary				
Shepherd	45 yrs	6	—	*Citadel*
Skills: 4 pts: Song of the Flocks and Herds§, Climbing, Wolf-wise				
Traits: 1 pt: Never Cry Wolf				
Wanderer	75 yrs	5	+1 P	*Citadel*
Skills: 6 pts: Song of Paths and Ways§, Air of Gates‡, Foraging, plus any Wise				
Traits: 1 pt: —				
Huntsman	45 yrs	9	+1 P	*Citadel, Protector*
Skills: 7 pts: Call of the Wild§, Javelin, Bow, Tracking, Stealthy, Observation				
Traits: 1 pt: Watchful				
Chandler	50 yrs	15	+1 M	*Citadel, Protector*
Skills: 5 pts: Chant of Offering‡, Haggling, Conspicuous, Appraisal				
Traits: 1 pt: —				
Weaver	50 yrs	10	+1 M	*Citadel*
Skills: 5 pts: Weaving Way§, Threading Chant§, Mending				
Traits: 1 pt: Fateful				

‡ This is an Elven spell song. It costs 2 pts to open and has special rules described in this chapter.

§ This is an Elven skill song. It costs 2 pts to open and always counts as open-ended. Descriptions can be found in the skill list.

Forester 90 yrs 5 +1 P *Citadel, Protector*

Skills: 6 pts: Song of Arbors‡, Forest-wise, Tree-wise, Song of the Eldar§

Traits: 2 pts: Stern

Vintner 60 yrs 20 +1 M *Citadel*

Skills: 7 pts: Purple Song§, Vine-wise, Cooper, Vintage-wise, Terroir-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Rarified

Miller 60 yrs 18 +1 M *Citadel*

Skills: 6 pts: Grain Song§, Mending, Carpentry, Mill-wise, Grain-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Earthen

Song Singer 45 yrs 10 +1 M *Citadel, Protector*

Skills: 6 pts: Song of Songs‡, Song of Soothing§, Lament of the Westering Sun‡, Oratory

Traits: 1 pt: Vocal

Spouse 75 yrs 10 +1 M *Citadel, Protector*

Skills: 5 pts: Song of Soothing§, Rhyme of Rules‡, Song of Feasting§, Fealty-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Patriarch/Matriarch 100 yrs 15 +1 M *Citadel*

Skills: 6 pts: Homesong‡, Lyric of Healing‡, Dignity of the Wilderlands§

Traits: 1 pt: Patriarchal/Matriarchal

Requires: Spouse

Elder 150 yrs 30 +1 M *Citadel, Etharch*

Skills: 5 pts: Verse of Decision‡, Council-Caller‡

Traits: 2 pts: Wise Aphorisms

Requires: The character must be 750 years old after taking this path or the oldest character in the group by 100 years.

Citadel Setting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Citadel Born	20 yrs	7	—	*Wilderlands*

Skills: 5 pts General; 2 pts: Elven Script, Sing

Traits: Elven common traits plus 1 pt: —

Servitor 20 yrs 5 — *Wilderlands, Protector*

Skills: 5 pts: Hauling, Observation, Citadel-wise, Althing-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Humility, Lifting Heavy Things

Wanderer 75 yrs 5 +1 P *Wilderlands*

Skills: 6 pts: Song of Paths and Ways§, Air of Gates‡, Scavenging, Streetwise

Traits: 1 pt: Lonesome

Song Singer 25 yrs 10 +1 M *Wilderlands, Protector*

Skills: 5 pts: Sing, Song of Songs‡, Song of Soothing§, Lament of Stars‡

Traits: 1 pt: Voice in the Crowd

Student 20 yrs 10 +1 M *Wilderlands, Protector*

Skills: 6 pts: Lyric of Law§, Ballad of History§, Elven Script, Etiquette, Oratory

Traits: 1 pt: Educated

Clothier 75 yrs 20 — *Wilderlands, Protector*

Skill: 7 pts: Threading Chant§, Embroidery, Leathercraft§, Weaving Way§

Traits: 1 pt: Well Dressed

Soldier-Protector 5 yrs 10 +1 P *Wilderlands, Protector, Etharch*

Skills: 8 pts: Alarm†, Armor†, Shield†, Sword, Bow, Knives, Fletcher, Mend

Traits: 1 pt: Dutiful

Requires: Wanderer, Seafarer, Spouse, Rider, Huntsman, any Etharch or Protector lifepath

Seafarer 50 yrs 5 +1 P *Wilderlands, Protector*

Skills: 9 pts: Weathersong‡, Rope Chant§, Rhyme of the Mariner§, Seamanship, Pilot, Spear

Traits: 1 pt: Call of the Sea, Rower

Sea Captain 100 yrs 15 +1 M *Wilderlands, Protector, Etharch*

Skills: 8 pts: Slip of Currents§, Supplication to the Wind‡, Command, Oratory, Sword

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Seafarer, Adjutant, Lieutenant or Sword Singer

Novice 10 yrs 10 +1 P *Wilderlands*

Skills: 4 pts: Mending, Craft-wise, Elven Artifact-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Loyal

Shaper 35 yrs 15 +1 P *Wilderlands, Protector*

Skills: 6 pts: Woodcraft§, Stonecraft§, Smithcraft§

Traits: 1 pt: Long Fingered

Requires: Novice

Jeweler 75 yrs 20 — *Wilderlands, Protector*

Skills: 5 pts: Jewelcraft§, Gemcraft§, Appraisal

Traits: 2 pts: Patient, Nimble

Requires: Shaper

‡ This is an Elven Spell Song. It costs 2 pts to open and has special rules described in this chapter.

§ This is an Elven skill song. It costs 2 pts to open and always counts as open-ended. Descriptions can be found in the skill list.

† This is a special training skill. It costs 2 pts to open and may not be advanced.

Artisan 150 yrs 40 +1 M *Wilderlands, Protector, Etharch*

Skills: 6 pts: Archcraft§, Starcraft§, Canticle of Years‡, Antiphon Union‡

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Shaper

Keel Master 100 yrs 25 +1 M/P *Wilderlands, Protector*

Skills: 6 pts: Shipwright, Ship-wise, Carving

Traits: 2 pts: Perfectionist

Requires: Shaper

Artist 60 yrs 12 +1 M *Wilderlands*

Skills: 5 pts: Song of Form§, Painting

Traits: 2 pts: Appreciation for Beauty

Bard 65 yrs 20 +1 M/P *Wilderlands, Protector*

Skills: 11 pts: Song of Merriment‡, Lament of Mourning‡, Verse of Friendship‡, Tract of Enmity‡, Oratory, Conspicuous, Lyre, Flute

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Song Singer

Adjutant 75 yrs 20 +1 M *Wilderlands, Protector*

Skills: 7 pts: Code of Citadels§, Etiquette, Administration, Etharch-wise, Citadel-wise, Protector-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Organized, Patient

Requires: Herald, Attendant, Student or Spouse

Loremaster 200 yrs 25 +1 M *Wilderlands, Etharch*

Skills: 10 pts: Ancient and Obscure History, Research, Ballad of History§, Lyric of Law§, Canticle of Years‡, Rhyme of Tongues‡

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Bard, Adjutant, Steward or Patriarch/Matriarch

Althing 250 yrs 100 +1 M, P *Wilderlands, Protector, Etharch*

Skills: 10 pts: Council-Caller‡, Song of Silence‡, Persuasion, Soothing Platitudes, Ugly Truth, Administration

Traits: 2 pts: Servant of the Citadel

Requires: Patriarch/Matriarch, Loremaster, Steward, Bard, Artisan, Sea Captain or Captain

Etharch Setting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Born Etharch	25 yrs	10	—	*Wilderlands, Citadel*

Skills: 5 pts General; 2 pts: Elven Script, Etiquette, Sing

Traits: Elven common traits plus 2 pts: Etharchal, Fêa, Aman

Student 25 yrs 10 +1 M *Wilderlands, Citadel*

Skills: 9 pts: Ages of the Etharch§, Lyric of Law§, Ballad of History§, Oratory, Calligraphy, Song of the Eldar§

Traits: 1 pt: Learned

Attendant 25 yrs 15 +1 P *Wilderlands, Citadel, Protector*

Skills: 4 pts: Etiquette, Ride, Brawl, Sword

Traits: 2 pts: Calm Demeanor

Second 35 yrs 15 +1 P *Any*

Skills: 8 pts: Song of Bonding‡, Sword, Knives, Bow, Mending, Riding, Mounted Combat Training†

Traits: 2 pts: Lesson of One, Patient

Requires: Attendant, Bowyer, Spearbearer, Seafarer or Soldier-Protector

Sword Singer 40 yrs 10 +1 P *Any*

Skills: 10 pts: Song of the Sword‡, Sword, Armor†, Shield†, Knives, Brawling

Traits: 1 pt: Fealty to the Fêa, Cool Headed

Requires: Second, Lancer or Lieutenant

Steward 110 yrs 20 +1 M *Citadel, Protector*

Skills: 8 pts: Estate Management, Accounting, Etiquette, Estate-wise, Intrigue-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Lieutenant, Artisan, Bard, Loremaster, Adjutant, Sea Captain or Matriarch/Patriarch

Prince/Princess 150 yrs 100 +1 M/P *Citadel, Protector*

Skills: 6 pts: Song of Lordship§, Voice of Ages‡; 4 pts: General

Traits: 1 pt: Prince/Princess of the Blood

Requires: Fêa trait and Sword Singer

Etharch 250 yrs 200 +1 M, P *Citadel, Protector*

Skills: 8 pts: Council-Caller‡, Voice of Thunder‡, Doom Sayer‡, Discerner‡; 4 pts: General

Traits: 2 pts: Lord of Ages

Requires: Aman trait and either Loremaster or Prince

Protector Subsetting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Rider	15 yrs	8	+1 P	*Wilderlands, Citadel*

Skills: 6 pts: Riding, Animal Husbandry, The Gift of Speed‡, Lay of the Horse‡

Traits: 1 pt: Smells like a Horse

Herald 35 yrs 10 +1 M/P *Wilderlands, Citadel*

Skills: 8 pts: Paean of Deeds§, Mornsong‡, Evensong‡, Recitation of Ages‡, Silver Trumpet

Traits: 2 pts: Stoic

Soother 30 yrs 10 +1 M *Wilderlands, Citadel*

Skills: 6 pts: Lyric of Healing‡, Song of Soothing§, Doom of Strength‡, Foraging

Traits: 1 pt: —

Ranger 45 yrs 10 +1 M/P *Wilderlands*

Skills: 10 pts: Observation, Stealthy, Bow, Foraging, Rhyme of the Pathfinder§, Song of Soothing§, Threne of the Chameleon‡, Lyric of Healing‡

Traits: 1 pt: Gray Mantle, Sprinter

Requires: Forester, Wanderer, Bowyer or Second

Bowyer 20 yrs 8 +1 P *Wilderlands, Citadel*

Skills: 5 pts: Bowcraft§, Mending, Bow, Bow-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Circumspect

Spearbearer 20 yrs 8 +1 P *Wilderlands, Citadel*

Skill: 8 pts: Spearcraft§, Spear, Armor Training†, Formation Fighting Training†

Traits: 1 pt: —

Sword Singer 30 yrs 10 +1 P *Any*

Skills: 10 pts: Sword, Armor†, Shield†, Knives, Brawling, Song of the Sword‡

Traits: 1 pt: Sword of the White Towers

Requires: Second, Soldier Protector, Soother, Spouse or Spearbearer

Outrider 20 yrs 10 +1 P *Citadel, Wilderlands*

Skills: 9 pts: Bow, Spear, Observation, Trails-wise, Mounted Combat: Bowman Training†, Animal Husbandry, Mending, Stealthy

Traits: 1 pt: Daring

Requires: Rider

Lancer 50 yrs 12 +1 P *Any*

Skills: 10 pts: Song of Burning Bright‡, Lament for the Fallen‡, Lance, Mounted Combat Training†, Shield Training†, Armor Training†

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Outrider or Second

Lieutenant 65 yrs 10 +1 M *Any*

Skills: 7 pts: Paean of Deeds§, Command, Sword, Shield†, Formation Fighting†

Traits: 1 pt: Ear to the Ground

Requires: Sword Singer, Lancer, Sea Captain or two Bowyer/Spearbearer lifepaths

Captain 85 yrs 15 +1 M, P *Any*

Skills: 9 pts: Oratory, Sword, Command, Tactics, Formation Fighting†, Monody of the March‡, Silent Fury§, The Hymn of Victory‡

Traits: 2 pts: Sworn to the Lord Protector (or Etharch or Althing)

Requires: Lieutenant, Prince, Sea Captain, Steward or two Sword Singer lifepaths

Armorer 90 yrs 15 +1 P *Wilderlands, Citadel*

Skills: 7 pts: Armorer, Etching, Sewing, Tanner, Antiphon Union†

Traits: 1 pt: Patient

Requires: Shaper or Bladesmith

Bladesmith 80 yrs 15 +1 P *Wilderlands, Citadel*

Skills: 5 pts: Riddle of Steel§, Etching, Elven Blade-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Acute

Requires: Armorer, Shaper, Bowyer or Spearbearer

Lord Protector 125 yrs 60 +1 M, P *Any*

Skills: 10 pts: Strain of Far Sight‡, Anthem of Courage‡, Ballad of Rage‡, Command, Formation Fighting†, Administration, Logistics, Strategy

Traits: 1 pt: Sworn to Protect

Requires: Captain or Prince

‡ This is an Elven Spell Song. It costs 2 pts to open and has special rules described in this chapter.

§ This is an Elven skill song. It costs 2 pts to open and always counts as open-ended. Descriptions can be found in the skill list.

† This is a special training skill. It costs 2 pts to open and may not be advanced.

Starting Stat Points for Elves by Age

Starting Age	Mental Pool	Physical Pool
01-25 years	7 pts	13 pts
26-60 years	8 pts	13 pts
61-100 years	9 pts	14 pts
101-125 years	9 pts	15 pts
126-160 years	10 pts	16 pts
161-225 years	10 pts	17 pts
226-325 years	11 pts	17 pts
326-425 years	12 pts	17 pts
426-525 years	13 pts	18 pts
526-625 years	13 pts	19 pts
626-725 years	14 pts	19 pts
726-825 years	14 pts	20 pts
826-925 years	15 pts	20 pts
926-1025 years	15 pts	21 pts
1026-1125 years	15 pts	22 pts
1126-1225 years	15 pts	23 pts
1226-1325 years	15 pts	24 pts
1326+ years	16 pts	24 pts

The Ages of Elves

Elves are often perceived as either aloof and cold or out of touch and bizarre. Neither perception is true. Elves are a passionate people, keenly involved in the affairs of the world. However, their long view of matters gives them a unique perspective. What might seem urgent to short-lived Men and Dwarves is a matter that can be considered at length for the Elves. But once their interest is piqued or ire aroused, Elves engage intensely.

Nor are Elves above the common struggle. They are as complex and internecine as any other people. In fact, it is the mix of their need to be involved, their temperamental nature and their immortal being that gives rise to their Grief. Often their aged wisdom allows them to predict that their affairs will come to a tragic end, but their fiery nature grants them little latitude to stop the calamity. Watching and living this endless cycle of strife nurtures within them a great anguish, ever growing across their endless lives.

Elven Common Traits

All Elven characters start with the following traits:

Born Under the Silver Stars *Char*

To those who look upon the Elves with clear eyes, there shimmers an unmistakable halo, like white light through a gossamer veil, like stars shining at night.

Essence of the Earth *Dt*

Elves do not feel the effects of earthly cold and heat as do Men; they do not fall ill; they are ageless and will only pass on when the Earth ends. Elves do not have to take Health tests for illness, and they gain +1D to Health and Forte tests for resisting fatigue and poison. Yet, they are not deathless: Elves may be killed by violence or may waste away due to Grief.

Fair and Statuesque *Char*

Elves are fair and beautiful to all who look upon them. The Elven form inclines toward tall and slender, rounded by graceful curves.

First Born *Dt*

Elves are made from the very fabric of nature—wind, air, wood and water. Thus, they know its secrets very well: They know how to preserve much of its power—even when it is taken and shaped into something new. It is this intimate knowledge that allows the Elves to weave their songs.
Their unadulterated essence grants them insight into their world unmatched by the races of Men, Dwarves and Orcs. Due to this, Elves' Perception maximum is 9. Their other stat caps are 8. Their stride is also 8.

Grief *Dt*

Years of emotion and strife take their toll, and eventually all Elves begin to feel Grief tug at their hearts. See the Elven Grief section for the rules of this trait.

Keen Sight *Dt*

Like eagles, Elves can see great distances with perfect clarity. Add +1D to all Perception- and Observation-based field maneuvers for Range and Cover or any Perception test involving seeing long distances. Elves also may see in starlight as if it were day. They suffer no obstacle penalties for dim light. Smoke and haze still bar their vision—normal penalties apply. In complete darkness, Elves suffer +4 Ob like Men or Dwarves.

Special Elven Traits

Elven special traits may only be taken for Elven characters in character burning. They may only be earned by Elven characters in play via trait vote.

Exile *Dt* 2 pts

This Elf has committed some crime that has nearly earned him the title of *enemy* among his people. Rather than dishonor him with such a stigma, his people instead sent him into exile. Ultimately, though, it is a death sentence. The Exile cannot journey West. Should his Grief overtake him, he'll have no succor and will simply waste away. This trait adds +1D to starting Grief and a 1D infamous reputation among all Elves.

Mourner *Dt* 3 pts

The Mourner is obsessed with his Grief. He is morose. The player may add any amount to his starting Grief that he sees fit, up to a maximum of exponent 9. In addition, all Laments are made at +2 Ob, and any time the character's Grief is one test from advancing, the next test—regardless of its difficulty—advances him. Grief clings to this character's spirit and cannot be shaken.

Slayer *Dt* 4 pts

This Elf has been marked as a slayer of his kin. In his past, his rage overcame his Grief and compassion, and he slew one of his own. Now he is marked as enemy and hunted by his own people. +1D to starting Grief, a 2D infamous reputation (all Elven people) as a Slayer, and +1D to Intimidate/Silent Fury any Elf.

Unbreakable *Dt* 5 pts

This Elf is possessed of an unbreakable spirit. Grief seems to have no effect on him. Subtract -2D from starting Grief. In addition, all Grief tests are taken at -1 Ob.

World Weary *Dt* 1 pt

Certain Elves feel a weariness creep into their bones. The constant trial and tribulation that marks the passing of years begins to drag them down. Reduce hesitation by one, but increase Grief by one.

Care of the Eternal

Elves have time and patience to work more carefully than any other people. Therefore, Elven characters may use the *working carefully* bonus twice—+2D to a test at the cost of doubling the time spent. Conversely, Elves may never work quickly. This applies to skills, skill songs and spell songs.

Elven Skill Songs

Elven skills listed with a § in the skill list are considered *Elven skill songs*. They are called "skill songs" because the instructions, rules and strictures for these skills are passed from Elf to Elf in long and winding songs. These verses are sung as the Elf performs his tasks.

Skill songs are rooted in natural magic. The majority have no additional or special effect aside from the fact that all rolls made using them are open-ended. Any additional/special effects are listed in the description.

Many Elven skill songs are variations of similar skills listed in the General Skill List. In order to save space and not repeat myself, the skill description indicates the skill they mimic. If more information is needed (like sample obstacles) please refer to the general list. I apologize for the extra page flippage.

Elven Spell Songs

Men possess Sorcery, Orcs have their Rituals of Night and Blood, but both pale in comparison to the beauty and subtle might of the Elven Songs. Their position as the First Born grants Elves an intuitive understanding of the earth and its ways. They gather this knowledge into powerful songs.

These abilities are less skills and more like individual spells. To create the spell-like effect, the Elf player needs to test his appropriate spell song skill. There's no Tax or spell failure like Sorcery. See the individual spell song descriptions for their effects.

Also, all Elven spell songs count as *sorcerous* skills for the purposes of practice and learning. None of them require tools, and no FoRKs are possible. Helping dice may only come from another Elf with the same song or the Song of Songs.

All spell songs have their own shade and exponent. They are advanced like skills. Spell songs are considered natural magic; tests are therefore always open-ended.

Special Spell Song Rules: *Wonderment*

All spell songs, regardless of primary effect, cause *wonderment.* This enchantment affects all non-Elves in the Presence of the singer, forcing them to make a Steel test. Wonderment takes effect in a number of exchanges equal to the target character's Will.

For example, The Recitation of the Ages has no major spell effect like Threne of the Chameleon, but, if sung during the game, it will cause wonderment to all who hear the stories of the ages—even if they do not understand a word of it.

When the Elf has sung for a number of exchanges equal to his victim's Will, the player should test his song ability. If it is sung successfully, all those susceptible within his Presence should make a Steel test with hesitation modified by the margin of success. Add +1 Ob hesitation for each success over the song obstacle.

This doesn't mean that Elves should go about half-cocked singing songs. The primary effect still takes precedence. If an Elven Prince sings Doom Sayer to impress a girl, he has just bound that maiden fair to an inescapable fate!

Spell Song Roots

Unless otherwise specified, the root for Elven spell songs is Will.

Casting Spell Songs

Songs are listed with an action cost for casting them using the Duel of Wits, Range and Cover and Fight systems. However, song singing always counts as a tandem action—song singing is essentially speech. No actual actions are devoted to it. Actions are listed merely for timing purposes.

Like sorcerous spells, 20 actions of spell songs can be performed in a Duel of Wits or Range and Cover volley.

Sustaining Spell Songs

Elves may only sing one song at a time. They may sing a song continuously (sustain it) for a number of hours equal to their Will exponent. If the song is not complete or the Elf wishes the song to continue, he may pass the tune off to another Elf who knows the song. The new singer need only make a successful song test to pick up where the first Elf left off.

Hearing Songs

An Elven song starts from the singer and emanates outward. In general, any character who is close enough to comprehend the Elf's normal speaking voice is considered eligible to be affected by the song. The individual descriptions detail any exceptions to this rule.

Elven Spell Songs List

Air of Gates — Ob: See Description

This is a special song an Elf can sing to a door or gate. The singer may ask one gate in his presence, "What lies beyond?" and be answered.

Obstacle: Fence gates, Ob 1. Cabin doors, Ob 2. House doors, Ob 3. Doors of a great hall, Ob 4. Fortress gate, Ob 5. Castle gate, Ob 6. City gates, Ob 7. Gates of the realm, Ob 8.

Actions: 25 x the obstacle

Alarm — Ob: See Description

Alarm is sung when on watch deep in the night. While singing this tune quietly to himself, the character will always shout an alarm if surprised or attacked. The cry rings out. Allies are immediately awakened from sleep with the cry in their ears.

Obstacles: Alerting your companions, Ob 1. Alerting the camp, Ob 2. Alerting the battalion or village, Ob 3. Alerting the town, Ob 4. Alerting the army or city, Ob 5.

Actions: 75

Anthem of Courage — Ob: See Description

The Anthem of Courage is a fierce song of hope that holds Elves steadfast against abominable foes. When properly sung, no Elf in the host will leave his station so long as the lord lives. Extra successes from the song are added as dice to Steel.

Obstacles: Companions, Ob 1. Squad, Ob 2. Company, Ob 3. Battalion, Ob 4. Army, Ob 5.
Actions: 20

Ballad of Rage — Ob: See Description

The Lord Protector can summon forth his raw Grief and hone it into a fine rage. While he sings of his wrathful sorrow and coming vengeance, Grief dice are added to the Lord Protector's weapon skills.

Obstacle: Grief FoRKs to weapon skill, Ob 1. Grief helps weapon skill, Ob 2. Half of Grief added to weapon skill, Ob 3. All of Grief added, Ob 5.
Actions: 4x obstacle
Song Root: Grief

Canticle of Years — Ob 4

The Canticle of Years is typically sung in the baritone and bass range. It is a long and winding song that tells the story of time itself. Its primary effect is *wonderment*.

Actions: 600 per year

Chant of Offering — Ob: Will of Customer

This devilish song draws the eyes of customers to the wares of the Elven merchants. If successful, add +1D to Conspicuous to attract attention for commercial or spectacular endeavors. Extra successes add +1D each. This song can also be sung to aid Haggling when selling Elven goods.

Actions: 4

Council Caller — Ob: 10 minus Elf's Perception

Using this powerful song, the Elven lord sends forth a call to his brothers and cousins—a call heard in the very dreams of those he seeks. Successes over the obstacle are added to the Elf's base Circles exponent when seeking to contact great lords and rulers.

Actions: 160

Discerner — Ob: See Description

This spell song allows the prince to see what lurks in the hearts of Men, Dwarves and Elves. It counts as a bulwark against Falsehood, Soothing Platitudes, Persuasion, Inconspicuous and Seduction. Increase the obstacle by one for these skills if they are used against the Etharch while he is singing Discerner.

Add the margin of success from the song to the obstacle penalty. If the test to deceive the Etharch is failed, he is aware of the intentions of the manipulator or deceiver (but not the precise nature of the lie).

Obstacle: The Discerner song obstacle is equal to the target character's Will.

Actions: 5. It is a short stanza sung under the breath while seeming to agree with and listen to the target character. In the Duel of Wits, it's sung during your opponent's action.

Doom of Strength — Ob: 10 minus Health of Wounded

In the throes of battle every soul is needed to assure victory over the enemy. During these desperate times, the Soother will sing the Doom of Strength to revitalize the wounded and send them back into the fray. If successful, the song temporarily reduces the target victim's wounded dice by the margin of success. The effect lasts for minutes equal to Health of the recipient, after which the penalty immediately returns.

Actions: 45

Doom Sayer — Ob: 1 + the Will of the Doomed

Doom Sayer bestows the arrogant power to judge the fate of another. It isn't quite a song; It's a powerful pronouncement, spoken in meter and rhyme, that evokes a forceful and binding magic.

If a doom is successfully uttered, the Etharch may change one of the target character's Beliefs so that it reflects the destiny. However, the Etharch must also change one of his Beliefs to that very same doom. Playing the Belief earns artha as per normal. Dooms involve exile, punishment, a vow of vengeance, an oath of enmity, etc. Fulfilling the doom earns a deeds point for the doomed character. If the Doom involves the character's death, the artha is transferred to the player's next character.

Actions: Variable. The time it takes to speak the doom.

Evensong — Ob 2

A festival song sung to greet the Moon on the evening of her first rising of each month. The primary effect of this song is wonderment.

Actions: 9000

Gift of Speed — Ob: Perception of Horse

This powerful song lightens the tread of the rider's horse until it seems the steed is galloping on air. Meeting the obstacle grants +1D to the horse's Speed. Extra successes increase the Speed of the horse by +1D each. The rider must be mounted on the horse. The gift lasts for the remainder of the day (or night).

Actions: 3

Hymn of Victory Ob: See description

A song sung of all the victories of the Elves—this one included. The Hymn forces the enemy to choose Stand and Drool as a hesitation option from a failed Steel test while this song is being sung. The Hymn of Victory is a fine way to round up and finish off the straggling remnants of the enemy forces.

Obstacles: Enemy squad, Ob 1. Enemy company, Ob 2. Battalion, Ob 3. Army, Ob 5.

Actions: 60

Homesong Ob: See description

Homesong helps keeps the hearth safe. When sung over a hearth, the master of the house knows everyone who enters (or tries to enter) his dwelling. Homesong is typically sung to greet guests returning home after a long journey.

Obstacles: Cottage, Ob 1. Small house, Ob 2. Large house, Ob 3. Manor, Ob 4. Castle, Ob 5. Palace, Ob 6. Citadel, Ob 7.

Actions: 60

Lament for the Fallen Ob: See Grief Section

Elves must lament their fallen, otherwise Grief will overwhelm them. This lament is sung to alleviate the pain of seeing comrades fall in battle. It obeys the standard rules for laments as described in the Grief section of this chapter.

Actions: Obstacle x 100

Lament of Mourning Ob: See Grief Section

The Lament of Mourning is sung to remember both the tragedies and boons of past ages. It obeys the standard obstacles and rules for laments as described in the Grief section of this chapter.

Actions: Obstacle x 200

Lament of Stars Ob: See Grief Section

The Lament of Stars was the first lament learned by the Elves. As they left their ancestral homeland and crossed the sea to their new home, the bards composed this song to ease the heart pain and homesickness. This lament obeys all the standard rules for laments. See the Grief section for more on that.

Actions: Hours equal to obstacle

Lament of the Westering Sun Ob: See Grief Section

In this lament, the Elves call to the setting sun to purge them of their grief—to take it into the sea where the sun sleeps, so that on the new day they might be free and clean of their sadness. This lament obeys all the standard rules for laments. See the Grief section for more.

Actions: One day, from sunup to sundown

Lay of the Horse — Ob: Will of Horse

Through this lay, an Elf may communicate with his horse and may call to it over great distances. Distance for calling is 100 paces plus 100 paces per extra success.

Actions: 3

Litany of Responsibilities — Ob 1

The Litany is the endless list of duties of the Steward of an Elven house. The primary effect of this song is wonderment.

Actions: This song never ends.

Lyric of Healing — Ob: Health of Wounded

This beautiful and strong song seeps into the blood of the wounded and weary, strengthening body and mind. When sung over an injured character, successes over the obstacle add dice to Health tests for the purposes of recovery.

Actions: 125

Monody of the March — Ob: Will of soldier

This helpful tune keeps the mind occupied while the soldier is marching. It is so effective that if the cadence is successfully achieved, the soldier gains +1D to any Health tests for that day.

Actions: 180

Mornsong — Ob 3

A festival song sung to commemorate the dawn of the new year. The primary effect of this song is wonderment.

Actions: 306,050

Recitation of Ages — Ob: See description

This spell song is both a history lesson and a wondrous show of lights and images. As the ages are recited, the Elf intermingles phrases of memory and power, and scenes of aeons past float before the listeners.

Obstacles: Events of the current age, Ob 1; of the Third Age, Ob 2; of the Second Age, Ob 3; First Age, Ob 4; of the Years of the Sun, Ob 5; of the Creation and before time, Ob 6.

Actions: Obstacle x 100.

Rhyme of Rules — Ob 3

The Rhyme of Rules is an ever-growing song comprised of all the adages, apothegms, axioms, dictums, maxims, morals, precepts, proverbs, rules, sayings and truisms of the Elves. When sung itself, its primary effect is wonderment. However, Rhyme of Rules is also the only spell song that can be used as a FoRK (not a helping die, though). The FoRK die can be invoked for any skill song test (not spell song) for which the player can recite a clever bit of folklore obliquely pertinent to the situation.

Actions: 3-10, depending on the length of the player's verse

Rhyme of Tongues — Ob: See Description

Elven Loremasters spend many years studying the languages of all things. This simple Rhyme helps them remember what they have learned and allows them to communicate with nearly any creature. Once the rhyme is successfully sung, the spell lasts for hours equal to the Elf's Will.

Obstacles: Dialects of native/known languages, Ob 1. Foreign language, Ob 2. Foreign language dialect, Ob 3. Vile Language, Ob 4. *Low Speech*: Dogs, wolves, pigs and dolphins, Ob 5. Horse and other ungulates, Ob 6. Birds, Ob 7. Fish, Ob 8. Insects, Ob 9.

Actions: 4

Song of Arbors — Ob: See Description

The Song of Arbors allows the Elves to communicate in the tongue of the leafed ones and learn what news they can from the cryptic mind of the wood. An Elf may sing to any tree in his Presence. If successful, he may communicate with the tree about its well-being and any recent notable events.

Obstacle: Ancient trees, Ob 1. Elder trees, Ob 2. Full-grown trees, Ob 3. Young trees, Ob 4. Saplings, Ob 5. Vines and hangers, Ob 6.

Actions: 4444

Song of Bonding — Ob: 10 minus Will of the Singer

The Song of Bonding is usually only sung once in each Elf's life—to bind himself into the master-student relationship with his sword-father. Once successfully sung, the Bonded Second now gains a new trait: Bonded. This counts as a call-on for Steel when his master is in danger.

If a player is starting a Second in a game with his Sword Singer, sing this song before the game starts. If the song fails, or the Second's Sword Singer is not part of the game, then the player may choose to bond himself to another master as the game progresses.

Actions: 555

Song of Burning Bright — Ob: 10 minus Grief

The Song of Burning Bright evokes the true fire within the Elven heart. Once summoned, it drives the Elf into a blinding fury that strikes terror in the hearts of his enemies. All who look upon him must make a Steel Test. Hesitation is increased by the Elf's successes over the song obstacle. The Song of Burning Bright negates all hesitation-reducing traits for purposes of the Steel test. The victims must make a Steel test—no matter what—at 10 minus Will plus extra song successes. The effect of this song supersedes wonderment: Do not test for wonderment.

Actions: Obstacle x 2

If an Elven Lancer's Grief is B5, his obstacle to Burn Bright is 5 (10 minus 5). If he rolls 7 successes, his enemies must make Steel tests at +2 hesitation obstacle.

Song of Merriment — Ob: See description

The Song of Merriment brings joy to all who hear it. Sadness is washed away and fatigue forgotten.

Obstacles: Wonderment, Ob 1. Negate +1 Ob penalty, Ob 2. Alleviate -1D penalty for one scene, Ob 3. Cancel all ongoing hesitation, Ob 4.
Actions: 120

Song of Silence — Ob: 10 minus Will of Singer

To voice his displeasure, an Elven Lord will utter the brief syllables of the Song of Silence and then fall into an impenetrable aphony, thinking deeply on all matters at hand. No social skills or "mind affecting" spells will have any effect on the Lord while he is under the Song of Silence. If sung as an action during a Duel of Wits, the Elf can end the duel. No winner is declared, and no compromise can be made.

Song Root: Grief
Actions: 2

Song of Songs — Ob: See Description

This beautiful harmony can be sung in accompaniment to any other *spell-song*. The Song of Songs may help a Elven spell song as if it were a related skill. Song of Songs may not help skill-songs.

For example, the Lord Protector is in dire need; the servants of the Dark have unleashed terrible beasts of shadow, and his war-host quails before them. He calls his Song Singers to aid him as he sings the mighty Anthem of Courage. The Lord has an Anthem of Courage of B6. Each Song of Songs singer gives helping dice according to the standard rules. The Lord Protector's player would then cast his song dice plus the helping dice to pass the test.

Obstacle: If an obstacle is needed for Song of Songs, use the time and obstacles of the skill being helped. The Song of Songs may be used to cause wonderment like other spell songs at Ob 2.
Actions: 25 for the purpose of causing wonderment

Song of the Sword — Ob: See Description

The Song of the Sword infuses the blade with a dread and vengeful power. The Sword Singer may only sing one blessing at a time, but he may bless any sword in his presence.

Obstacle: The singer chooses the blade blessing to be sung before rolling: Morn Blade, (+1 weapon speed), Ob 1. Singing Blade (open-ended sword dice), Ob 2; Preternatural Balance (+1D), Ob 3; Crushing Edge (+1 VA), Ob 4; Sword of Might (+1 Power), Ob 5; Blinding Blade (+3 weapon speed), Ob 6; Blood Drinker (reduce Add by 1), Ob 7; Sun Blade (increase weapon length to "longest"), Ob 8. All blessings also make the weapon a "spirit blade" which may affect creatures with the Spirit Nature trait.
Actions: Obstacle x 1

Strain of Far Sight — Ob: See Description

This ancient and powerful song amplifies the Lord Protector's vision. Once sung, the effects last for the duration of the scene or conflict.

Obstacle: Seeing impossibly long distances, Ob 1. +1D to field maneuvers, Ob 2. +1D to Bow skill, Ob 3. +1D to Perception, Ob 4. +2D to Perception, Ob 5. Free forfeit in the script for Fight, Ob 6. Free forfeit in the Duel of Wits, Ob 7. Free forfeit for Range and Cover, Ob 8. Seeing into the past, Ob 9. Seeing into the future, Ob 10.

Actions: 1 x obstacle

Supplication to the Wind — Ob: See Description

Elven Seafarers are friends to the wind, and in times of need, they may ask her to treat them kindly.

Obstacle: Gauge the length of a storm (or other weather), Ob 1. Bring winds to doldrums, Ob 2. Negotiate currents and shoals (+1D Pilot), Ob 3. Speed a long journey (+1D Navigate), Ob 4. Bring a gale down to strong winds, Ob 5.

Actions: 60

Threne of the Chameleon — Ob: See description

This quiet song escapes the lips as barely a whisper. While it is sung, the Ranger is cloaked in shadow and shifting light, invisible to the eyes of his foes. Threne of the Chameleon adds advantage dice to the Stealthy skill. In addition, so long as the player gets one success, his character cannot be seen unless the opposing characters explicitly look for him—either via an applicable Instinct or a trait or by simply stating, "I look around." If sung successfully, the character counts as having one additional level of cover in Range and Cover. In Fight, other characters suffer a +1 Ob disadvantage to hit him with any missile or thrown weapon.

Obstacles: The player can set the obstacle for the Threne of Chameleon song. If sung successfully, the obstacle indicates the number of advantage dice granted to the Stealthy. Thus an Ob 1 Threne adds +1D to Stealthy.

Actions: 8

Tract of Enmity — Ob: See description

When dire deeds are performed against the houses of the Elves, terrible, undying oaths of vengeance are sung. Once marked as an enemy, the creature is given a new name and thenceforth all Elves know him thusly. Such enemies arouse the passion of Elves: They are relentlessly sought and remorselessly destroyed.

Obstacles: 1D infamous reputation, Ob 1. 2D infamous reputation, Ob 2. 3D infamous reputation, Ob 3.

Actions: 30

Verse of Decision — Ob: Target's Will

This potent spell is used when an Elven Elder sets his mind to a task. He can bind himself and another character into a decision that carries the same weight as a Duel of Wits result. Both parties must nominally agree to the terms. The song is sung and the result is binding as if the two had come to the decision via a Duel of Wits. No other test is necessary but the Verse of Decision.

Actions: 555

Verse of Friendship — Ob: See Description

The Verse of Friendship is a formidable spell. Once it is sung over a character, henceforth he is known by all Elves as *friend*. The character gains a 1D reputation when dealing with Elves.

Obstacle: Will, Greed, Faith, Spite or Hatred of the target, whichever is higher.
Actions: 500

Voice of Ages — Ob: See Description

Announcing his age and wisdom, the Elven lord lends weight and authority to his opinion, such that none can deny him. This effect lasts through the duration of one Duel of Wits.

Obstacle: +1D to Oratory or Persuasion, Ob 2. +1D Will (applied to Body of Argument or as an obstacle vs social skills), Ob 3. +3D to Oratory or Persuasion, Ob 4. Open-ended social skill dice, Ob 5. +5D to Oratory, Ob 6.
Actions: 4 x obstacle of the spell

Weathersong — Ob: See Description

The Seafarers sing to the sky and listen to her reply to learn the coming weather. This spell acts as a linked test with Orienteering, Navigation or any other weather-dependent skill, but add dice equal to the obstacle of the casting. It's a powerful spell.

Obstacle: Tomorrow's weather, Ob 1. Weather of the week, Ob 2. Weather of the month, Ob 3. Weather of the season, Ob 4. Freak, erratic or unnatural weather, Ob 5.

Elven Grief

Grief is an emotional attribute born from the toll of living an ageless life while watching endless tragedy unfold. Elves are plagued with Grief—it is the only force that can kill them, apart from violence. Nearly all Elves have some stain of it on them, but very few show it, and even fewer let it overwhelm them. Grief manifests in many ways: in sadness, in bitterness, in anger, in silence and in isolation.

When an Elf's Grief reaches exponent 10, he can no longer tolerate this world and its tribulations. Either he must pass on into the West or his heart breaks and he wastes away due to Grief.

The Deeds of Grief

The Elf player may spend a deeds point to tap his character's Grief while performing a spell or skill song. Instead of doubling dice like a standard deeds point, this adds the Grief attribute dice to the song exponent for the test. These dice are open-ended. Adding a Grief deeds like this always counts as a difficult test for advancing Grief. This cannot be mitigated by a lament.

Starting Grief

I recommend that Grief follow the same guidelines as stats and skills regarding starting exponents. If you're limiting characters

to exponent 6 skills, then Grief shouldn't start above 6 either. This should be discussed with the Elf players beforehand. Note that Grief may never, ever start higher than exponent 9.

All Elves start with an exponent 0 Grief. Consult the following list of conditions to determine the actual starting exponent:

—Add one if the character has taken any Protector lifepath
—In addition, add one if the character has been a Lancer, Lieutenant or Captain; and add another one if the character has been a Lord Protector or Soother
—Add one if the character was Born Etharch
—Add one if the character has been a Loremaster, Adjutant or Althing
—Add one if the character has taken the Elder lifepath
—Add one if the character does not know any Lamentations
—Add one if the character's history includes tragedy
—Add one if the character has lived among non-Elven people
—Add one for every point of the character's Steel over 5
—Add one if the character's Perception exponent is greater than 5
—Add one if the character is starting 500 years old; add two if the character is starting 750 years old; add three if the character is starting older than 1,000 years

Gray Grief

If it is appropriate to the game, and the GM and other players approve, the Elven player may spend five of his starting Grief exponent points to shade shift to gray.

Tragedy: Advancing Grief

Grief is an attribute like any other, and it advances like Steel or Health. However, it is tested a little differently from other abilities. The in-game experiences of the character test Grief. The magnitude of the experience determines the level of the test.

Obstacle 1 Grief
Being lied to. Going against an instinct.

Obstacle 2 Grief
Being robbed. Lying.

Obstacle 3 Grief
Being accused of a crime you did not commit. Being maliciously attacked or wounded. Witnessing a drought or famine. Seeing a person killed. Betraying a belief once.

Obstacle 4 Grief
Killing. Having your home burnt to the ground. Losing a friend due to separation or imprisonment. Stealing and causing others harm through that act.

Obstacle 5 Grief
Fighting in a bloody battle. Having your homeland/city/village betrayed by a friend. Being captured by the enemy. Betraying a belief a second time.

Obstacle 6 Grief
Being imprisoned for a crime you did not commit. Losing a massive and bloody battle. Being personally betrayed by a friend. Being mortally wounded. The death of a friend or loved one.

Obstacle 7 Grief
Forced to flee your homeland by scourging tides of darkness. Having to kill your friend whose mind has been twisted to the side of darkness. Betraying a belief a third time.

Obstacle 8 Grief
Being tortured. Witnessing your friend, the most powerful wizard around and the sole hope of all that is good, pulled down by a demon. Having to kill innocents in order to accomplish what is "right." Betraying family and friend.

Obstacle 9 Grief
Realizing that all of your hopes and dreams have led to nothing but murder, destruction and evil. Watching a friend commit suicide (this includes choosing to embrace grief and not journey west).

Obstacle 10 Grief
To watch the light of the world doused and to witness the cold tide of darkness come rushing forth. *To give up hope.*

At the end of a session, check the Elf's experiences against the above list. Note appropriate Grief tests on your character sheet. The obstacle is used only to determine the level of the test for the purposes of advancement.

An Elf with a starting Grief of B5 sees his companion cut down by an Orc. In a rage the Elf then slays the Orc. He now must note two Grief tests on his character sheet: one Ob 4 for killing, and one Ob 6 for the death of a friend.

The Limit of Grief

An Elf whose Grief has reached exponent 10 can no longer tolerate the trials and struggles of this world—his sadness, disgust, contempt or pity

has overwhelmed him. He lays aside his worldly trappings and passes on, either wasting away from Grief or wandering into the West. Either way he is not seen or heard from again—until the end of days.

Laments: Mitigating Grief

Elves are well aware of the toll of living an ageless life. They know that unless they are careful, the strain of Grief will overtake them. They will either collapse under its weight or fly into a burning, all-consuming rage which will inevitably result in their death. Knowing this, Elves are mindful to vent their sadness and lament tragedy in their lives. These songs help mitigate the bite of Grief.

When a Grief test needs to be taken, an Elf may sing a Lament to counteract its effects. Any of the laments can be used; the various descriptions are provided for color. The lament need not be sung immediately. So long as it is sung at a reasonable and appropriate juncture afterwards—at a funeral, for example—it will have its intended effect. While Elves often lament their sorrows in great processions or mass chants, Grief is a private thing. Each Elf must lament and grieve personally.

The obstacle for all Laments is the same obstacle as the Grief test.

The effects of the Lament are a bit different from normal spells or songs. They lower the "level" of the Grief test the character would have taken by one step. If the character takes a challenging Grief test, a properly sung Lament will lower that to a difficult test. Laments do not make Grief go away, but they do help the Elf cope with its effects.

Elven Resources

Run of the Mill Bow	5	Elven Rope	12
Run of the Mill Arms	5	Elven Bread	10
Reinforced Leather	3	Elven Mirrorwine	8
Light Mail	6	Starlight	50
Heavy Mail	10	Tome of Lore	20
Plated Mail	20	Elven Instrument	6
Elven Armor	See Description	Traveling Gear	2
Elven Arms	15	Personal Effects	1
Elven Bow	25	Elven Smithy	50
Elven Cloak	30	Artisan's Shop	60
Elven Steed	8	Skill Tools	9
Elven Clothes	2	Elven Ship	80
Elven Shoes	1	Elven Land	See Description
Elven Finery	5		

Notes on Elven Possessions

Run of the Mill Weapons and Armor—Use the stats for the equipment listed in the Lifepaths of Man and run of the mill lists for this gear.

Elven Armor—Elven Armor is superior quality armor. Also, there are no Clumsy Weight penalties for the following: Elven gambeson for 9 rps, Elven reinforced leather for 20 rps, Elven light mail for 30 rps and Elven heavy mail for 40 rps.

Elven plated mail can be bought for 75 rps. It's superior quality, but it retains all Clumsy Weight penalties.

Elves may buy armor piecemeal as described in the Mannish Resources section.

Elven Arms—Elven Arms are considered superior quality weapons. Players may purchase beaks, spikes and weights for their characters' weapons at +3 rps per modification, per weapon.

Elven starting characters who have four or fewer lifepaths and whose last lifepath is Sword Singer or Spearbearer may take the appropriate Elven Arms for 5 rps.

Elven Cloak—Elven Cloaks are also known as Gray Mantles. They are imbued with the Threne of the Chameleon and conceal Elven rangers who guard the fences of the hidden kingdoms of the Elves. Gray Mantles count as a 4D Threne of the Chameleon. If the character is using Stealthy and/or the actual Threne, he may add the cloak's dice to the skill or song when rolling to hide. In addition, Elven Cloaks are warm in winter, cool in summer, covering in rain and quick to dry.

Elven Bow—These are the weapons made using the Elven Bowcraft skill. Elven Bows are bigger than hunting bows, but not as big as the great bows of men. They provide 3D of range dice at extreme, and 3D at optimal. Maximum range is 250 paces. In the Fight rules, they have a Nock and Draw time of five actions.

When purchasing an Elven Bow, Elves may choose from these arrows:

Hunting Head:	I: B4, M: B8, S: B11	VA 2	Free
Leaf Head:	I: B5, M: B9, S: B12	VA 1	+1 rp
Bodkin:	I: B4, M: B7, S: B10	VA 3	+2 rps

Elven characters who take four or fewer lifepaths and whose last lifepath is Elven Bowyer may take an Elven Bow for 5 rps.

Elven Steed—Elven Steeds are swift in travel and steadfast in war. Pe: B3(4), Wi: B2, Ag: B3, Sp: B8, Po: B5, Fo: B6. Hea: B5, Ste: B5, Ref: B3, MW: B12 (Tough). Hesitation: 7 (Determined), Stride: 13. **Skills**: Mounted Combat Training, Rider Training, Intimidation B3, Foraging B4. **Traits**: Good Bone, Fleet of Hoof, Obedient, Loyal, Tough and Determined, plus Long-Limbed, Keen Hearing, Hooved, Ungulate.

Elven Bread—This rare and cherished bread is nourishing and restorative. After it is eaten, it grants +3D to all Health tests taken for the day after it is eaten. One portion of Elven Bread will suffice as a meal for a day. 10 rps buys six portions.

Elven Rope—Elven Rope is light and strong. It weighs half as much as its normal counterpart and holds twice as much for its thickness. Climbing, Knots and Rigging tests taken using Elven Rope may add +1D. It counts as tools for Knots and Climbing. Any Elf or Elf-friend may cue his rope to unknot and untie itself with a tug, nod or gesture.

Elven Mirrorwine— Mirrorwine refreshes and restores those who taste it. Add two open-ended dice to the next Health test taken. 8 rps buys four draughts.

Starlight—A bottle of starlight to illuminate the darkest times with the silver halo of the favored star. The Starlight is as bright as Mage Light with four successes over the obstacle. Counts as sunlight for creatures with Cold Black Blood or Enemy of the Sun traits.

Elven Instrument— Elves are renowned for their music, both in song and instrument. Elven instruments—flutes, trumpets, lyres, etc.—grant +1D to the bearer's musical instrument skill.

Personal Effects— A player may purchase for his character personal effects of sentimental value: a lock of hair, a mirror, a book, a ring, a cane, a locket or any other similar item.

Elven Workshops—Workshops are necessary to completely utilize Stonecraft, Smithcraft, Starcraft and Gemcraft skills—without one, the Elf may only undertake smaller projects (Ob 3 or lower). Also, Elven Workshops are required if the character will be building special "Elven works." Workshops count as property when factoring Resources.

Elven Ship— This is a beautiful, sleek and sturdy sea-going vessel. She has two masts and can accommodate a crew of about twenty. The crew is included so long as the player purchases a relationship with an

Elf who acts as his pilot, navigator or first mate. Their exact abilities are determined via the I Need a Gang or Crew rules. A ship counts as property when factoring Resources.

Elven Land—Elves, though not as particular or land-hungry as Men and Dwarves, do lay some claims of ownership to certain tracts. Pastoral lands are 20 rps. This cost includes a single important terrain feature like a lake, a length of river, a hill or prairie and a modest but comfortable dwelling for the Elf's family. 50 rps for a large country manor and land, 100 rps for a palace. 150 rps allows the Elf and his family to occupy a major terrain feature like a forest, bay or mountain. Alternately, 25 rps gets a sumptuous apartment in the Citadel. Elven Land counts as property when factoring Resources.

Tome of Lore—The tome of lore contains knowledge both prosaic and rare. It grants +1D to all Elven academic skills, skill songs and appropriate wises.

Elves in Play

It bears noting that these rules will create some very powerful Elven characters. No attempt has been made to balance with Men or Orcs. Instead, we decided to represent Elves as they were in literature: potent, immortal and passionate. So in these rules, a 5 LP Elf is going to have an edge over other 5 LP characters. He gets more stat points and access to a host of powerful spells.

Speaking of spells, it is the intention of these rules that Elves not cast Sorcery spells. Elves cannot take the Gifted trait, nor can they be Faithful. They have their own magic, rooted in their Essence of the Earth trait, in the form of songs. While songs don't have the high-powered kick that Sorcery and Faith do, I think you'll find that the benefits they do provide augment the Elves' powers nicely.

The Elven gear is also a rare and precious resource. If players are ignoring Rope, Bread and Starlight in favor of a Cloak, Arms and Armor, bat them upside the head. Encourage them to choose diverse items from the list. Also, I entreat all of you to use the Antiphon Union skill training rules and create your own cool Elven stuff! It's acceptable to build that stuff pre-game and allow players to buy it and incorporate it into their characters. Price them at about 10-15 rps per +1D of song ability and you should be okay.

When bringing Elves into play, make sure to play off of the Grief attribute. That ability is a measure of how much an individual

Elf can take before he loses it. Push Elves to the edge. Drive that Grief up. Simply by focusing on the scenes and situations suggested in the Tragedy: Advancing Grief section you have ideas for dozens of different scenarios. Murder, betrayal, tragedy—an Elven character must react to them. His Grief compels him. Use this. The attribute lends itself to some very powerful story/game ideas: Ruined homelands, eternal war, murder of immortal brethren and the inevitable short-sighted suicide of the younger races. The sadness is an after-effect—of the rage; the fleeting love; the decaying, corroding material world. In the moment, there is only seething, powerful emotion to contend with. Go with it!

Whatever you do, don't let a player join your game as "the remote and aloof Elven Ranger; I'm quiet and I shoot things." Boring! Turn it up a notch. Give him a personality: Make him a bastard who can't keep his mouth shut. The internal conflict in that character creates a wealth of game play possibilities. I'm sure you'll find similar inner struggles to drive characters in your games.

Lastly, players like to play "half elves." When a player wishes such a character, he must choose whether his character has embraced his Elven or human nature. If he chooses Elven, the character is for all intents and purposes an Elf. You can take the character trait, Half Elf, to represent your ancestry if you'd really like to. Lifepaths, skills and traits are chosen from the Elven list. If he chooses human, lifepaths, skills and traits are from the Mannish list. Take the Fey Blood trait and an Elven common trait to represent his ancestry.

The Ambitious Noblewoman

Clare ran away from her family six years ago. She hated her husband. She hated the stifling courtly rituals and the polite lies everyone told. So she raised a finger to her husband and her family, packed a trunk full of necessities and set off for the city. There she made a new life reading fortunes, selling potions and forging letters from her husband to the local merchants. But she has much greater plans in store, oh yes...

BELIEFS

My former husband is a useful fool, I must not overtax him lest I lose access to his treasury. The scum of this city are disorganized rabble, I will forge them into a suitable household for myself. The nobility are all liars and charlatans.

INSTINCTS

Never pass up an opportunity to humiliate a nobleman. Always keep a knife concealed about me. Never pass up the opportunity to make money.

LIFEPATHS: Born Noble, Page, Young Lady, Criminal

30 years old

STATS

Will	B4	Perception	B4	Agility	B4
Speed	B4	Power	B4	Forte	B4

ATTRIBUTES

Health	B4	Mortal Wound	B10	Reflexes	B4
Steel	B5	Hesitation	6	Stride	7
Circles	B2	Resources	B1		

SKILLS

Inconspicuous B3, Streetwise B3, Intimidation B3, Knives B3, Climbing B2, Write B2, Read B2, Etiquette B2, Astrology B2, Musical Instrument (Dulcimer) B3, Composition B2, Field Dressing B3, Apothecary B3, Doctrine B2, Riding B2, Brawling B2, Sword B3, Persuasion B3, Forgery B3

TRAITS

Mark of Privilege, Cynical, Tenacious

GEAR

Writing Tools, Field Dressing Tools, Apothecary Tools, Run of the Mill Arms (sword, knife), Reinforced leather breastplate and sleeves, Clothes, Shoes, Finery, House in the city

AFFILIATION: 1D Nobility

REPUTATION: 1D as an ambitious criminal

RELATIONSHIP: Husband, Lord Theurdoricus (Hateful, Immediate Family)

Lifepaths of Man

Peasant Setting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Born Peasant	8 yrs	3	—	*Serv., Soldier, Sea, Religious*

Skills: 3 pts: General

Traits: 2 pts: —

Farmer	8 yrs	5	+1 P	*Villager, Soldier, Serv.*

Skills: 8 pts: Farming, Mending, Animal Husbandry, Weaving, Cooking, Sewing, Firebuilding, Sing

Traits: 1 pt: Hoarding

Head of Household	15 yrs	20	+1 M	*Villager, Soldier*

Skills: 8 pts: Carpentry, Hunting, Haggling, Almanac

Traits: 2 pts: —

Restrictions: may not be the character's second lifepath

Midwife	10 yrs	15	+1 M	*Villager, Outcast*

Skills: 7 pts: Animal Husbandry, Herbalism, Midwifery, Omen-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Bedside Manner

Requires: any female gender-specific lifepath (Lady, for example), Farmer or Itinerant Priest

Lazy Stayabout	7 yrs	3	—	*Outcast, Servitude, Soldier*

Skills: 3 pts: Lazy-wise, Peasant-wise, Wife-wise, Work-wise

Traits: 1 pt: A Little Fat

Conscript	1 yr	4	—	*Servitude, Soldier, Outcast*

Skills: 2 pts: Foraging, Battle-wise, Rumor-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Flee from Battle

Peasant Pilgrim	3 yrs	4	—	*Outcast, Servitude, Villager*

Skills: 3 pts: Doctrine, Pilgrimage-wise, Saint-wise; 1 pt: General

Traits: 2 pts: Road Weary, Alms-Taker

Miller	7 yrs	15	—	*Villager*

Skills: 5 pts: Miller, Brewer, Mending, Carpentry

Traits: 1 pt: Lord's Favorite

Fisherman	6 yrs	5	+1 P	*Villager, Outcast, Seafaring*

Skills: 6 pts: Fishing, Rigging, Knots, Mending, Cooking, Boatwright

Traits: 2 pts: Superstitious

Shepherd	4 yrs	4	+1 P	*Villager, Outcast*

Skills: 5 pts: Animal Husbandry, Sing, Climbing, Flute

Traits: 1 pt: Cry Wolf

Woodcutter 5 yrs 5 +1 P *Villager, Outcast*

Skills: 5 pts: Firebuilding, Mending, Foraging, Orienteering, Tree-wise, Tree Cutting

Traits: 1 pt: —

Hunter 5 yrs 6 +1 M, P *Villager, Outcast, Soldier*

Skills: 7 pts: Hunting, Tracking, Stealthy, Cooking, Orienteering; Javelin or Bow

Traits: 1 pt: —

Trapper 5 yrs 8 +1 M, P *Villager, Outcast, Soldier*

Skills: 6 pts: Trapper, Stealthy, Tracking, Cooking, Haggling, Taxidermy

Traits: 1 pt: Foul Smelling

Peddler 5 yrs 10 +1 M *Villager, Serv., City, Outcast*

Skills: 7 pts: Mending, Sing, Haggling, Chandler, Persuasion, Inconspicuous, Falsehood

Traits: 2 pts: Blank Stare, Glib, Eidetic Memory

Elder 15 yrs 5 +1 M *Villager, Outcast*

Skills: 6 pts: Observation, Persuasion, Ugly Truth, Peasant-wise, Local History

Traits: 1 pt: Crotchety

Requires: The character must have at least four LPs and start the game over 50 years old.

Augur 5 yrs 10 +1 M *Servitude, Outcast*

Skills: 4 pts: Astrology, Sorcery, Falsehood, Ugly Truth, Omen-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Disturbed, Dreamer, Cassandra, Touch of Ages

Requires: Midwife, Country Wife or must be female and character has no more than three lifepaths total.

Itinerant Priest 6 yrs 8 +1 M *Villager, Outcast, City, Religious*

Skills: 7 pts: Oratory, Suasion, Chandler, Riding, Write, Read, Doctrine

Traits: 2 pts: Dusty, Faithful

Requires: any Acolyte LP from any setting

Recluse Wizard 15 yrs 28 +1 M *Outcast, Villager, City, Court*

Skills: 7 pts: Astrology, Alchemy, Enchanting, Illuminations, Ancient History, Obscure History

Traits: 2 pts: Batshit, Gifted

Requires: a previous lifepath that contains the Sorcery skill

Country Wife 10 yrs 5 +1 M, P *Religious*

Skills: 2 pts: Child-Rearing, Cooking; also, see note below

Traits: 1 pt: —

Note: A player who takes the Country Wife lifepath may also choose her husband's lifepath from the Peasant setting and may choose from his skills: She gets half of his skill points, rounded down. She also receives half of her husband's resource points.

Villager Setting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Village Born	10 yrs	4	—	*Peasant, Servitude, Sea, Religious*

Skills: 3 pts: General

Traits: 2 pts: —

Kid	4 yrs	3	+1 P	*Any except Noble and Court*

Skills: 3 pts: Trouble-wise, Throwing, Inconspicuous

Traits: 1 pt: Bad Egg, Good for Nothing, Fleet of Foot

Restrictions: If chosen (it's certainly not required), Kid must be the second lifepath chosen and may only be taken once.

Idiot	10 yrs	4	—	*Outcast, Peasant*

Skills: 4 pts: Inconspicuous, Conspicuous, Ugly Truth, Village Secrets-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Problems, Alcoholic, Abused, Handicapped

Pilgrim 2 yrs 4 — *Religious, Servitude, City*

Skills: 5 pts: Religious Rumor-wise, Road-wise, Shrine-wise, Alms-wise, Relic-wise, Doctrine

Traits: 2 pts: Collector

Conscript 1 yr 5 — *Servitude, Soldier, Outcast*

Skills: 2 pts: Foraging, Baggage Train-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Hide before Battle

Groom 4 yrs 7 — *Peasant, City Dweller, Soldier*

Skills: 4 pts: Animal Husbandry, Riding, Mending, Horse-wise, Road-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Runner 4 yrs 6 +1 P *City Dweller, Peasant, Soldier*

Skills: 3 pts: Streetwise, Inconspicuous, Shortcut-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Skinny, Fleet of Foot

Village Peddler 5 yrs 10 +1 M *Peasant, Serv., City Dweller, Outcast*

Skills: 7 pts: Mending, Sing, Haggling, Chandler, Persuasion, Inconspicuous, Falsehood

Traits: 2 pts: Odd

Shopkeeper 6 yrs 15 — *City Dweller, Peasant*

Skills: 5 pts: Haggling, Accounting, Observation, Merchant-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Clerk 4 yrs 9 — *City Dweller, Outcast, Soldier*

Skills: 4 pts: Bureaucracy, Write, Read, Contract-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Cramped Hands, Mind for Small Details

Sailor 5 yrs 5 +1 P *Soldier, City, Peasant, Serv., Sea*

Skills: 6 pts: Rigging, Knots, Brawling, Mending, Sing, Fishing

Traits: 1 pt: Superstitious, Sea Legs

Laborer 4 yrs 4 +1 P *Soldier, Outcast, Serv., Peasant*

Skills: 2 pts: Ditch Digging, Latrine-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Calloused, Starved, Broken, Hardened, Numb

Miner 3 yrs 7 +1 P *Soldier, Outcast, Serv., Peasant*

Skills: 2 pts: Mining, Cave-In-wise

Traits: 3 pts: Black Lung, Drunk, Superstitious

Requires: Laborer, Conscript, Farmer or Foot Soldier

Taskmaster 6 yrs 15 — *City Dweller, Outcast, Soldier*

Skills: 5 pts: Intimidation, Brawling, Sing, Conspicuous, Lazy Bastard-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Hard Hearted, Mean, Barker, Booming Voice

Requires: Village Sergeant or any Soldier lifepath

Serving Wench 3 yrs 5 +1 M *Any except Noble*

Skills: 4 pts: Soothing Platitudes, Ugly Truth, Customer-wise, Sleight of Hand

Traits: 2 pts: Choose 1st trait: Extremely Bitter, Ugly, Drop Dead Gorgeous, Buxom

Hostelier 6 yrs 15 — *City, Peasant*

Skills: 5 pts: Cooking, Mending, Accounting, Soothing Platitudes, Guest-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Fixed Smile, Gossip

Restrictions: may not be the character's second lifepath

Village Guard 3 yrs 7 +1 P *Soldier, City, Peasant, Servitude*

Skills: 4 pts: Appropriate Weapons, Intimidation, Brawling, Craft-wise, Village-wise, Guard-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Thug

Village Sergeant 5 yrs 9 +1 M/P *Soldier, Servitude, Noble Court*

Skills: 6 pts: Command, Intimidation, Field Dressing, Appropriate Weapons, Shield Training†, Armor Training†, Bribe-wise, Wealthy-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Overworked, Underpaid

Requires: Village Guard, Squire, Freebooter, Sergeant-at-Arms or Man-at-Arms

Corrupt Sergeant 5 yrs 12 +1 M/P *Soldier, Servitude, Noble Court*

Skills: 6 pts: Intimidation, Appropriate Weapons, Shield Training†, Armor Training†, Bribe-wise, Wealthy-wise, Criminal-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Predatory

Requires: Village Guard, Squire, Freebooter, Sergeant-at-Arms or Man-at-Arms

Tailor 5 yrs 12 — *City Dweller, Peasant*

Skills: 5 pts: Sewing, Embroidery, Clothing-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Frippery

Tax Collector 5 yrs 15 +1 M *City Dweller, Peasant, Outcast*

Skills: 4 pts: Intimidation, Accounting, Haggling, Persuasion

Traits: 1 pt: Hard Hearted, Manhunter

Requires: may not be the character's second lifepath

Cobbler 8 yrs 20 — *City Dweller, Peasant, Soldier*

Skills: 4 pts: Cobbler, Shoe-wise, Feet-wise, Leather-wise, Nail-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Comfortable Shoes

Requires: Apprentice

Farrier 5 yrs 12 — *Peasant, Soldier, City Dweller*

Skills: 4 pts: Blacksmith, Animal Husbandry, Horse-wise, Haggling

Traits: 1 pt: A Bit Deaf

Requires: Apprentice

Butcher 6 yrs 15 — *City, Peasant, Outcast*

Skills: 4 pts: Butchery, Cooking, Guts-wise, Anatomy

Traits: 2 pts: Prominent Scar, Thick Skin, Stinky, Muttering

Barber 7 yrs 16 — *City, Peasant, Outcast*

Skills: 5 pts: Bloodletting, Anatomy, Apothecary, Village-wise, Gossip-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Agreeable, Seemingly Concerned

Brewer 8 yrs 15 — *City, Peasant, Noble Court*

Skills: 4 pts: Brewer, Miller, Grain-wise, Brew-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Reeks of Alcohol, Ruddy Complexion

Acolyte 7 yrs 10 +1 M *Peasant, Servitude, City, Religious*

Skills: 6 pts: Doctrine, Bureaucracy, Write, Read, Ritual, Religious History, Temple-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Tonsured, Early Riser, Broken, Perfect Pitch

Failed Acolyte 6 yrs 8 — *Outcast, Soldier, Peasant*

Skills: 4 pts: Temple-wise, Dirty Secrets-wise, Doctrine, Religious History

Traits: 2 pts: Bitter

Village Priest 8 yrs 15 +1 M *Any except Noble and Noble Court*

Skills: 5 pts: Oratory, Suasion, Symbology

Traits: 2 pts: Vested, Devout, Faithful

Requires: Acolyte

Venal Priest 9 yrs 20 +1 M *Any except Noble and Noble Court*

Skills: 6 pts: Persuasion, Soothing Platitudes, Falsehood

Traits: 2 pts: Venal, Vested

Requires: Acolyte, Clerk, Student or any Religious setting lifepath

Apprentice 7 yrs 7 +1 P *City, Peasant, Soldier, Seafaring*

Skills: 6 pts: Mending, Blacksmith, Carpentry, Tanner, Potter, Cooper

Traits: 2 pts: Broken In, Back-Breaking Labor

Journeyman 6 yrs 15 +1 M/P *City, Peasant, Soldier, Seafaring*

Skills: 5 pts: Haggling, Appraisal, Write, Read

Traits: 1 pt: Made Man, Geometric

Requires: Apprentice

Cloth Dyer 5 yrs 20 +1 M *City Dweller, Peasant*

Skills: 6 pts: Cloth Dyeing, Dye Manufacture, Accounting, Haggling, Fabric-wise, Mineral-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Many-Colored Hands

Requires: Apprentice

Bowyer 6 yrs 15 — *Soldier, Outcast, Peasant*

Skills: 4 pts: Bowyer, Fletcher, Mending, Bow, Bow-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Apprentice, Huntsman, Forester or Archer

Master Craftsman 10 yrs 30 +1 M, P *City Dweller, Soldier*

Skills: 6 pts: Craftsman-wise, Artisan-wise, Materials-wise, Tools-wise; 3 pts: General

Traits: 1 pt: Perfectionist, Early Riser, Stubborn, Healthy

Requires: Journeyman

Vintner 10 yrs 40 +1 M *Noble Court, Peasant, Villager*

Skills: 4 pts: Vintner, Wine Tasting, Estate Management, Grape-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Patient, Lugubrious

Restrictions: may not be the character's second lifepath

Apiarist 8 yrs 20 +1 M *City Dweller, Peasant. Noble Court*

Skills: 4 pts: Insect Husbandry, Carpentry, Firebuilding, Honey-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Stung Once (Once), Beespeaker

Mining Engineer 8 yrs 15 +1 M *City Dweller, Noble Court, Soldier*

Skills: 5 pts: Prospecting, Engineer, Ore-wise, Rock-wise, Command

Traits: 1 pt: Grim, Agoraphobic, Deep Sense

Requires: Apprentice, Miner, Student or Journeyman

Town Official 5 yrs 25 +1 M *City Dweller, Outcast, Soldier*

Skills: 8 pts: Rule of Law, Persuasion, Etiquette, Interrogation, Falsehood, Town-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Pragmatic

Requires: Clerk, Priest or Student

Merchant 7 yrs 30 +1 M *City Dweller, Outcast, Seafaring*

Skills: 6 pts: Accounting, Persuasion, Falsehood, Haggling, Wholesale-wise, Landlord-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Distracted

Requires: Accountant, Sea Captain, Shopkeeper, Smuggler, Fence, Vintner or Chamberlain

Village Wife 8 yrs 5 +1 M, P *Religious, City Dweller, Servitude*

Skills: 2 pts: Child-Rearing, Cooking; also, see note below

Traits: 1 pt: —

Note: Players who take the Village Wife lifepath may also choose their husband's lifepath from the Villager setting. The Village Wife may choose from her husband's skills—she gets half of his skill points, rounded down—and she gets half of her husband's Resources.

† This is a training skill. It costs 2 pts to open and may not be advanced.

City Dweller Setting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
City Born	12 yrs	10	—	*Servitude, Court, Noble, Outcast*

Skills: 4 pts: General

Traits: 1 pt: —

Runner	3 yrs	7	+1 P	*Villager, Soldier*

Skills: 3 pts: Streetwise, Inconspicuous

Traits: 1 pt: —

Urchin	2 yrs	4	—	*Outcast, Servitude, Village*

Skills: 5 pts: Inconspicuous, Falsehood, Streetwise, Stealthy

Traits: 1 pt: Sickly, Fleet of Foot, Unheeded

Requirements: if taken, must be second or third lifepath

Beggar	5 yrs	4	—	*Outcast, Servitude, Village*

Skills: 6 pts: City-wise, City Guard-wise, Wealth-wise, Inconspicuous, Persuasion, Falsehood

Traits: 1 pt: Lame, Downtrodden, Hurt, Broken

Courier	4 yrs	8	+1 M	*Villager, Soldier*

Skills: 4 pts: Riding, Streetwise, Countryside-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Laborer	4 yrs	4	+1 P	*Soldier, Outcast, Serv., Peasant*

Skills: 2 pts: Ditch Digging, Hauling

Traits: 2 pts: Drunk, Mind-Numbing Work

Pilgrim	2 yrs	3	+1 M	*Religious, Servitude, Villager*

Skills: 4 pts: Religious Diatribe, City-wise, Shrine-wise, Doctrine

Traits: 2 pts: Tall Tale Teller, Stinky

Groom	4 yrs	5	+1 P	*Peasant, Villager, Soldier*

Skills: 6 pts: Road-wise, Driving, Riding, Animal Husbandry, Mending, City-wise, Traveler-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Peripatetic

Duelist	4 yrs	8	+1 P	*Soldier, Outcast, Servitude*

Skills: 7 pts: Sword, Brawling, Two-Fisted Fighting Training†, Streetwise, Haggling, Conspicuous, Trial by Combat-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Mercenary, Cold-Blooded, Fearless

Requires: Squire or any Outcast or Soldier lifepath, or any guard lifepath

Coin Clipper	6 yrs	15	+1 M	*Outcast, Noble Court*

Skills: 5 pts: Streetwise, Forgery, Falsehood, Intimidation, Counterfeiting, Coin-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Light Sleeper

Pickpocket 4 yrs 8 +1 P *Outcast, Villager, Servitude*

Skills: 5 pts: Inconspicuous, Streetwise, Sleight of Hand, Crowd-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Plain Face

Street Thug 3 yrs 5 +1 P *Outcast, Servitude, Soldier*

Skills: 5 pts: Brawling, Intimidation, Streetwise, Darkened Streets-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Cruel, Street Smart

Criminal 5 yrs 10 +1 M/P *Outcast, Villager, Soldier*

Skills: 6 pts: Inconspicuous, Streetwise, Intimidation, Knives, Climbing

Traits: 2 pts: Cynical, Poker Face, Rainman, Alert

Confidence Man 4 yrs 12 — *Outcast, Soldier, Villager*

Skills: 5 pts: Falsehood, Inconspicuous, Disguise, Persuasion, Grift-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

City Peddler 5 yrs 10 — *Villager, Serv., Peasant, Outcast*

Skills: 7 pts: Mending, Sing, Haggling, Chandler, Persuasion, Inconspicuous, Falsehood

Traits: 1 pt: The Story

Sailor 5 yrs 5 +1 P *Soldier, Seafaring, Peasant, Serv.*

Skills: 5 pts: Rigging, Knots, Brawling, Mending, Sing, Gambling

Traits: 1 pt: Superstitious, Sea Legs

Student 4 yrs 5 +1 M *Any except Noble*

Skills: 11 pts: Write, Read, Philosophy, Rule of Law, History, Symbology, Anatomy, Astrology, Inconspicuous, Streetwise, City-wise

Traits: 3 pts: Rabble Rouser, Drunk, Geometric

Ganymede 5 yrs 15 — *Outcast, Servitude, Court*

Skills: 5 pts: Fashion-wise, Inconspicuous, Conspicuous, Soothing Platitudes

Traits: 2 pts: Catamite, Flamboyant, Comely, Sharp Dresser

Dilettante 3 yrs 8 +1 M *Villager, Court, Outcast*

Skills: 4 pts: Sorcery-wise, Obscure History, Falsehood

Traits: 1 pt: Superstitious, Entropic, Cipher

Neophyte Sorcerer 6 yrs 12 +1 M *Villager, Peasant, Outcast, Serv.*

Skills: 6 pts: Write, Read, Research, Symbology, Great Masters-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Extremely Respectful of One's Betters, Bitter, Gifted

Temple Acolyte 5 yrs 10 +1 M *Peasant, Outcast, Serv., Religious*

Skills: 5 pts: Doctrine, Bureaucracy, Write, Read, Temple-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Believer, Tonsured, Faithful

Sculptor 5 yrs 8 +1 M/P *Outcast, Peasant, Noble Court*

Skills: 6 pts: Sculpture, Mason, Blacksmith, Carpentry, Stone-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Passionate

Painter 5 yrs 5 +1 M/P *Outcast, Peasant, Noble Court*

Skills: 5 pts: Painting, Illuminations, Anatomy, Paint-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Odd, Perspective, Greater Muse

Composer 4 yrs 5 +1 M *Outcast, Peasant, Noble Court*

Skills: 5 pts: Music Composition, Poetry, Sing, Musical Instrument

Traits: 2 pts: Esoteric, Remote

Dramaturge 4 yrs 5 +1 M *Outcast, Peasant, Noble Court*

Skills: 5 pts: Playwright, Composition, Write, Drama-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Other Life

Performer 3 yrs 5 +1 M *Villager, Outcast, Soldier*

Skills: 6 pts: Acting, Persuasion, Sing, Falsehood, Conspicuous, Sleight of Hand, Musical Instrument

Traits: 2 pts: Colorful

Tinkerer 7 yrs 8 +1 M *Villager, Peasant, Outcast*

Skills: 5 pts: Mending, Scavenging, Junk-wise

Traits: 2 pts: —

Coal Man 4 yrs 5 — *Serv., Peasant, Outcast, Soldier*

Skills: 4 pts: Firebuilding, Streetwise, Charcoal-wise, Haggling

Traits: 2 pts: Hacking Cough

Seamstress 5 yrs 10 — *Villager, Peasant*

Skills: 4 pts: Sewing, Embroidery, Clothing-wise, Fashion-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Fretful, Sharp Dresser

Barkeep 5 yrs 15 — *Villager, Peasant*

Skills: 4 pts: Drink-wise, Drunk-wise, Persuasion

Traits: 1 pt: Good Listener

Shopkeeper 6 yrs 16 +1 M *Villager, Peasant*

Skills: 4 pts: Merchant-wise, Haggling, Accounting, Observation

Traits: —

Baker 6 yrs 10 — *Villager, Peasant*

Skills: 5 pts: Baking, Cooking, Daily Bread-wise, Sweet Tooth-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Floury

Alewife 6 yrs 12 +1 P *Noble Court, Peasant, Villager*

Skills: 5 pts: Brewer, Mending, Drinking, Administration, Drunk Husband-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Domineering Presence

Restrictions: Character must be female.

Conner 6 yrs 12 — *Noble Court, Peasant, Villager*

Skills: 5 pts: Brewer, Mending, Drinking, Cooper, Beer-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Red Cheeks, Drunk

Clerk 4 yrs 9 +1 M *Villager, Outcast, Soldier*

Skills: 4 pts: Bureaucracy, Write, Read, Accounting, Bribe-wise, Paperwork-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Scribe 7 yrs 10 +1 M *Villager, Peasant*

Skills: 5 pts: Write, Illuminations, Read, Handwriting-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Near-Sighted, Cramped Hands

Requires: Student, Acolyte or Clerk

Accountant 10 yrs 15 +1 M *Villager, Peasant*

Skills: 4 pts: Accounting, Bureaucracy, Write, Read, Ledger-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Bored

Requires: Clerk, Young Lady or Student

Scholar 10 yrs 15 +1 M *Villager, Outcast, Noble Court*

Skills: 11 pts: Read, Research, History, Philosophy, Symbology, Instruction, Illuminations, Foreign Languages, Ancient Languages

Traits: 1 pt: Know It All, Bookworm

Requires: Scribe, Thinker, Archivist, Interpreter, Custodian, Bishop or any sorcerous lifepath

Moneylender 8 yrs 20 — *Villager, Peasant, Outcast*

Skills: 4 pts: Currency-wise, Haggling, Accounting

Traits: 1 pt: Penny-wise

Tax Collector 5 yrs 18 +1 M *Villager, Peasant, Outcast*

Skills: 4 pts: Intimidation, Accounting, Haggling, Interrogation

Traits: 1 pt: Hard Hearted

Restrictions: may not be the character's second lifepath

Taskmaster 6 yrs 15 +1 M/P *Villager, Outcast, Soldier*

Skills: 5 pts: Intimidation, Brawling, Sing, Conspicuous, Laborer-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Intimidating, Dreadful

Restrictions: may not be the character's second lifepath

Mercenary Captain 5 yrs 15 +1 M/P *Soldier, Seafaring, Outcast*

Skills: 6 pts: Pilot, Fat Merchant-wise, Sword, Climbing, Intimidation

Traits: 2 pts: Predatory

Requires: Sailor, Pirate or Knight

City Guard 5 yrs 9 +1 P *Soldier, Outcast*

Skills: 5 pts: Brawling, Intimidation, Drinking, Appropriate Weapons, Armor†

Traits: 1 pt: Drunk

Sergeant-at-Arms 6 yrs 11 +1 P *Soldier, Outcast*

Skills: 6 pts: Intimidation, Appropriate Weapons, Armor†, Field Dressing

Traits: 1 pt: Overworked

Requires: any guard lifepath, Marine, First Mate, Foot Soldier, Freebooter, Squire, Man-at-Arms or Cavalryman

Guard Captain 6 yrs 15 +1 M *Soldier, Outcast, Noble Court*

Skills: 6 pts: Etiquette, Riding, Intimidation, Command, Appropriate Weapons

Traits: 1 pt: Exasperated

Requires: Knight, Captain or any sergeant

Apprentice 7 yrs 8 +1 P *Villager, Peasant, Soldier, Sea*

Skills: 6 pts: Mending, Write, Read, Hauling, Driving, Ditch Digging

Traits: 2 pts: Broken In, Back-Breaking Labor

Apprentice Artisan 8 yrs 10 +1 P *Villager, Soldier*

Skills: 8 pts: Artisan-wise, Mason, any "smith" skill, Carpentry, Write, Read, Jargon

Traits: 1 pt: —

Journeyman 6 yrs 15 +1 M/P *Villager, Peasant, Soldier, Sea*

Skills: 7 pts: Haggling, Appraisal, Blacksmith, Carpentry, Tanner, Potter, Cooper

Traits: 1 pt: Made Man, Geometric

Requires: Apprentice

Engraver 7 yrs 15 +1 P *Soldier, Noble Court*

Skills: 4 pts: Engraving, Etching, Jargon

Traits: 1 pt: Gentle but Firm

Requires: Journeyman

Saddler 8 yrs 25 +1 M/P *Villager, Soldier, Court*

Skills: 6 pts: Saddlery, Tanner, Sewing, Embroidery, Mending, Mount-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Journeyman

Armorer 10 yrs 25 — *Soldier, Court, Outcast*

Skills: 7 pts: Swordsman-wise, Blacksmith, Tanner, Armorer, Weaponsmith

Traits: 1 pt: Diligent

Requires: Journeyman

Plumber 7 yrs 20 +1 M *Noble Court, Outcast*

Skills: 5 pts: Plumbing, Engineer, Coppersmith, Waterworks

Traits: 1 pt: A Touch of Madness

Requires: Journeyman

Locksmith 8 yrs 13 +1 M *Peasant, Villager*

Skills: 4 pts: Locksmith, Haggling, Lock-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Steady Hands

Requires: Journeyman

Jeweler 9 yrs 20 — *Villager, Peasant*

Skills: 5 pts: Jeweler, Lapidary, Appraisal, Haggling, Falsehood

Traits: 1 pt: Guarded

Requires: Journeyman

Gaol Warden 4 yrs 15 — *Outcast, Court, Soldier, Villager*

Skills: 4 pts: Administration, Etiquette, Gaol-wise, Everybody's Innocent-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Born Noble, Merchant, Sergeant, Man-at-Arms or Judge

Advocate 6 yrs 25 +1 M *Outcast, Noble Court, Villager*

Skills: 6 pts: Rule of Law, Bureaucracy, Persuasion, History, Rhetoric

Traits: 1 pt: Shrewd

Requires: Student or Young Lady

Doctor 7 yrs 20 +1 M *Outcast, Noble Court, Villager*

Skills: 6 pts: Anatomy, Apothecary, Bloodletting, Surgery, Soothing Platitudes

Traits: 2 pts: Frustrated

Requires: Student or Young Lady

Physician 5 yrs 15 +1 M *Noble Court, Soldier*

Skills: 6 pts: Herbalism, Apothecary, Anatomy, Research, Herbalist-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Midwife, Young Lady or Student

Hospital Warden 4 yrs 15 — *Outcast, Servitude, Religious*

Skills: 5 pts: Administration, Beggar-wise, Vagrant-wise, Leper-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Overworked, Generous, Venal, Hypochondriac

Requires: Any Noble, Noble Court or Religious lifepath

Banker 10 yrs 60 — *Noble Court, Noble*

Skills: 4 pts: Accounting, Administration, Currency-wise; 2 pts: General

Traits: 1 pt: Intense

Requires: Merchant, Moneylender, Steward, Accountant or Chamberlain

Merchant 6 yrs 30 +1 M *Villager, Peasant, Noble Court*

Skills: 6 pts: Accounting, Haggling, Supplier-wise, Lord-wise, Peasant-wise

Traits: —

Requires: Master Craftsman, Master of Horses, Master of Hounds, Moneylender, Steward, Jeweler, Saddler, Armorer, Cobbler, Courtier or Chamberlain

Sorcerer 6 yrs 32 +1 M, P *Villager, Outcast, Noble Court*

Skills: 6 pts: Sorcery, Enchanting, Calligraphy

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Neophyte Sorcerer, Arcane Devotee or Weather Witch

Temple Priest 5 yrs 20 — *Any except Noble*

Skills: 8 pts: Church Politics-wise, Doctrine, Oratory, Suasion, Symbology

Traits: 2 pts: Vested, Aloof, Imperious, Strong-Willed

Requires: Religious Acolyte, Temple Acolyte, or Military Order

Judge 10 yrs 30 +1 M *Court, Villager*

Skills: 5 pts: Rule of Law, Amercement, Criminal-wise, Interrogation

Traits: 2 pts: Ornery, Quick-Witted

Requires: Town Official, Tax Collector, Bailiff or Justiciar

Municipal Minister 9 yrs 30 +1 M *Villager, Noble Court, Outcast*

Skills: 6 pts: Persuasion, Rule of Law, Administration, Oratory, Law-wise, Minister-wise

Traits: —

Requires: Town Official, Scholar, Priest, Bishop, Captain, Sea Captain, Artisan, Master Craftsman, Knight, Courtier or Master of Horses

Artisan 10 yrs 45 +1 M *Soldier, Noble Court*

Skills: 9 pts: Jargon, Mason, Engineer, Architect

Traits: 1 pt: Self-Confident

Requires: Apprentice Artisan, Engineer or Master Craftsman

Master Craftsman 10 yrs 45 +1 M, P *Villager, Court, Soldier*

Skills: 6 pts: Craftsman-wise, Artisan-wise, Materials-wise, Tools-wise; 3 pts: General

Traits: 2 pts: Ambitious, Charismatic

Requires: Journeyman and one of the following: Locksmith, Plumber, Engraver, Saddler, Blacksmith, Armorer, Atilliator, Cobbler, Bowyer or Taskmaster

Bishop 12 yrs 60 +1 M *Court, Religious*

Skills: 5 pts: Etiquette, Bureaucracy, Ritual, Church-wise, City-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Holier

Requires: Archpriest, Canon, Steward, Chamberlain or the Your Grace trait

Magnate 12 yrs 75 +1 M *Any*

Skills: 6 pts: Administration, Merchant-wise, Court-wise, Commodities-wise, Pirates-wise, Bandit-wise; 1 pt: General

Traits: 2 pts: Self-Satisfied, Greedy, Affinity for Business

Requires: Merchant or Master of Horses

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
City Wife	6 yrs	5	+1 M	*Religious*

Skills: 2 pts: Child-Rearing, Husband-wise; also, see note below

Traits: 1 pt: —

Note: A player who takes the City Wife lifepath may also choose her husband's lifepath from the City Dweller setting. The City Wife may choose from her husband's skills—she gets half of his skill points, rounded down—and she gets one quarter of her husband's Resources.

† This is a training skill. It costs 2 pts to open and may not be advanced.

Noble Setting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Born Noble	8 yrs	15	—	*Any*

Skills: 5 pts: General

Traits: 1 pt: Mark of Privilege, Your Lordship, Your Eminence, Your Grace

Bastard	6 yrs	15	+1 M/P	*Outcast, Soldier, City, Religious*

Skills: 4 pts: Family Secret-wise, Etiquette, Extortion

Traits: 2 pts: Bastard, Bitter, Cynical, Happy-Go-Lucky

Restrictions: If chosen, this path must be the character's second lifepath and may only be taken once.

Page	6 yrs	15	+1 P	*Soldier, City, Servitude*

Skills: 7 pts: Riding, Brawling, Write, Read, Sword, Etiquette

Traits: 1 pt: —

Restrictions: If chosen, this path must be the character's second lifepath and may only be taken once.

Student	4 yrs	10	+1 M	*City Dweller, Noble Court*

Skills: 8 pts: Write, Read, Rule of Law, Oratory, Doctrine, Etiquette

Traits: 1 pt: —

Squire	6 yrs	15	+1 M, P	*Soldier, City, Serv., Outcast*

Skills: 9 pts: Sword, Mounted Combat Training†, Shield Training†, Armor Training†, Lance, Knives, Crossbow

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Page or any Professional Soldier lifepath

Arcane Devotee	6 yrs	10	+1 M	*City Dweller, Court, Outcast*

Skills: 6 pts: Calligraphy, Write, Read, Research, Symbology

Traits: 2 pts: Base Humility, Gifted

Religious Acolyte	5 yrs	10	+1 M	*City Dweller, Religious, Court*

Skills: 6 pts: Doctrine, Bureaucracy, Write, Read, Etiquette

Traits: 2 pts: Tonsured, Faithful

Young Lady 10 yrs 20 +1 M *City Dweller, Court, Religious*

Skills: 11 pts: Write, Read, Etiquette, Astrology, Musical Instrument, Composition, Field Dressing, Apothecary, Doctrine

Traits: 2 pts: —

Restrictions: Young Lady may only be taken as the second or third LP for the character and it may only be taken once.

Knight 5 yrs 20 +1 P *Soldier, City, Outcast, Religious*

Skills: 10 pts: Mounted Combat Training†, Shield Training†, Armor Training†, Appropriate Weapons, Intimidation, Hunting, Conspicuous

Traits: 2 pts: Sworn Homage

Requires: Squire or Cavalryman

Lady 5 yrs 25 +1 M *City, Outcast, Religious, Court*

Skills: 11 pts: Etiquette, Estate Management, Persuasion, Seduction, Inconspicuous, Doctrine, Husband-wise, Estate-wise, Staff-wise, Court-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Young Lady, Courtier, Knight or City Wife with Magnate or Bishop chosen as the husband's lifepath

Lord 7 yrs 50 +1 M *Soldier, Noble Court, City*

Skills: 6 pts: Hunting, Dance, Sing, Falconry, Estate Management, 1 pt: General

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Knight or the Your Lordship trait

Dame 7 yrs 40 +1 M *City, Court, Outcast, Religious*

Skills: 3 pts: Estate Management, Noble-wise; 2 pts: General

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Lady, City Wife with Magnate or Bishop as the husband's LP or the Your Lordship trait

Baron 8 yrs 60 +1 M/P *Court, Soldier*

Skills: 1 pt: General

Traits: 1 pt: Noblesse Oblige, Regal Bearing, Pompous, Sharp Dresser, Callous

Requires: Baron requires Knight and the Your Lordship trait; or Magnate, Master of Horses, Steward, Lord, Constable or Justiciar.

Viscount 9 yrs 65 +1 M/P *Court, Soldier*

Skills: 2 pts: General

Traits: 1 pt: Noblesse Oblige, Regal Bearing, Pompous, Sharp Dresser, Callous

Requires: Knight and the Your Eminence trait; or Magnate, Baron, Constable or Justiciar

Count 10 yrs 70 +1 M/P *Court, Soldier*

Skills: 3 pts: General

Traits: 1 pt: Noblesse Oblige, Regal Bearing, Pompous, Sharp Dresser, Callous

Requires: Knight and the Your Eminence trait, or Magnate, Constable or Justiciar

Duke 10 yrs 90 +1 M/P *Court, Soldier*

Skills: 3 pts: General

Traits: 1 pt: Noblesse Oblige, Regal Bearing, Pompous, Sharp Dresser, Callous

Requires: Duke or Knight and the Your Grace trait

Noble Prince 10 yrs 100 +1 M/P *Court, Soldier*

Skills: 4 pts: General

Traits: 1 pt: Noblesse Oblige, Regal Bearing, Pompous, Sharp Dresser, Callous

Requires: Duke or Knight and the Your Grace trait

Prince of the Blood * 60 — *Court, Soldier, Religious*

Skills: 2 pts: General

Traits: 2 pts: Born to be King, Noblesse Oblige, Regal Bearing, Pompous, Sharp Dresser, Callous

Requires: the Your Grace trait and express permission from the GM and all players in the current game

Notes: Players may take the Prince of the Blood lifepath for any appropriate length of time, from 2 years to 20. Subject to GM approval, as above.

Noble Court Subsetting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Minstrel	4 yrs	10	+1 M	*City Dweller, Outcast, Villager*

Skills: 5 pts: Poetry, Sing, Musical Instrument

Traits: 1 pt: Recondite

Court Jester 5 yrs 10 — *Outcast, Servitude*

Skills: 7 pts: Sing, Sleight of Hand, Climbing, Conspicuous, Throwing, Ugly Truth

Traits: 3 pts: Scapegoat, Aura of Innocence

Court Artist 6 yrs 15 — *City Dweller, Outcast*

Skills: 5 pts: Sculpture, Painting, Engraving, Seduction, Genius-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Romantic

Requires: Court Jester, Painter, Thinker, Scholar or Sculptor

Servant 6 yrs 7 — *Outcast, Servitude*

Skills: 4 pts: Inconspicuous, Etiquette, Court Gossip-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Veneer of Obedience, Lifting Heavy Things, Bored

Nurse 6 yrs 7 — *Outcast, Servitude, Villager*

Skills: 5 pts: Child-Rearing, Etiquette, Court Gossip-wise, Field Dressing, Child-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Maternal

Groom 4 yrs 5 +1 P *City Dweller, Villager, Soldier*

Skills: 5 pts: Animal Husbandry, Riding, Mending, Border-wise, Road-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Gardener 10 yrs 10 +1 P *City Dweller, Servitude*

Skills: 7 pts: Plant-wise, Flower-wise, Tree-wise, Pest-wise, Herbalism, Farming, Almanac

Traits: 2 pts: Earthy Smell, Salt of the Earth, Down to Earth, Affinity for Plants

Torturer 5 yrs 10 +1 M *Outcast, Servitude, Soldier*

Skills: 5 pts: Interrogation, Torture, Anatomy, Torture Devices-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Unsavory Madman

Forester 7 yrs 9 +1 M/P *Peasant, Soldier, Villager, Outcast*

Skills: 8 pts: Observation, Orienteering, Foraging, Survival, Tracking, Trapper, Cudgel, Staff, Bow, Poacher-wise, Park-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Student 4 yrs 10 +1 M *City, Noble, Religious*

Skills: 9 pts: Write, Read, Rule of Law, Oratory, Doctrine, Etiquette

Traits: 1 pt: Dangerous, Geometric

Page 6 yrs 15 +1 P *Soldier, City, Servitude, Noble*

Skills: 6 pts: Riding, Brawling, Write, Read, Sword

Traits: 1 pt: —

Restrictions: If chosen, this path must be the character's second lifepath and may only be taken once.

Man-at-Arms 6 yrs 12 +1 P *Soldier, City Dweller, Outcast*

Skills: 8 pts: Mounted Combat Training†, Shield Training†, Armor Training†, Brawling, Intimidation, Etiquette, Appropriate Weapons

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Page, Squire or any Professional Soldier lifepath

Falconer 5 yrs 10 +1 M/P *Peasant, Soldier, City Dweller*

Skills: 4 pts: Falconry, Animal Husbandry, Hunting

Traits: 2 pts: Boaster, Weird, Birdie Talk

Huntsman 5 yrs 12 +1 M/P *Peasant, Soldier*

Skills: 8 pts: Hunting, Animal Husbandry, Forest-wise, Stealthy, Cooking, Tracking, Orienteering, Crossbow

Traits: 1 pt: —

Herald 4 yrs 10 — *Soldier, Servitude, City Dweller*

Skills: 4 pts: Heraldry, Noble-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Formalist, Rainman, Eidetic Memory

Court Chef 5 yrs 14 +1 M *Outcast, City Dweller*

Skills: 5 pts: Cooking, Sing, Herbalism, Falsehood

Traits: 1 pt: —

Squire 5 yrs 14 +1 M, P *Soldier, City, Serv., Outcast, Noble*

Skills: 9 pts: Sword, Armor Training†, Shield Training†, Lance, Brawling, Mounted Combat†, Etiquette

Traits: 1 pt: Pragmatic, Tough, Determined

Requires: Corrupt Sergeant, Village Sergeant, Sergeant, Veteran, Page or Man-at-Arms

Young Lady 9 yrs 25 +1 M *City Dweller, Noble, Religious*

Skills: 10 pts: Write, Read, Etiquette, Poetry, Astrology, Musical Instrument, Composition, Field Dressing, Apothecary, Court Gossip-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Restrictions: Young Lady may only be taken as the second or third lifepath, and it may only be taken once.

Knight 6 yrs 20 +1 P *Soldier, Noble, Outcast*

Skills: 11 pts: Conspicuous, Intimidation, Falconry, Mounted Combat Training†, Shield Training†, Armor Training†, Appropriate Weapons

Traits: 1 pt: Sworn Homage, Sense of Entitlement

Requires: Squire or Cavalryman

Courtier 5 yrs 15 +1 M *City Dweller, Outcast, Noble*

Skills: 8 pts: Etiquette, Observation, Persuasion, Seduction, Inconspicuous, Court Gossip-wise, Noble-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Rapier Wit

Governess 8 yrs 12 — *Outcast, Servitude, Villager*

Skills: 7 pts: Family-wise, Administration, Intimidation, Etiquette, Persuasion, Ugly Truth

Traits: 1 pt: Dismissive, You Should Know Better than That!, Bitter

Requires: Nurse, Midwife, Lady or any Wife lifepath

Chaplain 5 yrs 18 +1 M/P *Soldier, City, Religious, Servitude*

Skills: 8 pts: Oratory, Doctrine, Riding, Armor Training†, Mounted Combat Training†, Shield Training†, Appropriate Weapons

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Military Order or any priest lifepath

Court Sorcerer 8 yrs 32 +1 M *Outcast, City Dweller*

Skills: 7 pts: Etiquette, Falsehood, Astrology, Alchemy, Sorcery

Traits: 1 pt: Inscrutable, Gifted, Second Sight

Requires: Arcane Devotee, Rogue Wizard or Sorcerer

Court Lawyer 8 yrs 25 +1 M *City Dweller, Outcast, Religious*

Skills: 6 pts: Etiquette, Oratory, Persuasion, Rule of Law, History

Traits: 1 pt: Rhetorical, Evasive

Requires: Student or Advocate

Court Doctor 8 yrs 20 +1 M *City Dweller, Outcast*

Skills: 7 pts: Etiquette, Apothecary, Bloodletting, Surgery, Anatomy, Astrology, Falsehood

Traits: 1 pt: Incomprehensible Diagnosis

Requires: Student, Itinerant Monk, Cloistered Nun or Priest

Chronicler 10 yrs 15 +1 M *City Dweller, Outcast, Villager*

Skills: 6 pts: Composition, History, Etiquette, Illuminations, Obscure History

Traits: 2 pts: Prone to Exaggeration, Flatterer, Denouncer, Cynical, Righteous

Requires: Student, Custodian, Interpreter, Archivist or Young Lady

Armorer 7 yrs 25 +1 P *City Dweller, Soldier*

Skills: 9 pts: Etching, Armorer, Blacksmith, Tanner, Sewing, Weaponsmith

Traits: 1 pt: Proud

Requires: Journeyman

Atilliator 10 yrs 30 +1 P *Soldier, City Dweller*

Skills: 6 pts: Atilliator, Carpentry, Carving

Traits: 1 pt: Professionally Diligent

Requires: Journeyman

Court Priest 6 yrs 20 +1 M *Outcast, City Dweller, Religious*

Skills: 5 pts: Etiquette, History, Symbology, Doctrine, Persuasion

Traits: 2 pts: Royal Favorite, Faithful

Requires: Chaplain, Priest or Religious Acolyte

Steward 7 yrs 15 +1 M *City, Noble, Outcast, Religious*

Skills: 6 pts: Estate Management, Accounting, Observation, Manor-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Town Official, Municipal Minister, Judge, Court Lawyer, Court Doctor, Governess, Young Lady, Magnate or Lord

Master of Horses 8 yrs 40 — *City Dweller, Soldier*

Skills: 4 pts: Horse Husbandry, Appraisal, Horse-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Love of the Horse, Low Speech, Affinity for Horses

Requires: Captain, Baron, Saddler, Merchant or Magnate

Master of Hounds 7 yrs 20 — *City Dweller, Soldier*

Skills: 7 pts: Dog Husbandry, Dog-wise, Hunting, Instruction, Mimicry

Traits: 1 pt: Dog Lover, Pigpen, Emotional, Iron Stomach

Requires: Captain, Baron, Saddler, Merchant or Magnate

Hostage 6 yrs * — *City, Noble, Soldier, Religious*

Skills: 4 pts: Etiquette, Court-wise, Foreign Languages, Foreign History

Traits: 1 pt: Homesick, Bored, Darling of the Court

Requires: any lifepath from the Noble setting

Note: *Hostage gives resource points equal to half of the character's previous lifepath.

Bailiff 4 yrs 15 +1 M/P *City Dweller, Soldier, Outcast*

Skills: 7 pts: Intimidation, Interrogation, Rule of Law, Outlaw-wise, Village-wise, City-wise, Tax-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Nose for Trouble

Requires: Knight or the Your Lordship trait

Justiciar 5 yrs 15 +1 M/P *City, Soldier, Religious, Outcast*

Skills: 6 pts: Rule of Law, Amercement, Interrogation, Criminal-wise, Circuit-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Stern Demeanor, Amenable to Other Options

Requires: Judge, Captain, Bailiff or Lord

Coroner 6 yrs 15 — *City Dweller, Soldier*

Skills: 5 pts: Rule of Law, Anatomy, Writ-wise, Observation

Traits: 1 pt: Hard Hearted, Seen It All

Requires: Steward, Town Official, Municipal Minister, Judge, Court Lawyer, Court Doctor, Magnate or Lord

Constable 6 yrs 50 +1 M *City Dweller, Soldier, Outcast*

Skills: 5 pts: Command, Heraldry, Logistics, Kingdom-wise, Obligation-wise, Soldier-wise, Cavalry-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Weight of the World

Requires: Captain, Baron, Viscount, Count, Duke or Prince

Treasurer 7 yrs 45 — *City Dweller, Soldier, Religious*

Skills: 5 pts: Accounting, Estate Management, Tax-wise, Debt-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Pecunious, Lavish Taste

Requires: Steward, Town Official, Municipal Minister, Judge, Court Lawyer, Court Doctor, Magnate, Baron, Bishop, Viscount, Count or Duke

Chamberlain 7 yrs 30 +1 M *City Dweller, Soldier, Religious*

Skills: 5 pts: Soothing Platitudes, Persuasion, Ugly Truth; 1 pt: General

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Scholar, Steward, Town Official, Municipal Minister, Judge, Court Lawyer, Court Doctor, Magnate, Baron, Bishop, Viscount, Count or Duke

Advisor to the Court § 10/yr +1 M/P *Any*

Skills: 1 pt: General per year of tenure

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Thinker, Captain, Sea Captain, Magnate, Master Craftsman, Artisan, Bishop, Rogue Wizard, Mad Summoner, Heretic Priest, Dame, Baron, Viscount, Count, Duke or Prince

§ This lifepath can be one to three years long, player chooses tenure. Character earns 1 general skill point and 10 resource points per year. The stat and trait points are earned once.

† This is a training skill. It costs 2 pts to open and may not be advanced.

Religious Subsetting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Castrati	7 yrs	15	+1 M	*Outcast, Noble Court*

Skills: 7 pts: Sing, Persuasion, Falsehood, Etiquette, Administration, Rule of Law

Traits: 3 pts: Eunuch, Scheming

Pardoner 5 yrs 12 — *Peasant, City, Villager, Outcast*

Skills: 5 pts: Persuasion, Falsehood, Intimidation, Doctrine

Traits: 1 pt: Pardoner, Corrupt

Zealous Convert 4 yrs 10 — *Outcast, Peasant, Servitude, Court*

Skills: 4 pts: Religious Diatribe, Doctrine, Rhetoric

Traits: 3 pts: Infallible Religious Logic, Righteous, Firm, Demagogue

Military Order 3 yrs 7 +1 M, P *Any except Peasant*

Skills: 5 pts: Doctrine, Riding, Armor Training†, Appropriate Weapons

Traits: 2 pts: Disciplined, Fanatical Devotion, Sworn to the Order

Requires: Knight of a Holy Military Order requires Squire, Knight or any lifepath from the Professional Soldier setting

Grave Digger 4 yrs 6 — *Outcast, Servitude, City, Villager*

Skills: 4 pts: Digging, Grave-wise, Cemetery-wise

Traits: 2 pt: Superstitious, Burial Rites

Porter 3 yrs 5 — *Outcast, Villager, Peasant*

Skills: 4 pts: Temple-wise, Priest-wise, Worshipper-wise, Church Treasure-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Keys to the Church, Familiar Face

Notary 4 yrs 15 — *City Dweller, Outcast, Court*

Skills: 4 pts: Rule of Law, Bureaucracy, Church Law, Bribe-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Clerk, Young Lady or Student

Custodian 5 yrs 10 +1 M *City Dweller, Outcast*

Skills: 7 pts: Relic-wise, Observation, Obscure History, Religious History, Folklore, Saint-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Strange, Erudite, Obsessed, Arcane

Requires: Student, Young Lady, Cloistered Monk/Nun, Temple Acolyte, Inquisitor, Exorcist or Theologian

Interpreter 5 yrs 10 — *City Dweller, Court, Villager*

Skills: 7 pts: Read, Ancient Languages, Instruction, Write, Doctrine, Foreign Languages

Traits: 2 pts: Ink-Stained Hands, Condescending

Requires: Student, Young Lady, Temple Acolyte, Exorcist or Theologian

Archivist 7 yrs 8 +1 M *City Dweller, Villager, Court*

Skills: 5 pts: Research, Library-wise, Ancient History, Symbology

Traits: 1 pt: Myopic, Affinity for Books and Scrolls

Requires: Student, Cloistered Nun/Monk, Exorcist or Theologian

Itinerant Monk 6 yrs 6 — *Peasant, Villager, Outcast*

Skills: 7 pts: Doctrine, Suasion, Meditation, Begging, Alms-wise, Streetwise, Road-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Tonsured

Cloistered Nun 10 yrs 12 — *Peasant, Outcast, Noble Court*

Skills: 6 pts: Research, History, Meditation, Monastic Ritual, Vintner, Symbology

Traits: 1 pt: Tonsured, Restless, Bored

Temple Acolyte 6 yrs 5 +1 M *City Dweller, Outcast, Soldier*

Skills: 4 pts: Write, Read, Doctrine, Temple-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Tonsured, Obedient, Faithful

Priest 5 yrs 18 +1 M *Villager, Outcast, Soldier, Court*

Skills: 7 pts: Oratory, Suasion, Write, Read, Doctrine, Ritual, Symbology, Religious History

Traits: 2 pts: Vested

Requires: Temple Acolyte or Religious Acolyte

Exorcist 6 yrs 10 + 1 M *Outcast, City, Court*

Skills: 9 pts: Doctrine, Obscure History, Observation, Church Law, Symbology, Demonology, Ancient Languages, Exorcist Ritual†

Traits: 2 pts: Skeptical, Haunted, Possessed, Lost Faith, Faithful

Requires: Temple Priest, Itinerant Priest, Priest, Court Priest or Archivist

Inquisitor 6 yrs 15 +1 M/P *Outcast, Soldier, City, Court*

Skills: 6 pts: Doctrine, Interrogation, Torture, Heresy-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Suspicious, Merciless, Cold-Blooded, Righteous

Requires: Temple Priest, Itinerant Priest, Priest, Court Priest, Judge or Justiciar

Theologian 10 yrs 9 +1 M *City Dweller, Villager, Court*

Skills: 10 pts: Doctrine, Rhetoric, Philosophy, History, Religious History, Church Law, Obscure History, Read, Write

Traits: 2 pts: Learned, Insightful, Bookworm, Academic

Requires: Scribe, Archivist, Court Lawyer, Advocate, Custodian, Interpreter, Priest or Bishop

Archpriest 5 yrs 25 +1 M/P *City Dweller, Outcast, Court*

Skills: 10 pts: Oratory, Suasion, Write, Read, Doctrine, History, Religious History, Ritual, Church-wise, Parish-wise, Tithe-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Imperious Demeanor

Requires: Temple Priest, Itinerant Priest, Priest, Court Priest or Chaplain

Canon 10 yrs 45 +1 M/P *City Dweller, Outcast, Court*

Skills: 6 pts: Rule of Law, Church Law, Administration, Doctrine, Church-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Authoritative

Requires: Archpriest, Theologian or Abbot

Abbot/Abbess 10 yrs 45 +1 M *City Dweller, Outcast, Court*

Skills: 6 pts: Administration, Accounting, Vintner, Wine Tasting, Royal Secret-wise, Abbey-wise; 2 pts: General

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Itinerant Monk, Cloistered Nun, Theologian or Vintner

Bishop 8 yrs 45 — *City, Outcast, Noble Court*

Skills: 7 pts: Religious History, Intimidation, Ritual, Symbology, History, Obscure History

Traits: 2 pts: Domineering Presence

Requires: Archpriest, Baron, Viscount, Count, Duke or Prince and the Your Grace trait

† This is a training skill. It costs 2 pts to open and may not be advanced.

Professional Soldier Subsetting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Runner	3 yrs	5	+1 P	*Villager, Peasant, Serv., Outcast*

Skills: 4 pts: Inconspicuous, Stealthy, Sing

Traits: 2 pts: Skinny, Fleet of Foot, Sprinter

Apprentice	4 yrs	6	+1 P	*City Dweller, Peasant, Villager*

Skills: 6 pts: Mending, Write, Read, Hauling, Driving, Ditch Digging

Traits: 2 pts: Exhausted, Back-Breaking Labor

Musician	3 yrs	5	+1 M	*Villager, Peasant, Servitude*

Skills: 4 pts: Musical Instrument, Conspicuous, Riding

Traits: 1 pt: —

Foot Soldier	3 yrs	6	+1 P	*Outcast, Villager, Servitude*

Skills: 6 pts: Soldiering, Appropriate Weapons, Shield Training†, Brawling, Foraging, Firebuilding

Traits: 1 pt: —

Archer	3 yrs	5	+1 P	*Outcast, Villager, Servitude*

Skills: 5 pts: Bow, Fletcher, Brawling, Foraging, Firebuilding

Traits: 1 pt: —

Crossbowman	3 yrs	7	+1 P	*Outcast, Villager, Servitude*

Skills: 5 pts: Crossbow, Fletcher, Brawling, Foraging, Firebuilding

Traits: 1 pt: —

Sailor	5 yrs	5	+1 P	*Sea, Outcast, Villager, Servitude*

Skills: 6 pts: Seamanship, Rigging, Knots, Mending, Navigation, Knives, Sword

Traits: 1 pt: Iron Stomach, Sea Legs, Affinity for Rope

Herald	3 yrs	7	+1 M	*Villager, Servitude, Noble Court*

Skills: 4 pts: Oratory, Conspicuous, Riding, Heraldry, Bannerman-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Bannerman	3 yrs	7	+1 P	*Villager, Servitude, Noble Court*

Skills: 5 pts: Conspicuous, Riding, Appropriate Weapons, Armor Training†

Traits: 2 pts: Honored, Brutal, Aggressive

Scout	3 yrs	4	+1 P	*Peasant, Servitude, Outcast*

Skills: 5 pts: Stealthy, Foraging, Orienteering, Appropriate Weapons, Observation

Traits: 1 pt: —

Sergeant 5 yrs 8 +1 M/P *Villager, Servitude, Noble Court*

Skills: 6 pts: Intimidation, Command, Field Dressing, Appropriate Weapons

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Squire, Village Guard, City Guard or Foot Soldier

Veteran 8 yrs 20 — *Outcast, Court*

Skills: 5 pts: Soldier-wise, Soldiering, Campaign History, Tactics

Traits: 2 pts: Stubborn, Maimed

Requires: Sergeant, Sergeant-at-Arms, Knight, Military Order or Freebooter

Cavalryman 4 yrs 9 +1 P *Villager, Servitude, Noble Court*

Skills: 10 pts: Riding, Mounted Combat Training†, Armor Training†, Shield Training†, Appropriate Weapons, Horse-wise, Haggling

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: a prior lifepath having to do with horses—Knight, Squire, Groom, Master of Horses, etc.

Journeyman 5 yrs 15 +1 M/P *Villager, Peasant, Outcast*

Skills: 5 pts: Blacksmith, Appraisal, Haggling, Ridiculous Request-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Apprentice

Armorer 8 yrs 20 +1 M *City Dweller, Villager, Outcast*

Skills: 9 pts: Mending, Blacksmith, Armorer, Weaponsmith, Etching, Tanner

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Journeyman

Atilliator 10 yrs 22 +1 P *Court, City Dweller, Outcast*

Skills: 6 pts: Atilliator, Carpentry, Carving, Blacksmith, Tanner

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Journeyman

Chaplain 5 yrs 15 +1 M/P *Outcast, City, Sea, Court, Religious*

Skills: 6 pts: Oratory, Riding, Armor Training†, Mounted Combat Training†, Appropriate Weapons

Traits: 1 pt: Ideologue, Psychotic

Requires: any priest lifepath or Military Order

Engineer 5 yrs 18 +1 M *City Dweller, Court, Outcast*

Skills: 6 pts: Artillerist, Engineer, Fortifications

Traits: 1 pt: Smart, Sense of Distance

Requires: Student, Engineer, Mining Engineer or Artillerist's Hand

Wizard of War 4 yrs 20 +1 M *City Dweller, Court, Outcast*

Skills: 7 pts: Sorcery, Strategy Games, Soldier-wise, War-wise, Haggling, Cartography

Traits: 1 pt: Arrogant

Requires: Neophyte Sorcerer, Arcane Devotee, Weather Witch, Rogue Wizard or Mad Summoner

Quartermaster 5 yrs 17 +1 M *Villager, City Dweller, Court*

Skills: 6 pts: Administration, Accounting, Haggling, Logistics

Traits: 1 pt: Light Sleeper

Requires: Sergeant, Veteran, Steward, Ship's Captain, Captain of the Guard, Merchant, Man-at-Arms, Smuggler, Constable or Lord

Captain 6 yrs 35 +1 M, P *Any except Noble*

Skills: 9 pts: Command, Contract-wise, Haggling, Oratory, Appropriate Weapons, Field Dressing, Riding, Strategy

Traits: 2 pts: Savvy

Requires: Captain of the Guard, Knight, Lord, Constable or two Freebooter lifepaths

† This is a training skill. It costs 2 pts to open and may not be advanced.

Seafaring Setting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Son of a Gun	8 yrs	3	—	*Servitude, Soldier, Outcast*

Skills: 3 pts: General (yes, this is a Born lifepath)

Traits: 2 pts: Sea Legs

Boy 4 yrs 8 — *City, Servitude, Soldier, Outcast*

Skills: 4 pts: Sailor-wise, Ship-wise, Captain-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Veneer of Obedience, Curses like a Sailor, Sprinter

Requires: If Boy is chosen, it must be the second lifepath taken and may only be taken once.

Galley Slave 6 yrs 3 — *Servitude, Soldier, Outcast*

Skills: 3 pts: Slave Deck-wise, Taskmaster-wise, Sing, Seamanship, Knots

Traits: 3 pts: Tasting the Lash, Eating Maggots, Following the Beat, Iron Stomach, Bottomless Stomach, Gnawing Hunger

Ratcatcher 6 yrs 4 — *Outcast, Servitude, City Dweller*

Skills: 5 pts: Trapper, Poisons, Ratiquette

Traits: 3 pts: Bilge-Drinker, Rat-Speak, Feral

Landsman 4 yrs 5 — *Servitude, Soldier, Outcast*

Skills: 3 pts: Seamanship, Knots, Brawling, Rope-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Cursing, Aches and Pains

Drummer 5 yrs 6 — *Soldier, City, Villager, Outcast*

Skills: 3 pts: Drum, Sing, Drum Maker

Traits: 2 pts: Incessant Tapping

Sailor 5 yrs 7 +1 P *Servitude, Soldier, City, Outcast*

Skills: 6 pts: Seamanship, Rigging, Knots, Brawling, Sing, Sea-wise, Gambling

Traits: 2 pts: Drunk

Crazy Old Sailor 10 yrs 8 +1 M *Servitude, Outcast*

Skills: 3 pts: Ugly Truth, Intimidation, Omen-wise

Traits: 3 pts: Superstitious, Metal Plate in the Skull, "He's a Jonah, that one."

Requires: Sailor, Pirate or Mercenary Captain and that the character take this path some time in his 40s

Purser 4 yrs 9 — *Servitude, Soldier*

Skills: 4 pts: Accounting, Crew-wise, Supply-wise, Ship-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Gnawing Hunger, Bitter

Requires: Clerk, Student or Sailor

Signalman 5 yrs 8 +1 M *Servitude, Soldier*

Skills: 5 pts: Signaling, Observation, Cryptography

Traits: 1 pt: Cryptic

Pilot 4 yrs 8 — *Soldier, City, Villager, Outcast*

Skills: 5 pts: Pilot, Ship-wise, Observation, Shoal-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Blisters, Light Sleeper, Bored, Paranoid about the Ship

Requires: Sailor, Pirate or Mercenary Captain

Marine 4 yrs 10 +1 P *Soldier, City, Villager, Outcast*

Skills: 4 pts: Appropriate Weapons, Knots, Intimidation

Traits: 1 pt: Bruiser, Sea Legs

Requires: Sailor, Pirate or Mercenary Captain

Bosun 5 yrs 8 — *Soldier, City, Villager, Outcast*

Skills: 3 pts: Intimidation, Brawling, Sailor-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Mean, Obedient

Requires: Sailor, Pirate or Mercenary Captain

Sailmaker 5 yrs 9 +1 P *Soldier, City, Villager, Outcast*

Skills: 5 pts: Sewing, Weaving, Mending, Sail-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Sailor, Pirate, Seamstress, Sewing

Ship's Doctor 6 yrs 15 +1 M *Soldier, City, Villager, Outcast*

Skills: 8 pts: Apothecary, Bloodletting, Surgery, Anatomy, Astrology, Falsehood, Tar-wise, Scurvy-wise

Traits: 3 pts: Incomprehensible Diagnosis, Ugly Reputation

Requires: Doctor, Court Doctor, Physician, Barber or Student

Ship's Cook 5 yrs 10 +1 M *Soldier, City, Villager, Outcast*

Skills: 6 pts: Cooking, Firebuilding, Sing, Falsehood, Mystery Meat-wise

Traits: 3 pts: Crippled, Cookie, Maggot Connoisseur

Requires: Sailor or Pirate

Ship's Chaplain 5 yrs 15 — *Villager, City, Religious, Soldier*

Skills: 4 pts: Oratory, Doctrine, Ship-wise

Traits: 2 pts: World Weary, Burial at Sea, Secretly Worships the Black Sea God

Requires: Chaplain, Military Order, Temple Acolyte or Religious Acolyte

Weather Witch 5 yrs 20 +1 M/P *Servitude, City, Villager, Outcast*

Skills: 6 pts: Sea-wise, Summoning, Spirit Binding, Superstition-wise, Navigation, Astrology

Traits: 2 pts: Weather Sense

Requires: Augur, Neophyte Sorcerer, Arcane Devotee or Rogue Wizard

Navigator 6 yrs 15 +1 M *Soldier, City, Servitude, Outcast*

Skills: 6 pts: Navigation, Sea-wise, Cartography, Astrology, Current-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Pilot, Mercenary Captain, Sailor or Student

Carpenter's Mate 6 yrs 8 +1 P *Soldier, Servitude, Villager, Outcast*

Skills: 3 pts: Mending, Gambling, Wood-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Cursing, Bull's-eye Spitter

Ship's Carpenter 4 yrs 16 +1 P *Soldier, City, Servitude, Outcast*

Skills: 5 pts: Carpentry, Shipwright, Boatwright, Ship-wise

Traits: 1 pt: I Know This Ship Like My Own Hands

Requires: Apprentice or Carpenter's Mate

Artillerist's Mate 4 yrs 8 +1 M *Soldier, City, Servitude, Outcast*

Skills: 4 pts: Mending, Carpentry, Artillerist

Traits: 1 pt: Disturbingly Confident

Engineer 4 yrs 25 +1 M *Soldier, City, Servitude, Outcast*

Skills: 6 pts: Engineer, Munitions, Artillerist, Carpentry, Mending

Traits: 1 pt: It Just Might Work!

Requires: Artillerist's Mate, Student, Ship's Carpenter, Engineer or Journeyman

Officer's Mate 4 yrs 10 +1 M/P *Servitude, Outcast, Soldier, City*

Skills: 4 pts: Etiquette, Captain-wise, Seamanship

Traits: 3 pts: Pegboy

Requires: Born Noble, Page or Son of a Gun

Restrictions: If chosen, this lifepath must be the character's second.

Steward 6 yrs 20 +1 M *Soldier, City, Servitude, Outcast*

Skills: 5 pts: Accounting, Ship Management, Haggling, Merchant-wise, Appraisal

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Purser, Merchant, Steward or Accountant

First Mate 6 yrs 18 +1 M *Soldier, City, Servitude, Outcast*

Skills: 6 pts: Intimidation, Command, Conspicuous, Seaman-wise, Sword

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Knight or any two sailor/seafaring lifepaths

Ship's Captain 7 yrs 30 +1 M *Any except Noble*

Skills: 6 pts: Command, Oratory, Ship-wise, Sea-wise; 2 pts: General

Traits: 2 pts: Stern Demeanor

Requires: First Mate, Knight, Knight of a Holy Military Order or two Mercenary Captain lifepaths

† This is a training skill. It costs 2 pts to open and may not be advanced.

Servitude and Captive Setting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Born Slave	12 yrs	5	-1 M/P	*Soldier, Outcast*

Skills: 2 pts: General; 1 pt: Slavery-wise

Traits: 3 pts: Broken, Scarred, Maimed, Lame

Ditch Digger 4 yrs 4 — *Soldier, Outcast*

Skills: 3 pts: Ditch Digging, Sing, Boss-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Blisters, Back-Breaking Labor

Servant 5 yrs 6 — *Outcast, Soldier, City, Court*

Skills: 2 pts: Soothing Platitudes, Gossip-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Mind-Numbing Work, Obsequious

Field Laborer 6 yrs 5 — *Outcast, Soldier*

Skills: 7 pts: Farming, Mending, Sing, Hauling, Driving, Fall Grass-wise

Traits: 3 pts: Hope

Captive of War 4 yrs 4 — *Outcast, Soldier, City Dweller*

Skills: 2 pts: Cell-wise, Chain-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Claustrophobic, Resigned to Fate

Gaol	3 yrs	3	—	*Outcast, Soldier, City Dweller*

Skills: 3 pts: Gaol-wise, Ratiquette

Traits: 2 pts: Involuntary Shudders

Harem Slave	5 yrs	4	—	*Outcast*

Skills: 3 pts: Falsehood, Seduction

Traits: 2 pts: Numb, Worldly

Bondsman	7 yrs	7	—	*Peasant, Soldier, Outcast*

Skills: The player may choose his Bondsman's owner's lifepath from the Noble, City Dweller, Soldier or Villager setting. The Bondsman may purchase from owner's skills with one quarter of that path's skill points (minimum of 1).

Traits: 2 pts: Lucky

Outcast Subsetting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Urchin	4 yrs	3	—	*Peasant, Soldier, Servitude*

Skills: 4 pts: Inconspicuous, Streetwise, Sleight of Hand

Traits: 2 pts: Addicted, The Story

Restriction: must be the second lifepath chosen and may only be taken once

Apostate	3 yrs	6	—	*City Dweller, Soldier, Religious*

Skills: 4 pts: Doctrine, Heretical Doctrine, Foreign Doctrine

Traits: 1 pt: Apostate

Blackmailer	3 yrs	10	+1 M	*City Dweller, Soldier, Village, Sea*

Skills: 4 pts: Extortion, Forgery, Ugly Truth, Falsehood, Bribe-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Cold Hearted

Kidnapper	3 yrs	10	+1 M	*City Dweller, Soldier, Village, Sea*

Skills: 5 pts: Interrogation, Torture, Intimidation, Ransom-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Hard Hearted

Pillager	4 yrs	7	—	*Soldier, City, Servitude, Sea*

Skills: 4 pts: Scavenging, Foraging, Army-wise, Battle-wise, Haggling

Traits: 1 pt: —

Vagrant	3 yrs	5	—	*City Dweller, Soldier, Servitude*

Skills: 4 pts: Road-wise, Hostel-wise, Hospital-wise, Inconspicuous

Traits: 2 pts: —

Cripple	6 yrs	3	—	*Servitude, City Dweller*

Skills: 6 pts: Begging, Inconspicuous, Conspicuous

Traits: 2 pts: Lame or Missing Limb

Poacher 5 yrs 5 +1 M/P *Servitude, Soldier, Villager*

Skills: 6 pts: Royal Parks-wise, Hunting, Stealthy, Tracking, Orienteering

Traits: 1 pt: —

Deranged 6 yrs 3 — *Servitude*

Skills: 3 pts: Inconspicuous, Quack-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Sick, Phobia, Lunatic, Linguist, Possessed

Outlaw 4 yrs 5 +1 M/P *Soldier, City, Village, Peasant, Sea*

Skills: 5 pts: Authority-wise, Inconspicuous, Conspicuous

Traits: 1 pt: Outlaw

Fence 6 yrs 15 +1 M/P *Servitude, City Dweller, Soldier*

Skills: 6 pts: Appraisal, Haggling, Inconspicuous, Streetwise, Guard-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Shrewd

Requires: Shopkeeper, Barkeep, Moneylender or an additional prior Outcast lifepath or criminal-type lifepath from City Dweller

Gravedigger 5 yrs 4 — *Soldier, Servitude*

Skills: 6 pts: Ditch Digging, Philosophy, Grave-wise, Cemetery-wise, Bone-wise

Traits: 3 pts: Bitter

Ratcatcher 5 yrs 4 — *Rats*

Skills: 4 pts: Trapper, Poisons, Ratiquette

Traits: 2 pts: Diseased, Rat-Speak

Beggar 3 yrs 5 — *Peasant, Soldier, Village*

Skills: 5 pts: Inconspicuous, Conspicuous, Streetwise, Falsehood

Traits: 2 pts: The Story

Leper 4 yrs 3 -1 P *Servitude, Peasant*

Skills: 5 pts: Inconspicuous, Hospital-wise, Priest-wise, Pilgrim-wise

Traits: 3 pts: Leprosy, Unbeliever, White-Gold Wielder

Prostitute 5 yrs 6 — *Peasant, Villager, City, Servitude*

Skills: 3 pts: Conspicuous, Inconspicuous, Persuasion, Falsehood, Haggling, Soothing Platitudes

Traits: 2 pts: Tolerant

Whoremonger 6 yrs 12 — *Villager, City Dweller, Soldier*

Skills: 5 pts: Intimidation, Haggling, Prostitute-wise, City-wise, Guard-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Corrupt Sergeant, Venal Priest, Shopkeeper, Barkeep, Moneylender or an additional prior Outcast lifepath or criminal-type lifepath from City Dweller

Itinerant Performer 4 yrs 5 — *Peasant, Villager, City, Soldier*

Skills: 8 pts: Cooking, Sewing, Acting, Sleight of Hand, Haggling, Mending, Disguise

Traits: 2 pts: Odd

Insurrectionist 3 yrs 5 — *City Dweller, Soldier*

Skills: 4 pts: Philosophy, Rule of Law, Doctrine, Oratory, Arson

Traits: 2 pts: Zealot

Cultist 4 yrs 8 — *Peasant, Servitude, Soldier*

Skills: 5 pts: Cult Doctrine, Inconspicuous, Conspicuous, Falsehood, Persuasion

Traits: 2 pts: Zealot, Rabble Rouser, Speaker of the Secret Language

Poisoner 5 yrs 8 +1 M *City Dweller, Villager, Court*

Skills: 5 pts: Poisons, Cooking, Inconspicuous, Disguise

Traits: 2 pts: Off-Kilter

Thug 4 yrs 7 — *Soldier, City Dweller*

Skills: 4 pts: Streetwise, Murder-wise, Guard-wise, Brawling

Traits: 2 pts: Cold-Blooded, Jaded

Desperate Killer 3 yrs 5 — *Soldier, City Dweller, Servitude*

Skills: 5 pts: Appropriate Weapon, Inconspicuous, Assassination-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Desperate, Murderous, Cold Hearted, Hard Hearted

Bandit 3 yrs 7 +1 P *Soldier, Peasant*

Skills: 4 pts: Appropriate Weapons, Intimidation, Stealthy, Caravan-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Pirate 4 yrs 5 — *Seafaring, City, Villager*

Skills: 6 pts: Pirate Cove-wise, Rigging, Knots, Knives, Sea-wise, Map-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Problem with Authority, Scurvy, Maimed, Crippled, Lame

Smuggler 4 yrs 15 +1 M *Soldier, City Dweller, Villager*

Skills: 6 pts: Persuasion, Falsehood, Appraisal, Law-wise, Forgery, Stealthy, Inconspicuous

Traits: 2 pts: Paranoid

Freebooter 4 yrs 10 +1 P *Soldier, Peasant, Servitude*

Skills: 8 pts: Intimidation, Appropriate Weapon, Countryside-wise, Fortress-wise, Mercenary Company-wise, Foreign Languages, War-wise, Loot-wise, Extortion-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Cold Blooded, Merciless

Requires: Bandit, Smuggler, Squire, Knight, City Guard, Village Guard, Marine Sailor or any Professional Soldier lifepath

Strider 5 yrs 6 +1 P *Soldier, Peasant, Servitude*

Skills: 9 pts: Forest-wise, Orienteering, Foraging, Tracking, Firebuilding, Riding, Stealthy, Appropriate Weapons

Traits: 2 pts: Loner

Requires: Born Noble, Hunter, Trapper, Huntsman or Scout

Mad Summoner 8 yrs 20 +1 M/P *Peasant, City Dweller, Seafaring*

Skill: 6 pts: Summoning, Enchanting, Demonology, Empyrealia

Traits: 2 pts: Mad, Fear of Cheese, Fear of Wet Noises, Alarming

Requires: Cultist, Augur, Neophyte Sorcerer or Arcane Devotee

Rogue Wizard 6 yrs 24 +1 M, P *Servitude, Seafarer, Religious*

Skills: 8 pts: Sorcery, Inconspicuous, Graveyard-wise, Astrology, Bloodletting, Ugly Truth, Apocalypse-wise, Enchanting, Alchemy

Traits: 3 pts: Spooky, Aura of Fear, Obscure Aura

Requires: Cultist, Augur, Neophyte Sorcerer or Arcane Devotee

Crazy Witch 6 yrs 6 +1 M/P *Peasant, Servitude, Village*

Skills: 5 pts: Folklore, Herbalism, Poisons, Summoning, Profanity-wise

Traits: 2 pts: A Little Crazy, Gifted, Mark of the Beast

Requires: Weather Witch, Young Lady, Augur or Midwife

Heretic Priest 7 yrs 6 — *Peasant, Servitude*

Skills: 7 pts: Heretical Doctrine, Oratory, Apostate-wise, Demonology, Summoner-wise, Cultist-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Lunatic, Overbearing Loony, Faith in Dead Gods

Requires: Acolyte, Cultist, Apostate, Theologian, Venal Priest, Interpreter or Archivist

Thinker 15 yrs 5 +1 M *Any*

Skills: 6 pts: Philosophy, Strategy, Strategy Games, Calligraphy, History, Painting; 1 pt: General

Traits: 2 pts: —

Restrictions: Thinker can only be taken if the character's starting age will be 36 years or older

Starting Stat Points for Men by Age

Starting Age	Mental Pool	Physical Pool
01-10 years	5 pts	10 pts
11-14 years	6 pts	13 pts
15-16 years	6 pts	16 pts
17-25 years	7 pts	16 pts
26-29 years	7 pts	15 pts
30-35 years	7 pts	14 pts
36-40 years	7 pts	13 pts
41-55 years	7 pts	12 pts
56-65 years	7 pts	11 pts
66-79 years	7 pts	10 pts
80-100	6 pts	9 pts

The Kingdoms of Man

Mannish Common Traits

All mannish stats are capped at 8. Their stride is 7.

Men have no common traits in the view of these rules. Why? Because the ability, bodily shape and psychological makeup of humans is the benchmark for normalcy in the Burning Wheel. Traits are used to describe how characters differ from that norm. However, players are offered a wide range of variation and options using Lifepath and Special traits. Also, cultural traits provide a way to further identify and make unique various cultures and races of men.

Cultural Traits

Cultural traits are a subset of common traits. They are used to describe bits of culture or racial physiology that characters carry with them—an accent, a particular attitude or perhaps the color of their skin (if it's different from their neighbors).

If building a game with multiple Mannish cultures, the GM, in concert with the players, can assign each culture a set of three traits. The traits should be minor, but telling.

One culture in my campaign world is Superstitious, Industrious and Stubborn. Another group is Tall, Lithe and Deferential to Women. Any player who wants his character to be from either of these cultures starts with those character traits for free.

Small details like these really help to bring even more life to characters built with the Lifepaths of Man.

Mannish Lifepath Traits

Lifepath (LP) traits represent the unavoidable effects of the choices made in life. Men have tons of lifepath traits, so there's a lot to choose from. Remember, the first LP trait on each path is required and costs one point. The others are optional and can be purchased for one point each.

Lifepath Character Traits

The most important function of character traits is to add colorful details to the game. They are meant to help you embellish your roleplay. These traits are fairly self-explanatory—their name generally says it all, so there's no need to describe them in detail. Players are free to interpret and sculpt them in order to better incorporate them into their characters. It's even possible (and quite fun) to play against your own character traits—they can be aspects of the character's personality that even he doesn't like! A list is provided below so players can determine if a lifepath trait is a character trait, call-on or die trait.

Special Mannish Traits

Special traits are purchased with trait points left over after buying required lifepath traits.

Apostate *Dt* 3 pts

The Apostate has forsaken one religion for another. Anyone can be an apostate—many Christians captured by the Muslims during the Crusades resorted to apostasy in order to save their lives. The Apostate character must have at least one religiously focused Belief. He also gains a 1D infamous reputation among his former co-religionists.

Restrictions: Men only, special trait

Bastard *Dt* 4 pts

This character is the illegitimate son of a noble of rank. He will only be heir to the lands and income if all the other heirs die or join the clergy. Bastards are not looked upon kindly, as they dilute claims to birthright and threaten the system of rightful inheritance. Bastards have a 1D infamous reputation among the nobility.

Restrictions: Men only, special trait

Born to be King *Char* 5 pts

This character is a son in the royal line. If he is the eldest, he is the direct heir to the throne. If he is a younger son, he bears no immediate obligation and is free to pursue his own aims. However, the character is a Prince and the obligations of said rank should play heavily on his life. He may, at some point, be called upon to take the throne!

Restrictions: Men only, special trait

Catamite *Char* 1 pt

Catamite has been chosen as the trait name to represent openly homosexual characters in the Burning Wheel. Honestly, it was a pejorative medieval term—a slur. It is how society would refer to them, not necessarily how they refer to themselves.

Any character may be homosexual according to the player's choice, but by taking the Catamite trait, the player is acknowledging that his character is open about his orientation. The ramifications of such a decision in a conservative medieval society are grist for great game situations.

Chosen One *Dt* 5 pts

If a player's character possesses the Faithful trait, he may purchase this trait to make the Faith shade gray.

Restrictions: Men only, special trait

Faithful *Dt* 5 pts

This trait is required in order to open the Faith attribute. With Faith, the character is able to perform miracles. The Faith section of this chapter describes how to start the attribute. The Emotional Magic section of the Burning Wheel describes its mechanics.

Restrictions: Men only, special trait

Gifted *Dt* 5 pts

This trait is required for the character to be able to cast spells, enchant artifacts, speak with the dead or summon spirits. Without it, Sorcery, Summoning and Enchanting are merely academic pursuits. With the Gifted trait, the character can manipulate magic. See the Sorcery section in the Burning Wheel for more.

Restrictions: Men only, special trait

Outlaw *Dt* 3 pts

The Outlaw is a very particular person in medieval society. A player who chooses the Outlaw trait for his character must consent to a few conditions: First, his character has either committed a grievous crime or is perceived as an enemy of the established order. Second, no law applies to this character—he has no rights whatsoever. He cannot appeal to the courts or the mercy of a judge. Any man or beast may kill the outlaw and suffer no legal penalty for it. When the Outlaw trait is taken, the player must divide his resource points into two pools. Any resource points from City, Noble or Religious lifepaths go into one pool: The player may spend them as per the normal rules. However, he does not get access to these City/Noble/Religious resources until the Outlaw trait is voted off. The character's remaining resource points may be spent as normal on gear, affiliations, relationships, etc.

Outlaws gain a 1D infamous reputation amongst town and city folk and the nobility.

Restrictions: Men only, special trait

Vigor of Youth *Dt* 5 pts

Though old, this character possesses the strength and vitality of his youth. If starting the game older than 40 years, a character with this trait uses these stat pools: 7 mental and 14 physical.

Restrictions: Men only, special trait

Mannish Resources

Arms	See Description	Finery	5
Missiles	See Description	Cash	6 rps
Armor	See Description	Skill Toolkit	8
Riding Mount or Pack Animal	5	Workshop	20 rps
Warhorse (Courser)	12	Companion Animal	3
Clothes	1	Herd of Animals	20
Traveling Gear	1	Rent	5 rps
Shoes	1	Property	See Description
Personal Effects	1	Sorcerous Spells	See Description

Arms— Arms covers the necessary hand weaponry to suit a character's idiom. Arms for a knight would consist of a sword, lance and dirk. For a foot soldier, perhaps an axe and dagger. Whatever it is, just take what you need. Players may purchase beaks, spikes and weights for their characters' weapons at +1 rp per modification per weapon, +4 rps per modification per weapon of superior quality.

Poor Quality Arms— 3 rps. These are base Ob 2 to use and use the poor quality weapon stats.

Run of the Mill Quality Arms— 5 rps. Base Ob 1 to use and have the run of the mill stats for weapons.

Superior Quality Arms— 20 rps. Base Ob 1 to wield. Use the superior quality weapon stats.

Missiles— Throwing weapons like knives or javelins, 3 rps. Hunting bow, 5 rps. Great bow, 10 rps. Crossbow, 7 rps. Heavy crossbow, 12 rps. Pistol, 15 rps. Arquebus, 20 rps. Included in the costs of these weapons are enough missiles to adequately outfit the character. Special arrowheads are not included and cost extra resource points. They cost 1 rp per special head type—take as many of each head as you like. Rules for special arrowheads are given in the Weapon Appendix of the Burning Wheel.

Poor Quality Missiles— Half resource points cost rounded up. Poor quality missiles are +1 Ob to hit.

Superior Quality Missiles— 3x rps cost. Superior quality missile weapons grant the character a +1D bonus balance die. This is added to his skill every time he takes a shot.

Armor— Run of the mill armor: gambeson, 3 rps; reinforced leather, 6 rps; light mail, 10 rps; heavy mail, 15 rps; plated mail, 20 rps; full plated mail, 50 rps.

When you buy armor, you buy the whole suit—helmet, arms, chest and legs. The player may choose individual pieces if he likes. A helmet or breastplate costs half the full suit. Greaves or leggings cost a third of the full price. Round up any fractional costs. Shields may be included in an armor kit at no extra cost.

A full plated helmet—like a sallet—costs 25 rps. A heavy mail breastplate costs 8 rps. Light mail leggings and greaves cost 4 rps each. Such a kit would cost 41 rps total.

Poor Quality Armor— Half of the run of the mill cost rounded up. This armor falls apart; all 1s count for losing armor dice.

Superior Quality Armor— 4x cost of a full suit. Only the first 1 counts, which is rerolled; if that die comes up a 1 again, an armor die is lost.

Riding Mount— A horse, pony, camel and so forth can be bought with this choice. Basic riding horse stats follow: **Stats**: Pe: B3(4), Wi: B2, Ag: B2, Sp: B6, Po: B6, Fo: B6. **Attributes**: He: B4, St: B3, Re: B4, MW: B12. Hesitation: 8. **Skills**: Rider Training, Foraging B2. **Traits**: Gelded, Docile, Obedient, Proud, plus Long-Limbed, Keen Hearing, Hooved, Ungulate. **Stride**: 12.

Warhorse— A warhorse is trained to carry its master into battle. Basic warhorse stats: Pe: B3(4), Wi: B2, Ag: B4, Sp: B6, Po: B7, Fo: B7. **Attributes**: He: B5, St: B7, Re: B4, MW: B13. Hesitation: 5 (Fearless and Determined). **Skills**: Rider Training, Mounted Combat Training, Armor Training, Formation Fighting Training, Intimidation B2, Brawling B3, Foraging B2. **Traits**: Level-Headed, Loyal, Determined, Fearless, Aggressive plus Long-Limbed, Keen Hearing, Hooved, Ungulate. **Stride**: 12.

Clothes— This resource purchase includes all of the clothing a character would need for everyday life in his station. It is not just one outfit. Like the Arms purchase, Clothing allows the player to take what he needs to trick out his character (short of Finery).

Traveling Gear— This is all the necessary bits, odds and ends and what-nots that are needed for survival on the road—candles, matches, flint and steel, a pocket knife, a rain cloak, a rain hat, a good sturdy rucksack, a thick leather belt, a money purse or wallet, a warm coat, etc. The exact choices are up to the player, but the GM has some say—no flamethrowers or Elven cloaks in traveling gear. Oh, yes, I almost forgot…don't forget to bring a good length of rope; you'll want one if you don't.

Shoes— Shoes.

Personal Effects— A player may purchase for his character personal effects of sentimental value: a religious trinket, a mirror, a book, a ring, a cane, a locket or any other similar item.

Finery— Finery covers specialty clothing and expensive items that one would wear either on special occasions or when trying to make a point: courtly regalia for nobles, vestments for priests, shining robes for mages, etc. Like clothing, this purchase includes a whole wardrobe, not just a single outfit. Take as much or as little as you like. Improper dress imposes obstacle penalties to Inconspicuous and Etiquette tests.

Cash—A player may start with a pocketful of cash. This grants 1D of cash that can be used as per the Resources rules. Once used, the cash is expended.

Skill Toolkits— Many skills require tools. This resource can represent anything from medicine to books. If a skill is listed with "Tools: Yes," then a character must spend resource points on a toolkit in order to be able to adequately perform skill tests. Tests without tools (for skills that require them) are at a double obstacle penalty.

A toolkit that has finite supplies—like medicine for Herbalism—can run dry. Each use after the first, roll the DoF. If a 1 comes up, the kit is empty. The character must make an Ob 2-5 Resources test to replenish it. The GM may set the obstacle depending on how rare the contents of the kit are. Ob 2 for carpenter's tools, Ob 4 for surgeon's tools, Ob 5 for sorcerous tools. Only one character can help you when you're using a toolkit.

Workshop— A workshop is just a big toolkit. It is used for artisan and craftsman skill tests that require more than just simple tools. Purchasing this gives the character an appropriate room/building/ tower to house the workshop. Workshops allow for more than one character to help on a skill test. This counts as property when factoring resources.

Companion Animal— Some players may wish to take a dog, cat or falcon as an accoutrement to their character. Stats are provided for these beasties in the Monster Burner, but they are really there more for show than for stealing the spotlight in an adventure.

Herd of Animals— Characters with the Animal Husbandry skill, or the Master of Horses, Merchant or Magnate lifepath, may take an appropriate herd of animals. This purchase counts as property when factoring resources.

Rent—Characters who cannot afford to own property live on leased land or rented houses/apartments. It's a common condition of the age. This purchase gives the character a place to live and counts as an Ob 2 Resources maintenance test. Paying rent counts as property when factoring Resources.

Property— A leaky shack, 1 rp; a small cottage, 3 rps; a house or "cottage industry" like a weaver, 10 rps; a villa or a farm or a knight's fee, 15 rps; a small business, 20 rps; moderate-sized business, 30 rps; manor or estate, an urban hôtel, *40 rps; well-paid position (like mayor), *45 rps; successful small business, a large business, a keep, *60 rps; a fortress or moderate-sized estate, *75 rps; a castle with attendant town, a large estate, *90 rps; a palace or government position in a prosperous town, *105 rps. Rowboat or skiff, 5 rps; longboat, 10 rps; junk, 15 rps; felucca, 30 rps; carrack, 60 rps; caravel, 75 rps; treasure ship, 105 rps.

Property obviously counts as property when factoring Resources.

* Note that only Noble Born characters or characters with the Minister, Town Official, Merchant, Magnate, Steward, Master of Horse, Master of Hounds, Bailiff, Justiciar, Coroner, Constable, Treasurer, Bishop or Abbot LPs may spend more than 40 rps on property. Other characters simply may not own that degree of property (unless otherwise specified). The property purchase comes with appropriate staff, buildings and accoutrements. It does not provide the character with other free purchases from the Resources list.

Purchasing Spells with Resources

Starting sorcerer characters purchase their spells with resource points. Resource point costs are provided with each spell. But in case you need to price your own spells, the costs are as follows: The resource point cost for each spell is 2 rps for every point of obstacle. If the spell is listed with a "^", the cost is 4 rps per obstacle point. If the obstacle is listed as a "range," price the spell using the obstacle in the middle of the variable range. For example, if a spell obstacle is 1-10, price the spell as an Ob 5 spell. If the spell Obstacle is based on a stat, price the spell based on a stat of 5 plus the cost of any base obstacle.

Faith

Faith is the ability to work miracles. It is not merely belief but a connection to the divine that grants great power. Faith has a shade and exponent like any other ability—the mechanics and rules for testing it are covered in the Emotional Attributes section of the Burning Wheel.

Starting Faith

When a player purchases the Faithful trait for his character, he may open a B3 Faith attribute.

By answering the following questions, he may raise his starting attribute. Once in play, advancement is governed by the standard mechanics. However, the player must incorporate his Faith into one of his Beliefs. See Emotional Magic in the Burning Wheel.

The GM should ask the player the following questions. The answers should be based on the character's Beliefs and the situation at hand:

- Whom do you trust most?
- When in danger, whom do you consult for aid?
- Ultimately, how can you best serve your allies?

There is only one correct answer to these questions: God. Each correct answer grants +1 to starting Faith.

Beware of Faith munchkins who do not consider these questions carefully and merely write in a B6 Faith because there is nothing stopping them. The group has my permission to heckle munchkins into answering honestly. Also, if you'd prefer not to heckle, you can watch the behavior of the faithful character in play and compare that to the player's answers to the Faith questions. If they don't coincide, be sure to reflect the character's actual behavior in a trait vote, perhaps with Lost Faith!

Advancing Faith

Faith can only advance via successful tests and practice (in the form of many hours at prayer). Faith uses the sorcerous skill type for practice.

Sorcery Spells

The following spells are available for purchase by characters with the Sorcery skill. As described in the Sorcery chapter of the Burning Wheel, each spell is listed with its obstacle, effect, facets, resource point cost and actions required for casting.

A-B

Arcane Kindness — Ob 4^ — 10 Actions

Soothing rhythms emanate from the sorcerer and make agreeable his desires. This incantation grants bonus dice to Seduction, Haggling, Oratory, Persuasion and Circles tests. Meeting the obstacle adds +1D to the listed abilities. Up to two more successes can be spent to add two more dice to a maximum bonus of +3D.

Origin: Personal
Element: Anima
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Caster
Impetus: Enhance
Resource Points: 16

Bilious Smoke — Ob 5 — 16 Actions

Inky, sulphurous vapor pours forth from the wizard's black mouth. The smoke obscures vision for those trapped in it and looking through it (+5 Ob Perception to tests, +3 Ob to Observation). In addition, those within the cloud are stung and smothered. Every exchange spent in the cloud requires an Ob 3 Forte test. Margin of failure is temporarily subtracted from the victim's Health. If Health reaches zero, the victim falls unconscious. Health is recovered at one die per exchange. Weapon Length: as Missile; Range: as Thrown.

Origin: Personal
Element: Fire/Air
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: 10s of Paces
Impetus: Create/Tax
Resource Points: 24

Binding — Ob 2 — 2 Actions

Like so many stalks of grain, he sweeps aside the glittering spears of his foes. This useful incantation allows the wizard to sorcerously bond two or more similar items together, so that they lock together like pieces of a puzzle. A sorcerer may choose a number of items of earth, stone, wood or metal equal to his Will exponent within the area of effect. These items are held together with a Power equal to his Will exponent. Weapon Length: as Sword; Range: as Melee.

Origin: Personal
Element: Earth
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Half Presence
Impetus: Control
Resource Points: 4

Blessed Hands — Ob Target's Health^ — 750 Actions

Fire is the breath of life. The sorcerer lays hands upon a wounded target. Meeting the obstacle grants +1D to Health. Each success over the obstacle adds another +1D to his recovery roll. This spell does not count as treatment. An herbalist or surgeon must attend to the wound first. This spell is then cast to speed recovery.

Origin: Personal
Element: Anima
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: Single Target
Impetus: Enhance
Resource Points: 20

Blue-Blooded Heart — Ob 4 — 15 Actions

Cold holds no pain for one who knows the secret of the Blue-Blooded Heart. This incantation protects the recipient from the drain of cold. No Health or Forte tests need to be made due to cold, and no injury is sustained from cold air, water or frost damage.

Origin: Presence
Element: Anima
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Single Target or Caster
Impetus: Control
Resource Points: 8

Breath of Wind — Ob 4^ — 4 Actions

Roaring winds howl from the throat of the sorcerer. Natural effects of the winds: Success: Kicks up dust; 1 over: A nice breeze, papers flutter, candles doused; 2 over: Branches blown down from trees, shutters broken; 3 over: Larger branches blown from trees; 4 over: Wooden buildings damaged, people picked up and tossed down; 5 over: Trees blown down, 12-foot swells; 6 over: Doors ripped from hinges, 15-foot swells; 7 over: Sturdy roofs damaged; 18-foot swells; 8 over: Wooden buildings collapse; 9 over: Most structures destroyed. Weapon Length: as Missile; Range: as Great Bow.

Origin: Personal
Element: Air
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: Natural Effect
Impetus: Destroy
Resource Points: 16

C

Call of Iron — Ob 3 — 2 Actions

With a flick of the wizard's wrist, the knife is wrenched from the assassin's hand. Using Call of Iron, a wizard can grab objects made of metal—a sword, for example—with his mystical might and call them to him. Pulling something is a Power test, where Power = Will. For example, wresting a metal weapon from an enemy's hand would be a versus test: your Will versus the enemy's Power. Weapon Length: as Missile; Range: as Thrown.

Origin: Double Presence
Element: Earth
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: Single Target
Impetus: Control
Resource Points: 6

Cat's Eye — Ob 3 — 7 Actions

Twilight becomes bright and what lies in the shadows is revealed. This incantation reduces obstacle penalties for dimness, haziness and darkness by two.

Origin: Presence
Element: Anima
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Single Target or Caster
Impetus: Enhance
Resource Points: 6

Chameleon — Ob 4^ — 8 Actions

Skin and clothing swirl and fade as the sorcerer blends seamlessly into his surroundings. Meeting the obstacle grants +1D to the Stealthy skill. Each success over the obstacle adds another +1D to the Stealthy skill. In addition, so long as one success over the obstacle is generated, the chameleoned character cannot be casually spotted. Another character must explicitly state that he is looking about (either via expressed action or by an Instinct or trait). Only then can his Perception/Observation be tested to spot the one so concealed.

Origin: Personal
Element: Heaven
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Single Target or Caster
Impetus: Control
Resource Points: 16

Chaos Ward — Ob 5^ — 45 Actions

A cacophony of lights and sounds swirls round, obscuring the very earth from thy feet and the sun from thy brow. This incantation causes confusion to all who fall under it. Meeting the obstacle imposes a +1 Ob penalty to all actions in the area of effect. Additional successes increase the penalty. Weapon Length: as Missile; Range: as Heavy Crossbow +1D.

Origin: Sight
Element: Heaven
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: 10s of Paces
Impetus: Influence/Tax
Resource Points: 20

Choking Hand — Ob 3^ — 4 Actions

His malignant will forms an invisible appendage eager to do his terrible bidding. This incantation conjures a "hand" with a Power equal to the caster's Will plus 1D per three successes over the obstacle. The Hand chokes its victims using the rules for Locks, but it does not have to vie for position. The mage tests the spell Power vs the victim's Power. If the Choking Hand manages to incapacitate its victim, then it may continue to choke him to death as per the Damaging Lock rules. (Damaging lock rules are found in the Adventure Burner. If you don't have the Adventure Burner, the victim is simply incapacitated.) If the victim breaks the hold of the Choking Hand, then the spell is broken and ends. Weapon Length: as Polearm; Range: as Pistol.

Origin: Presence
Element: Anima
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Single Target
Impetus: Tax
Resource Points: 12

Courage — Ob 4^ — 2 Actions

The word is fire in thy veins. This simple incantation negates your allies' current hesitation. Meeting the obstacle reduces hesitation by one. Successes over the obstacle reduce any hesitation by one action per success. If hesitation is reduced to zero, the character can act immediately.

Origin: Personal
Element: Anima
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: Presence
Impetus: Influence
Resource Points: 16

D

Dark of Night — Ob 3^ — 5 Actions

A dim pall suffocates the hall as the wizard enters, shadows lengthen and deepen, lamps shine but give no light. This spell creates darkness and smothers light. Thus a candle can be seen as a point of light, but it illuminates nothing. Successful casting creates the dim light condition (+1 Ob to any action requiring light). Extra successes can be spent to increase the level of darkness up to a maximum of +4 Ob. Extra successes can also increase the area of effect.

Origin: Personal
Element: Heaven
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: 10s of paces
Impetus: Tax
Resource Points: 12

Delirium Tremens — Ob Target's Forte — 3 Actions

The touch of the wizard sends all thy senses reeling. This spell increases obstacles by 10 minus the victim's Will. Effects lessen over time; obstacle penalty drops by one each volley (or test out of combat) after initial contact. Weapon Length: as Hands; Range: as Melee.

Origin: Personal
Element: Anima
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: Single Target
Impetus: Tax
Resource Points: 10

Dexterity of the Cat — Ob 1+Speed — 35 Actions

Purring incantations imbue the recipient with the infallible balance of the cat. +2D are added to the character's Speed for purposes of climbing, leaping, dodging and other cat-like actions (including fighting, but not sprinting or long distance running).

Origin: Personal
Element: Anima
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Single Target or Caster
Impetus: Enhance
Resource Points: 12

Dog's Ear — Ob Perception — 35 Actions

Suddenly the world is a storm crashing through an ocean of sound—a man's breath like a gust of wind, a baby's cry like the howl of a gale, footfalls like lightning strikes. Increases Perception by +1D overall, and by +2D for strictly auditory-based Perception tests. Anima Enhancers like this spell can be used to affect positioning and maneuvers.

Origin: Personal
Element: Anima
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Single Target or Caster
Impetus: Enhance
Resource Points: 12

E

Eldritch Shield — Ob 3^ — 9 Actions

I call upon thee, Powers Arcane. Protect this humble supplicant from the depredations of evil! The Eldritch Shield protects the caster from the Destroy and Tax impetus spells—Fire Breath, Rain of Fire, White Fire, Fire Fan, Emperor's Hand, Havoc's Hand, Choking Hand, etc. It will not protect against a spell like The Fear or Persuasion.

Meeting the obstacle creates a 1D shield. Successes over the obstacle increase the shield by one per success. This is the strength of the shield. When a spell effect hits the shield, subtract the shield's strength from the dice used to cast the spell. If the shield reduces the incoming spell's dice below the obstacle needed to cast it, then the spell is completely absorbed. If the spell is not completely reduced, subtract the shield dice from the spell cast and use this number as the new Power/effect for the spell.

For example, if a sorcerer is sustaining a 10-die Eldritch Shield and a witch throws a Fire Fan (Ob 3) at him with six extra successes, the shield absorbs the spell, but is reduced to three dice. If the shield then absorbs a White Fire bolt at seven successes, three of them are blocked by the shield and the other four get through. Just enough to meet the spell obstacle. Damage for the spell is factored using the remaining successes.

If all of the shield dice are knocked down, the caster must make an Ob 2 tax test. Also shield failure counts as a "may not" for Sustained spells.

A sorcerer may extend his shield to his friends. Additional successes may be spent to cover additional characters. Those characters gain the full benefits of the remaining dice of the shield.

If six successes are rolled, the mage may touch his friend and bring him into the shield. It's an Ob 3 spell, one additional success is spent, and now a two-die shield protects them both.

Origin: Personal
Element: Arcana
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Caster and Single Targets
Impetus: Control
Resource Points: 12

Emperor's Hand — Ob Forte of Victim^ — 4 Actions

Cold blue fire arcs from the wizard's hand into the very soul of his prey, draining his strength. Meeting the obstacle temporarily drains 1D of Forte from the victim. Each success over the obstacle drains an additional point of Forte. Reducing Forte to zero incapacitates the victim. Forte recovers at 1D per exchange. Weapon Length: as Polearm; Range: as Pistol.

Origin: Presence
Element: White
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: Single Target
Impetus: Tax
Resource Points: 12

F-G

Falcon Skin — Ob 4 — 12 Actions

Invoking the names and powers of the shaper, the sorceress and the trickster, the wizard transmutes his form into that of a sleek falcon. While sustaining Falcon Skin, the caster takes on the stats of the Bird of Prey listed in the Creature Codex in the Monster Burner (also available as a free PDF download on www.burningwheel.org). He may fly as the bird does, but since he cannot speak or gesticulate, he may not cast spells. For the purposes of The Power Still Flows Through Him rules, use the wizard's own Forte.

Origin: Personal
Element: Anima
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Caster
Impetus: Transmute
Resource Points: 8

The Fear — Ob 3 — 1 Action

Fear radiates from him like chill from a winter night. This charm causes all in the sorcerer's presence—who are *looking* at him—to make Steel tests. Weapon Length: as Polearm; Range: as Pistol. Only works once per target.

Origin: Personal
Element: Anima
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: Presence
Impetus: Influence
Resource Points: 6

Fire Breath — Ob 3^ — 3 Actions

A tongue of fire lashes out from the caster's gaping maw and bathes his enemies in flames. Damaging effect spell: Power = Will +3, VA: 2. Die of Fate to determine IMS. Weapon Length: as Sword; Range: as Pistol.

Origin: Personal
Element: Fire
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: Paces
Impetus: Destroy
Resource Points: 12

Fire Fan — Ob 3^ — 1 Action

Flickering flames flare out from the caster's fingertips and scorch his enemies. Damaging effect: Power = ½ Will +3, VA 2. Die of Fate to determine IMS. Weapon Length: as Spear; Range: as Pistol.

Origin: Personal
Element: Fire
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: Presence
Impetus: Destroy
Resource Points: 12

Firewalker — Ob 4 — 4 Actions

Fire cannot burn one who knows this secret. This incantation will protect the caster and his belongings from the ravages of fire. This does not protect against fire created via the Destroy facet.

Origin: Personal
Element: Anima
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Caster or Single Target
Impetus: Control
Resource Points: 10

Fish Lung — Ob 5 — 10 Actions

Briny water becomes like air for the lungs. Fish Lung allows the recipient to breathe underwater.

Origin: Presence
Element: Water/Anima
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Caster or Single Target
Impetus: Enhance
Resource Points: 10

Flame Finger — Ob 3 — 12 Actions

A small, bright flame leaps into being in the palm of the sorcerer. This flame can be used to ignite fires (like a brand would) or shed a little candlelight.

Origin: Presence
Element: Fire
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Single Target
Impetus: Create
Resource Points: 6

Force of Will — Ob 6+Will — 133 Actions

The most foul sorcerous power is that of twisting man's will. This spell allows the mage to implant forceful commands into the victim's mind. The words of the mage become thoughts—as if the victim had formulated them himself. This is a very powerful spell. The words of the sorcerer are permanently embedded into the mind of the victim. They resonate against the character's personality for the rest of his days.

Origin: Presence
Element: Anima
Duration: Permanent
Area of Effect: Single Target
Impetus: Control
Resource Points: 22

Gray Cloak — Ob 5 — 12 Actions

Cold tendrils of gray mist unfold from the sorcerer's robes, blurring shape and hiding form. The Gray Cloak increases all Observation and Perception obstacles within (or looking into) its folds by +3 Ob. Weapon Length: as Missile; Range: as Thrown.

Origin: Personal
Element: Water/Air
Duration: Minutes
Area of Effect: 10s of Paces
Impetus: Control
Resource Points: 8

H-L

Havoc's Hand — Ob 3^ — 4 Actions

The sorcerer's hand becomes a venomous blade. The merest touch wreaks havoc upon his victim. The sorcerer's hand becomes a weapon. He must simply touch his opponent to deliver his retribution. The damage done is according to the spell, not the successes of the hit. The touch has a damaging effect Power = Will +4. VA 1. Die of Fate to determine IMS. Weapon Length: as Hands; Range: as Melee.

Origin: Personal
Element: Anima
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Single Target
Impetus: Destroy
Resource Points: 12

Horror — Ob 4^ — 2 Actions

Terrible emanations of fear and loathing pour forth from the wizard. This spell causes all in the mage's presence who can see him to make a Steel test at their base Hesitation, +1 Ob for each success over the spell obstacle. Weapon Length: as Polearm; Range: as Pistol.

Origin: Personal
Element: Anima
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: Presence
Impetus: Influence
Resource Points: 16

Horse's Stride — Ob 3 — 4 Actions

The swiftness of the running mare courses through the sorcerer's shanks. This spell increases the recipient's stride to that of a horse (12).

Origin: Personal
Element: Anima
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Caster or Single Target
Impetus: Enhance
Resource Points: 6

Lights of St. Andrew — Ob 3^ — 2 Actions

A rushing blast of color and light flies from the outstretched hands of the caster and stuns all in its path. This spell causes the victim to make a Forte test. Meeting the spell obstacle is triggers an Ob 1 Forte test. Extra successes from the spell increase the victim's obstacle. Margin of failure for the Forte test becomes an obstacle penalty for all of the victim's actions. The penalty drops by one each volley after the first. Weapon Length: as Sword; Range: as Pistol.

Origin: Personal
Element: Heaven
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: Paces
Impetus: Tax
Resource Points: 12

Low Speech — Ob See Description — x3 Actions

This spell allows you to speak with animals: apes and simians, Ob 1; dogs, pigs and dolphins, Ob 2; horses, oxen, Ob 3; wild beasts, Ob 4; birds, Ob 5; reptiles, Ob 6; fish, Ob 7; insects, Ob 8. Decide which type before casting.

Origin: Personal
Element: Anima
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Presence
Impetus: Enhance
Resource Points: 8

M-O

Mage Light Ob 4^ 12 Actions

He rapped his staff upon the flagstones and gentle illumination flowed forth. Mage Light is a subtle and powerful spell that dispels darkness. It can be used to call upon the simple light of a candle or the awesome light of day. Before casting, the sorcerer must indicate what kind of light he is conjuring and where the light is set to emanate from: his brow, his staff, a ring on his finger, etc. There are four types of darkness: dim light, lantern, torch, twilight (+1 Ob); candlelight, moonlight (+2 Ob); gloom or near dark, starlight (+3 Ob); and complete darkness or darkness indoors or underground (+4 Ob). Successfully casting the spell negates the penalty for dim light and reduces all other darkness penalties by one. Extra successes may be spent to reduce the stiffer penalties of the deeper darknesses.

Origin: Personal
Area of Effect: Presence
Element: Heaven
Impetus: Create
Duration: Sustained
Resource Points: 16

Magesense Ob 4^ 300 Actions

Magesense is a powerful spell that extends the sorcerer's senses from the realm of the mundane into that of the arcane. When this spell is erected, the mage sees, hears and smells magic. When a spell is cast within or an active spell enters his Magesense area of effect, the mage may make a Perception test using the following obstacles: high powered magic (major miracles, Mjölnir, the Burning Wheel, Ob 10 spells, Strength 10 spirits etc.), Ob 1; moderately powered magic (minor miracles, Ob 5 spells, a *risen* corpse, the Belt of Flying, Dragon Slaying Sword, Spirit Weapons, Strength 5 spirits), Ob 5; low powered magic (Red Spectacles, Bless/Curse, Ob 2 spells, Strength 2 spirits), Ob 8. If successful, he can pinpoint the location of the magical effect—he does not instantly know the nature of the magic.

Extra successes of the spell must be divided between the area of effect and the sensitivity. Area of effect expands the range, but sensitivity adds +1D per success to Perception for the purpose of detecting magic. Magesense is one of the abilities that allows a sorcerer to use Aura Reading. Therefore, once magic is detected, Aura Reading may be used to determine the exact nature of the ability.

Lastly, while the Magesense is being sustained, the sorcerer's Perception counts as Observation for detecting Stealthy and Inconspicuous characters, and the sorcerer suffers a +1 Ob penalty to all physical activities like fighting, running and jumping.

Origin: Personal
Area of Effect: 10s of Paces
Element: Anima/Arcana
Impetus: Enhance
Duration: Sustained
Resource Points: 16

Magic Whistle Ob 1 2 Actions

A miniature firework launches from the magician's outstretched finger and corkscrews crazily off into the air. Its journey ends with a magical whistle. Multicolor sparks drift to the ground. Weapon Length: as Sword; Range: as Pistol.

Origin: Personal
Element: Arneson/Gygax
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: Paces
Impetus: Evocation
Resource Points: 2

Mask Ob 3^ 4 Actions

A wizard can walk in the guise of any man. A mage may alter the appearance of his face with this simple illusion. The spell forces others to make an Observation test to recognize the mage. The obstacle is 1 plus the margin of success.

Origin: Personal
Element: Control
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Caster
Impetus: Heaven
Resource Points: 12

Mend Ob 4^ 27 Actions

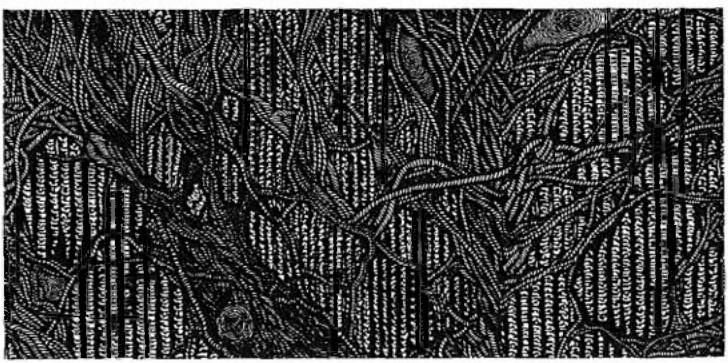
Under the witch's careful tending, the wear and tear of daily life disappears from cloth, wood and even metal. Meeting the obstacle repairs clothing and shoes; 1 success over mends tools, weapons or 1D of shield damage; 2 over mends 1D of armor; 3 over repairs stuff like gears or 2D of armor; 4 over repairs machines, like a mill, or large tools like a plowshare.

Origin: Personal
Element: Heaven
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Single Target
Impetus: Control
Resource Points: 16

Minor Maker Ob 3^ 12 Actions

Know this simple spell and you'll never be without that which you need. Starting with a scrap, piece or fragment, the wizard can recreate and multiply wood, rope, cloth or paper.

Origin: Personal
Element: Earth
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Single Target, Paces
Impetus: Create
Resource Points: 12



P-Q

Persuasion — Ob Will — 4 Actions

Sorcery renders supple the words and tongue of a magician. Using Persuasion, a sorcerer may offer a suggestion to his target. It must be a minor request or suggestion and seemingly normal or mundane; the sorcerer may not command his target to do anything. If the spell is successfully cast, then the victim must do as the sorcerer suggests. He must attempt to complete the request in the time allotted by the duration. After that time, the suggestion will lose importance, and the victim will move on.

Origin: Presence
Element: Anima
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Single Target
Impetus: Influence
Resource Points: 10

Phantasmagoria — Ob 3^ — 56 Actions

Shadows, dreams and phantasms come at the witch's beck and call. Using Phantasmagoria, a witch may conjure images and illusions. The size, scope, depth, texture and detail of the vision depend on the success of the spell. Meeting the obstacle allows her to change the shape of one small, palm-sized object—but to all who view it, it seems real enough. Exceeding the obstacle allows her to increase the size and breadth of that illusion: 1 success over for an object or animal the size of a hat; 2 over for a dog or chair; 3 over creates a person, a wall or a bed; 4 over for a horse or cart or a complex image like a painting or tapestry; 5 over to create a small house or a crowd of people; 6 over to create a house, a court or a monstrous creature like a Giant or Ancient Seneschal.

To penetrate an illusion, a character must pass an Ob 3 Perception test or an Ob 2 Observation test. To make the illusions harder to penetrate, the witch may add her extra successes into complexity instead of scope. Successes allocated to the complexity of the illusion are added to the Perception/Observation obstacle.

Origin: Presence
Element: Heaven/Anima
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Natural Effect
Impetus: Control
Resource Points: 12

Philosopher's Perch — Ob 3 — 4 Actions

His pure thoughts render him weightless; he floats in air akin to a feather. This incantation allows the wizard to rise straight up into the air. He may rise a number of paces equal to his Will, and may only rise straight up.

Origin: Presence
Element: Air
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Caster or Single Target
Impetus: Control
Resource Points: 6

Pyrotechnics — Ob 3 — 8 Actions

The sorcerer commands the life of fire. He may cause it to burn high and bright or cause it to be low and smoking. This spell affects bonfire-sized fires and smaller. The mage may increase or reduce a fire's strength by two steps on the natural magic scale. Fires reduced to zero are doused.

Origin: Presence
Element: Fire
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: Single Target/Nat. Effect
Impetus: Control
Resource Points: 6

R

Rain of Fire — Ob 5^ — 7 Actions

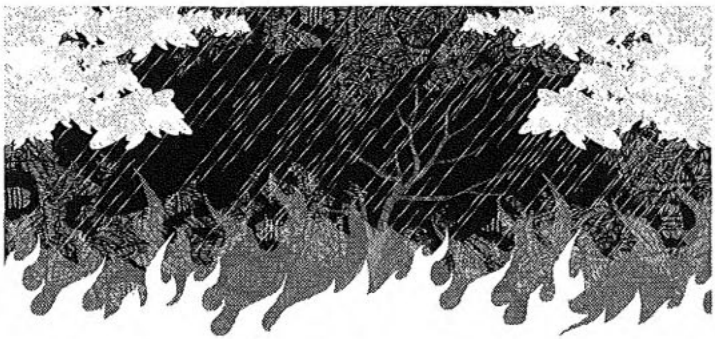
The sky turns a smoky red and streams of fire erupt on the wind, annihilating the wizard's enemies. Damaging effect spell: Power = Will +2, VA 5. Die of Fate to determine IMS. Weapon Length: as Missile; Range: as Heavy Crossbow +1D.

Origin: Sight
Element: Fire/Air
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: 10s of Paces
Impetus: Destroy
Resource Points: 20

Rainstorm — Ob 4^ — 256 Actions

Leaden clouds rush to the sorcerer's call; thick, stinging rain sweeps the fields, causing his enemies to despair. This incantation causes a torrential downpour that turns the earth to soupy mud, drowns out the cries of men and washes out bridges and homes. 1 over: light rain; 2 over: rain; 3 over: heavy rain; 4 over: downpour with accompanying, minor flash floods; 5 over: storm squall with flooding and minor damage to buildings; 6 over: storm and serious flooding, cows float away; 7 over: heavy storm with damage to wooden buildings; 8 over: flooding and sudden downpour causes buildings to collapse. Weapon Length: as Missile; Range: as Heavy Crossbow +2D.

Origin: Sight
Element: Water/Air
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: 100s of Paces
Impetus: Control
Resource Points: 16



S

Sarch's Glare — Ob Will/Forte — 4 Actions

Arcane power flares from the brow of the sorcerer, and his eyes become scintillating stars of fear. Those who look into his eyes freeze; their limbs go dead, paralyzed. The sorcerer may nominate one character to be the recipient of his gaze and attempt to paralyze him. Obstacle is the target's Will or Forte, whichever is lower. Weapon Length: as Missile; Range: as Pistol.

Origin: Presence
Element: Anima
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Single Target
Impetus: Tax
Resource Points: 12

Shards — Ob 2^ — 1 Actions

With a gesture, the sorcerer gouges massive splinters from nearby wood and stone and flings them with great velocity into the unwary. The spell leaves deep grooves in the material used as its source. Damaging effect spell: Power = ½ Will +2, VA 3. Die of Fate to determine IMS. Weapon Length: as Polearm; Range: as Pistol.

Origin: Presence
Element: Earth
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: Paces
Impetus: Destroy
Resource Points: 8

Sight of the Eagle — Ob Perception — 30 Actions

Light sharpens, and that which is distant becomes clear. The recipient gains +2D to Perception tests. Anima Enhancers like this spell can be used to affect positioning and maneuvers.

Origin: Personal
Element: Anima
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Caster or Single Target
Impetus: Enhance
Resource Points: 10

Spark Shower — Ob 2^ — 1 Actions

Fire leaps and spits sparks at the sorcerer's call. Anyone sitting around the targeted fire suffers. Must be cast into a fire source. Will douse torches when cast, but will not unduly affect campfires or larger blazes. Damaging effect spell: Base Power = ½ Will +3, VA 2. Die of Fate to determine IMS. Weapon Length: as Polearm; Range: as Pistol.

Origin: Presence
Element: Fire
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: Single Target
Impetus: Destroy
Resource Points: 8

Spirit Servant — Ob 3 — 50 Actions

A ghostly presence forms and shadows the sorcerer, serving his need and whim. The servant may perform simple functions for the caster: carry, serve, open, etc. The servant's Speed and Power are equal to the caster's Will. The Servant may not leave the sorcerer's sight.

Origin: Presence
Element: Arcana/Earth
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Single Target
Impetus: Control
Resource Points: 6

Storm of Lightning — Ob 6^ — 20 Actions

The sky chokes into a purple rage and voices its displeasure with searing thunderbolts. Damaging effect spell: Power = Will +5, VA 6. Die of Fate to determine IMS. Weapon Length: as Missile; Range: as Heavy Crossbow +1D.

Origin: Sight
Element: White/Air
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: 10s of Paces
Impetus: Destroy
Resource Points: 24

Strength of the Ox — Ob Power — 30 Actions

Calling forth the power of ancient spirits, the sorcerer summons the limitless strength of the ox into his veins. The recipient gains +2D to Power.

Origin: Presence
Element: Anima
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Caster or Single Target
Impetus: Enhance
Resource Points: 10

T-U

Thunderclap — Ob 3 — 2 Actions

Speaking this primal incantation and bringing his hands together, the wizard causes a small thunderclap to erupt and deafen his enemies. Thunderclap deafens all those around the caster for one hour and causes +1 Ob to all actions for one exchange. Victims may make a Forte test to reduce time of deafness: 10 minutes per success. Multiple thunderclaps have no cumulative effect (*What? I can't hear you*). Weapon Length: as Polearm; Range: as Pistol.

Origin: Personal
Element: Air
Duration: Instantaneous/Hours
Area of Effect: Presence
Impetus: Tax
Resource Points: 6

Turn Aside the Blade — Ob 4^ — 11 Actions

A true sorcerer is untouchable by swords, arrows, spears and fists. Turn Aside the Blade increases the obstacle to strike or shoot the caster. The obstacle penalty is 1 plus the margin of success of the spell. Thus, if a sorcerer casts the spell with five successes, all incoming attacks are at +2 Ob.

Origin: Personal
Element: Anima/Earth
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Caster
Impetus: Control
Resource Points: 16

V

Valor — Ob 4^ — 6 Actions

Waves of courage and zeal pour steadily forth from the wizard. This spell adds +1D to Steel plus +1D per margin of success to all allies in his presence.

Origin: Personal
Element: Anima
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Presence
Impetus: Enhance
Resource Points: 16

Voice Caster — Ob 4 — 5 Actions

The voice of the sorcerer has no source. He may produce sound wheresoever he desires in his presence. This spell takes the sound from the sorcerer's throat and projects it elsewhere. The sorcerer is silent; his voice is heard from a different point.

Origin: Presence
Element: Anima/Air
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Natural Effect
Impetus: Control
Resource Points: 8

W-Z

Wall Walker — Ob 3 — 3 Actions

Like a hunting spider, the witch clings to walls and clambers about. This spell allows the witch to walk upon walls as if they were horizontal surfaces. Count Speed as Climbing skill. Add +1D to Speed when able to utilize walls and ceilings for advantage.

Origin: Personal
Element: Anima
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Caster
Impetus: Control/Enhance
Resource Points: 10

Water Walker — Ob 5 — 4 Actions

Water becomes like ice to the ensorcelled feet of the witch. The recipient of this spell may tread upon water as if it were solid ground. White/rough water counts as unstable ground—at least +1 Ob to all actions. The character can climb rapids with Speed and/or Climbing tests.

Origin: Personal
Element: Anima
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Caster or Single Target
Impetus: Control
Resource Points: 10

Wave — Ob 4^ — 8 Actions

Smashing his hand against the glassy surface of the water, the incanter sends a powerful wave rippling across the surface. Natural effects of waves: Success, ripples. 1 over, don't rock the boat, baby. 2 over, small craft sway dangerously, people have difficulty standing. 3 over, people knocked down. 4 over, small boats capsized, people flattened. 5 over, mid-sized craft swamped, small boats shattered. 6 over, mid-sized boats capsized. 7 over, large vessels swamped, mid-sized vessels shattered. 8 over, large vessels capsized. 9 over, large seagoing vessels shattered.

Wave must be cast in a suitably sized body of water. Deep pools of water (like a big fountain in a city) can only produce up to "4 over" effects. Ponds and streams can only produce up to "5 over" effects. Weapon Length: as Missile; Range: as Crossbow.

Origin: Personal
Element: Water
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: 100s of Paces
Impetus: Control/Destroy
Resource Points: 16

Weatherworker — Ob 5 — 12 Actions

With a word, a plea and a pinch of luck, the weather witch asks the clouds, wind and rain to move along, remain a little longer or even calm down a bit. The caster may influence clouds, rain, and storms. He may not influence sun or light independent of moving clouds about. When successfully cast, the spell reduces any nasty weather to something merely bothersome, and can magnify bothersome weather to something nasty. Weatherworker can reduce or increase the intensity of weather by up to three steps on the Natural Effect scale. Reducing the effect to zero moves the phenomenon completely out of the caster's vicinity. Weather may only be increased up to the "9-over" effects—an act tantamount to suicide.

Origin: Sight
Element: Air/Water
Duration: Elapsed Time: Hours
Area of Effect: Natural Effect
Impetus: Influence
Resource Points: 10

Whisper on the Wind — Ob 3^ — 8 Actions

Power arcane sends words winging like divine messengers across the gulf of distance into the ear of the named receiver. The caster can deliver a short (syllables = 2x Caster's Will) message to a named and known recipient. Spell travels 1 mile (1500p). This distance may be increased by upping the obstacle for area of effect.

Origin: Personal
Element: Air
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: Single Target/Miles
Impetus: Control
Resource Points: 12

White Fire — Ob 4^ — 3 Actions

A crashing bolt of lightning arcs from the caster's brow, obliterating his enemies. After striking its intended target and resolving the effect (the most likely result being a pair of smoking boots where once stood your foe), roll the Die of Fate. On a 2-6, the spell dissipates. On a 1, the bolt jumps to another target—friend, foe or self. Roll randomly to determine the new target giving equal weight to all possibilities. After resolving this impact, roll the Die of Fate and go through the process again. Damaging effect spell: Power = Will +5, VA 4. Die of Fate to determine IMS. Weapon Length: as Missile; Range: as Great Bow.

Origin: Personal
Element: White
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: Natural Effect
Impetus: Destroy
Resource Points: 16

Windlash — Ob 4 — 10 Actions

Rain and wind grow hostile and lash out at the enemies of the witch. Windlash increases obstacle penalties for those out in the weather: +2 Ob for light rain; heavy rain is +3 Ob; storms are +6 Ob. If a test is, for some reason, not normally penalized by being performed in the rain, Windlash adds a +2 Ob modifier. Weapon Length: as Missile; Range: as Heavy Crossbow +1D.

Origin: Sight
Element: Air
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: 10s of Paces
Impetus: Control/Tax
Resource Points: 8

Wisdom of the Ancients — Ob Will — 30 Actions

Voices whisper answers and questions across the indigo gulf of time. This spell grants the wizard +2D Will.

Origin: Personal
Element: Anima
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Caster
Impetus: Enhance
Resource Points: 10

Witch Flight — Ob 3^ — 4 Actions

This spell launches the witch in a long leap and allows her to come safely to earth. Increase stride by four for your next positioning test. Leap 10 paces per success.

Origin: Personal
Element: Anima
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: Caster/Single T./10s of p.
Impetus: Enhance
Resource Points: 6

Witch Key — Ob 3 — 4 Actions

A sorcerer's merest whim is the key to any lock. Witch Key opens any mundane lock for the caster.

Origin: Personal
Element: Earth
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: Single Target
Impetus: Control
Resource Points: 12

Wolf Snout — Ob Perception — 32 Actions

To the witch, a man's scent becomes as distinct as his voice, fear becomes a taste on the tongue. This incantation increases Perception by +1D overall, by +2D for strictly olfactory/taste-based tests. Also, Perception counts as Observation for detecting Stealthy characters.

Origin: Personal
Element: Anima
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Single Target or Caster
Impetus: Enhance
Resource Points: 12

Wyrd Light — Ob 2 — 9 Actions

Globes of swirling light orbit the caster and move with a Speed equal to the caster's Will. The lights hover and float at the caster's command, illuminate as if they were torches, and may not move beyond the limits of the caster's presence.

Origin: Presence
Element: Heaven
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Natural Effect
Impetus: Control
Resource Points: 4

Men and Women in Play

Of the four character stocks presented in Burning Wheel, Men are the least fantastic. They are designed to closely emulate the facets of medieval life: All walks of life are represented, and nearly any combination of fate and fortune is possible. There are multitudinous options in their lifepaths, more than any other stock, in fact.

Despite being the least fantastic, the Lifepaths of Man are where it's at for traditional fantasy mystic archetypes—sorcerers and priests. Only men and women can tap the power of sorcerous magic or divine miracle. These are potent abilities. I recommend that either only one player take on the role of the above, or all players play one. Having a mixed group of magical and mundane characters is challenging to run. Such a grouping creates a pretty big rift in the standard adventuring party-style play group.

Lifepaths of Man also set the benchmark for all other characters. The four-lifepath man or woman is the archetypal starting character in Burning Wheel. Such characters are competent, but not powerful. Three lifepathers are rank beginners; five lifepathers are experienced veterans.

Most characters built with these lifepaths are going to come into the game with relatively vanilla numbers: stats and skills of 3-5. But they are by far the most quirky. Men and women get more trait points on average than Dwarves, Elves or Orcs of the same number of lifepaths. This allows players to juice those vanilla stats and skills with lots of really cool traits.

If you find yourself struggling with a character concept, try different paths or a different order so that different leads open up. Keep your eye on your end goal/concept, but let the journey there develop as you choose lifepaths.

Also, don't be afraid to close down or open up options in lifepaths or leads in order to emulate other cultures, either historical or imaginative. For example, Bishops might not work well in an East Asian style game, and might be better replaced with a mandarin or geomancer lifepath of your own design. If you're really interested in creating your own lifepaths, you can find the guidelines in the Monster Burner.

Finally, the role of gender in these lifepaths deserves mention: The vast majority of the lifepaths are gender neutral. Even though medieval Europe was male-dominated, there are enough examples of female participation in all facets of society to make restricting women to "traditional" roles counter to the ethos of these rules. Women fought in wars, started rebellions, ruled kingdoms, ran businesses, worked the fields and dug the ditches. They were disenfranchised, though. The customs and laws of the age denied them inheritance rights and limited their access to legal recourse. Still, there are a few female-only lifepaths. These paths represent roles that women can fulfill due to biology, and present a few of the female stereotypes of the age. You don't have to play them or include them if you don't want to. Yet if I excluded them, I would be remiss in my duties of presenting a broad and reasonably accurate picture of the age.

Astride the Beast

Sometimes the Astride the Beast wonders if the world only exists in his mind as a form of madness. He must truly be mad if he would invent such a cruel, pitiless world in which he is forced to live. His existence is a vortex of hunger, battle, hiding and survival Amidst the violence and confusion, he wonders about his future. So far, he has been successful, but his greatest challenge awaits!

BELIEFS

I must interrogate an Elf, a Dwarf and a Man to discover whether or not these creatures have minds like my own. A hungry wolf makes a dead Orc; I will see my wolf fed and cared for no matter what I must do. Fuck the legion; I'll forge my own path.

INSTINCTS

Speak truth to my superiors. Never volunteer for anything. Always stand safely out of striking distance when reporting in.

LIFEPATHS: Born Chattel, Ravager, Black Hunter, Astride the Beast

24 years old

STATS

Will	B2	Perception	B3	Agility	B4
Speed	B4	Power	B4	Forte	B5

ATTRIBUTES

Health	B3	Mortal Wound	B10	Reflexes	B3
Steel	B5	Hesitation	8/6	Stride	7
Circles	B2	Resources	B0	Hatred	B4

SKILLS

Brawling B3, Bow B3, Hunting B2, Field Dressing B2, Stealthy B3, Riding B3, Great Wolf Husbandry B2, Spear B2, Ugly Truth B1, Mounted Combat Training

ORC COMMON TRAITS

Cannibal, Cold Black Blood, Breeder, Fanged and Clawed, Loathsome and Twisted, Lynx-Eyed Like Burning Coals, Vile Language

LIFEPATH AND SPECIAL TRAITS

Pack Hunter, Black Bile Poison, Brash, Cry of Doom, Solipsistic

GEAR

Great wolf (mount), Poor Quality Arms (spear, knife, hammer), Poor Quality Bow, Poor Quality Reinforced Leather Armor

Orc Lifepaths

Chattel Setting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Boru Chattel	10 yrs	5	+1 P	*Black Legion, Servant*

Skills: 2 pts: General

Traits: Orc Common traits plus 1 pt: —

Cattle Slave	5 yrs	3	+1 P	—

Skills: 2 pts: Animal Husbandry

Traits: 2 pts: Tasting the Lash, Screaming, Shouting, Kicking the Beast

Scavenger	3 yrs	6	+1 P	*Black Legion*

Skills: 3 pts: Foraging, Inconspicuous

Traits: 2 pts: Tasting the Lash, Running (Away), Hiding, Stealing, Scavenger

Forge Slave	5 yrs	3	+1 P	—

Skills: 2 pts: Ditch Digging

Traits: 2 pts: Tasting the Lash, Pain Life, Back-Breaking Labor, Numb

Hauler	5 yrs	3	+1 P	—

Skills: 2 pts: Driving, Beast of Burden-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Tasting the Lash, Back-Breaking Labor, Cursing, Spitting, Yowling

Cutter Slave	5 yrs	3	+1 P	—

Skills: 2 pts: Tree Pulling[S], Ditch Digging

Traits: 2 pts: Tasting the Lash, Hatred of Forests, Back-Breaking Labor

Tunneler	4 yrs	3	+1 P	—

Skills: 2 pts: Ditch Digging, Tunnel-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Tasting the Lash, Back-Breaking Labor, Black Lung

Ravager	3 yrs	8	+1 P	*Black Legion*

Skills: 4 pts: Brawling, Cudgel, Intimidation

Traits: 2 pts: Pack Hunter

Woodcutter	7 yrs	9	+1 M	—

Skills: 4 pts: Rude Carpentry, Mending, Intimidation

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Cutter Slave

Butcher 7 yrs 9 +1 M —

Skills: 4 pts: Butchery, Tanner, Intimidation

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Cattle Slave

Forger 7 yrs 9 +1 M —

Skills: 5 pts: Blacksmith, Intimidation

Traits: 2 pts: Singed

Requires: Forge Slave

Pitwright 8 yrs 10 +1 M —

Skills: 4 pts: Mining, Intimidation

Traits: 1 pt: Deep Sense

Requires: Tunneler

Edge Grinder 10 yrs 15 +1 M/P *Black Legion*

Skills: 6 pts: Mending, Weaponsmith, Armorer, Tanner

Traits: 2 pts: Suspicious

Requires: He Who Grinds the Edges of Our Axes to Glinting Sharpness requires Forger

Whipmaster 9 yrs 15 +1 M *Black Legion*

Skills: 4 pts: Interrogation, Intimidation, Brawling, Torture[§]

Traits: 1 pt: Where There's a Whip, There's a Way

Requires: Pitwright, Forger, four slave lifepaths or any Great and Black or Legion lifepath

Great and Black Setting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Born Great	10 yrs	5	—	*Servant of the Dark*

Skills: 3 pts: General

Traits: Orc Common traits plus 2 pts: Born to Rule Them All, Enemy of the Sun

The Rites 3 yrs 3 +1 M, P *Legion, Servant of the Dark*

Skills: 5 pts: Brawling, Intimidation, Torture[§]

Traits: 2 pts: Life Is Death, Sprinter

Restrictions: The Rites may only be taken once and it must be the character's second lifepath.

Servant of the Gate 4 yrs 7 +1 P *Legion, Chattel*

Skills: 2 pts: Soothing Platitudes, Ditch Digging

Traits: 1 pt: Humble Before My Master, Hauling, Back-Breaking Labor

[§] Special Orcish skill rooted in Hatred. It costs 1 pt to open, but it always counts as open-ended. Descriptions can be found in the skill list.

Follower 5 yrs 9 +1 M, P *Legion, Chattel*

Skills: 8 pts: Armor Training†, Axe, Bow, Knives, Mace, Riding, Shield Training†, Clan-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Silent Hatred

Requires: He Who Walks in the Named's Shadow requires The Rites or Astride the Beast.

Black Destroyer 6 yrs 12 +1 M, P *Chattel*

Skills: 7 pts: Mounted Combat Training†, Great Wolf Husbandry, Riding, Axe, Spear

Traits: 2 pts: Intense Hatred, Low Cunning

Requires: He Whose Skin Is like Winter Night, Whose Mere Presence Causes Those Beneath Him to Shiver in Terror and Cower Beneath His Wicked Blade requires Follower, Astride the Beast or Head Taker.

Named 8 yrs 25 +1 M, P *Chattel*

Skills: 5 pts: Command, Brutal Intimidation§, Torture§

Traits: 2 pts: Savage Consequences

Requires: He Who is Mighty and Earned the Ancient Right to Be Named requires Black Destroyer, Troll Lord or Head Taker.

Siege Master 10 yrs 30 +1 M *Chattel*

Skills: 5 pts: Siege Engineer, Artillerist, Mending

Traits: 1 pt: The Bigger They Come, Brutish Efficiency

Requires: Servant of the Gate

Gate Forger 10 yrs 30 +1 M *Chattel*

Skills: 5 pts: Mason, Bastions of Hatred§, Mining

Traits: 1 pt: Rare Talent

Requires: Siege Master

Whisperer 9 yrs 40 +1 M *Servant of the Dark*

Skills: 5 pts: Poisonous Platitudes§, Falsehood, Persuasion, Clan-wise, Ambition-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Forked Tongue, Poisonous Ambition

Requires: Slave to the Dark, Whipmaster, Gate Forger or Bears the Lash

Great One 20 yrs 60 +2 M, P —

Skills: 5 pts: Command, Strategy, Name Ritual; 1 pt: General

Traits: 2 pts: Brooding, Flights of Murderous Fancy, Unrelenting Hatred

Requires: Named and the Born to Rule Them All trait

§ Special Orcish skill rooted in Hatred. It costs 1 pt to open, but it always counts as open-ended. Descriptions can be found in the skill list.

† This is a training skill. It costs 2 pts to open and may not be advanced.

Black Legion Subsetting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Goblin	3 yrs	2	+1 P	*Chattel*

Skills: 2 pts: Foraging, Brawling

Traits: 2 pts: Tasting the Lash, Exhaustion, Running (Away), Charging Blindly, Marching

Restrictions: Born Great Orcs may not take this path.

Sun Blotter	3 yrs	3	+1 P	*Chattel*

Skills: 2 pts: Bow, Mending, Fletcher

Traits: 1 pt: Hiding, Running (Away)

Restrictions: Born Great Orcs may not take this path.

Nightseeker	4 yrs	4	+1 M, P	*Chattel*

Skills: 5 pts: Orienteering, Tracking, Trapper, Stealthy, Climbing, Garrote

Traits: 1 pt: Tasting the Lash

Requires: He Who Lurks in the Twilight and Seeks Our Enemies requires Legioner, Sun Blotter, Scavenger or Ravager.

Restrictions: Born Great Orcs may not take this path.

Legioner	4 yrs	5	+1 P	*Chattel*

Skills: 4 pts: Spear, Shield Training†, Brawling, Foraging

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Ravager, Whipmaster or Goblin

Restrictions: Born Great Orcs may not take this path.

Hatred Bearer	1 yr	15	+1 M, P	*Chattel*

Skills: 3 pts: Conspicuous, Black Legion-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Psychotic, Paranoid, Booming Voice

Requires: The Rites, Legioner or Whipmaster

Despair Shouter	3 yrs	10	+1 P	*Chattel*

Skills: 3 pts: Brazen Horn of Despair§, Intimidation, Brawling

Traits: 2 pts: Reviled

Requires: The Rites, Legioner or Whipmaster

Black Hunter	5 yrs	5	+1 P	*Chattel*

Skills: 5 pts: Bow, Hunting, Field Dressing, Stealthy

Traits: 1 pt: Black Bile Poison

Requires: He Who Is Fell and Stalks the Night requires Follower, Ravager or Nightseeker.

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Astride the Beast	5 yrs	6	+1 P	*Chattel, Great and Black*

Skills: 9 pts: Mounted Combat Training†, Riding, Great Wolf Husbandry, Intimidation, Spear, Armor Training†

Traits: 1 pt: Brash, Cry of Doom

Requires: He Who Sits Astride the Howling Black Beast requires Black Hunter or Follower.

Bears the Lash	6 yrs	9	+1 M	*Chattel, Great and Black*

Skills: 6 pts: Whip-wise, Intimidation, Torture§, Command, Sword, Brawling

Traits: 1 pt: Where There's a Whip, There's a Way

Requires: He Who Bears the Lash and Drives Us Ever On requires Whipmaster, Black Hunter, Astride the Beast or The Rites

Packmaster	7 yrs	10	+1 M/P	*Chattel, Great and Black*

Skills: 5 pts: Great Wolf Husbandry, Great Wolf-wise, Pack-wise, Mending

Traits: 1 pt: Flea-Bitten; Where There's a Whip, There's a Way; Show No Fear

Requires: He Who Rules the Black Wolf Pack requires Bears the Lash, Follower, Whipmaster, Master of Eight or Knower of Secrets.

Head Taker	6 yrs	15	+1 M, P	*Chattel, Great and Black*

Skills: 5 pts: Command, Brutal Intimidation§, Axe, Brawling

Traits: 2 pts: Unrelenting Savagery, Fondness for Elven Blood, Taste for Man-Flesh

Requires: He Who Cleaves the Heads of His Enemies From Their Shoulders and Sets Them Upon Stakes for All to See requires Bears the Lash, Black Destroyer or Named.

Troll Lord	5 yrs	20	+1 M, P	*Great and Black, Servant*

Skills: 6 pts: Troll-wise, Troll Etiquette, Hammer, Shield Training†

Traits: 2 pts: Arrogant, Troll Speak

Requires: Bears the Lash, Pack Master or Named

§ Special Orcish skill rooted in Hatred. It costs 1 pt to open, but it always counts as open-ended. Descriptions can be found in the skill list.

† This is a training skill. It costs 2 pts to open and may not be advanced.

Servant of the Dark Blood Subsetting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Slave to the Dark	6 yrs	3	—	*Chattel*

Skill: 2 pts: Servant-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Fearful Respect of the Servants, Naked Hatred

Drinker of the Dark	5 yrs	6	+1 M, P	*Chattel*

Skill: 3 pts: Doctrine of Night's Blood

Traits: 3 pts: Stark Madness, Blasphemer, Void Embrace

Requires: Slave to the Dark

Bloodletter 5 yrs 6 +1 M, P *Chattel*

Skill: 5 pts: Rituals of Blood‡, Torture§, Intimidation, Knives

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Drinker of the Dark

Knower of Secrets 6 yrs 7 +1 M/P *Chattel, Legion*

Skill: 4 pts: Rituals of Night‡, Vile Poisoner§, Foraging

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Drinker of the Dark

Master of Eight 8 yrs 8 +1 M/P *Chattel, Legion*

Skills: 7 pts: Spider Husbandry, Riding, Mounted Combat Training†, Web-wise, Climbing

Traits: 2 pts: Batshit, Affinity for Spiders

Requires: Knower of Secrets

Master of Blood 7 yrs 8 +1 M/P —

Skill: 4 pts: Rituals-wise, Animal Husbandry, Orc-wise, Elf-wise, Wolf-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Where There's a Whip, There's a Way

Requires: Bloodletter

Master of Darkness 7 yrs 8 +1 M/P —

Skill: 3 pts: Cave-wise, Tunnel-wise

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Knower of Secrets

Dark Summoner 10 yrs 12 +1 M/P —

Skill: 3 pts: Darkness-wise; 1 pt: General

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Master of Darkness

Blood Summoner 10 yrs 12 +1 M/P —

Skill: 3 pts: Poison-wise, Bat-wise, Troll-wise; 1 pt: General

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: Master of Blood

Servant 50 yrs 30 +1 M —

Skill: 2 pts: Great and Black-wise, Name Ritual; 2 pts: General

Traits: 1 pt: —

Requires: the Born to Rule Them All trait and Dark Summoner or Blood Summoner

‡ This is a sorcerous skill. It costs one point to open. All tests are open-ended.

§ Special Orcish skill rooted in Hatred. It costs 1 pt to open, but it always counts as open-ended. Descriptions can be found in the skill list.

† This is a training skill. It costs 2 pts to open and may not be advanced.

Starting Stat Points for Orcs by Age

Starting Age	Mental Pool	Physical Pool
01-10 years	3 pts	10 pts
11-16 years	4 pts	11 pts
17-22 years	5 pts	12 pts
23-30 years	5 pts	13 pts
31-40 years	6 pts	14 pts
41-50 years	6 pts	15 pts
51-60 years	7 pts	16 pts
61-80 years	7 pts	17 pts
81-99 years	8 pts	17 pts
100-125 years	8 pts	18 pts
126-150 years	9 pts	18 pts
151+ years	9 pts	19 pts

The Hate of Orcs

Twisted, tortured and fulgent with hate, these cousins of the Elves exist in a culture that is a cruel mockery of civilization—one of fear and brutality, a society of the whip.

They know their plight. They mass in the caves and shadows, gathering strength, beating their war drums, summoning their fury in preparation for sweeping and sudden war—a slaughter in which they will take revenge upon those who dared taunt them with what they do not and will never have.

Brutal Life

Like their Elven kin, Orcs are immortal—they are tied to the fate of the earth and will only die when it dies. They can be prematurely killed by violence or be driven over the brink of madness by their powerful, latent emotions.

Unlike their cousins, Orcs live under terrifying and brutal conditions—an Orc is far more likely to be killed by his kin than he is to die in battle against his true enemies.

To represent this difficulty of living a peaceful and fruitful existence, Orcs have a special rule when taking lifepaths. An Orc may take up to four lifepaths at no penalty. After the fourth lifepath, the player must roll the Die of Fate for each additional lifepath he wishes to take. If the Die of Fate comes up a 1, it indicates that the Orc would have died on this lifepath—he would have been savaged, slaughtered and eaten by his allies and companions. This doesn't quite mesh with a character creation system based on freedom of choice, does it? Rather than crumpling up the character and starting over, the Orc is given a crippling trait to represent the character's narrow escape from death. The player may continue to take lifepaths until he is satisfied or his Orc is a complete cripple.

Rolling the Die of Fate is no joke. Before you decide to take another path, ask yourself this question: Can I live without this lifepath? Can my character live without this limb?

# Lifepath	DoF	Result
1-4 LPs	—	*May take 4 LPs without risk*
5th LP	1	Missing Digits character trait
6th LP	1	Lame trait (-1 stride)
7th LP	1	Missing Eye trait: +2 Ob shooting
8th LP	1	Missing Hand (-1D Agility)
9th LP	1	Missing Limb trait (see page 282)
10th LP and up	1-2	Missing Limb trait

Um, I really wish I hadn't lost both my legs...

Sometimes a player pushes it too far and ruins a good character that he has been working on. If a player gets a bad roll on the DoF and loses something he didn't want to lose, he can take back the roll. However, he does not get to travel the lifepath he was rolling for and may not take any other lifepaths. The Orc was confronted by his betters and he chose to bow and prostrate himself rather than stand against them and fight.

Orc Common Traits

All Orc characters start the game with the following traits:

Cannibal *Char*

So vile are they, Orcs will not hesitate to slay and eat their companions.

Restrictions: Orc common trait

Cold Black Blood *Dt*

The cold substance of night runs through their veins, rendering these tormented souls immortal. But it also makes them susceptible to the sun's burning rays. Orcs suffer +2 Ob to all tests while abroad in the sunlight. If it is cloudy, dawn or twilight, the penalty is only +1 Ob. But the night deadens their nerves as well: *Cold Black Blood* reduces hesitation obstacles by two for pain, but not fear or wonderment.

Restrictions: Orc common trait

Breeder *Char*

Though they loathe life and yearn for death, Orcs are compelled by their accursed nature to procreate often and quickly.

Restrictions: Orc common trait

Fanged and Clawed *Dt*

The mouth of an Orc is a violent organ, well suited to tearing flesh and shouting blasphemies. Fanged Maw is a Power 1, WS 1, VA 1, Add 2, Shortest length weapon.

Claws like steel shards protrude from their gnarled fingers. They may be used as weapons: Power 1, WS X, VA –, Add 2, shortest length. They act like knives for purposes of engaging and positioning distance.

Loathsome and Twisted *Dt*

Orcs are repellent, even to their own kind, and especially to Elves, Men and Dwarves. Their bodies are bent and squat with ugly, long arms and sickening charred flesh: Orc stat maximums are straight 8s. Their stride is 7. This trait also grants the Hatred emotional attribute to Orcs.

Restrictions: Orc common trait

Lynx-Eyed, Like Burning Coals *Dt*

An Orc's eyes glow red with the inner fire of despite and hatred. Orcs can see clearly in darkness and shadows. They never suffer a penalty for such conditions.

Restrictions: Orc common trait

Vile Language *Char*

Orcs speak a special language of shadow, chill and blight. They share this tongue with corrupt vermin, shades, Great Wolves, Trolls and certain Great Spiders.

Restrictions: Orc common trait

Orc Special Traits

These traits are only available to Orcs.

Void Embrace *Dt* 4 pts

Drinkers of the Dark are immersed in shivering pools of arcane energies. They are taught to imbibe, inhale and exhale the Dark Blood and survive. This trait transforms the Orc's Hatred into a vehicle for enormous power. However, Orcs are unable to tap their innate power without Rituals. Void Embrace is an emotional attribute with its own shade and exponent. It is used to resist tax, sustain spells (rather than Will), and is used to maintain a spell after a distraction. Any Orc may be taught the Rituals, but without Void Embrace, he cannot resist the tax and thus will be permanently crippled or worse. Void Embrace can also be used to enhance certain rolls by spending a persona point to tap the Void. See the Void Embrace section of this chapter for more details. If Void Embrace is advanced to exponent 10, the Orc goes mad or commits suicide. Either way, he's removed from play.

Restrictions: Orc characters only

Enemy of the Sun *Dt* 3 pts

The greatest, most fearsome Orcs have been bred to resist the pure rays of the sun. They may travel by day and suffer no obstacle penalties as under the Cold Black Blood Orc common trait.

Restrictions: Orc characters only

Orc Skills

Orcs have a handful of skills listed with Hatred as the root. These are available to Orcs only. Calculate the root as normal, using the Hatred attribute.

Hatred-Based Skills

The following skills use Hatred as their root: Bastions of Hatred, Brazen Horn of Despair, Brutal Intimidation, Poisonous Platitudes, Tree Pulling and Torture (for this last skill, replace the Will root with Hatred).

The Orc Hatred is so powerful that it fuels the character with a terrible energy. Tests from any skill rooted in Hatred are open-ended.

Orc Hatred

Elves may grieve for the dead and gone as they watch eternity slide into ruin before them, but their Orc cousins feel differently. Tortured and maligned, they learn to hate: hate the world, hate their enemies, hate

themselves. A boiling, surging emotion dwells within them—it governs their lives, their society and their fate. This hate knows no reservation. It is heaped on enemy and kin alike.

Hatred Emotional Attribute

Hatred is an attribute like Faith or Grief. It can be used by Orc characters to focus the bloody anger of their horrid lives into their skills and abilities.

Head Takers focus their hatred into Brutal Intimidation, Whisperers' hatred drips from their tongues like poison and Servants of the Dark Blood transform their hatred into something destructive and altogether more powerful—sorcery incarnadine and black. And Orcs can manifest their Hatred as described in the Summoning Fury rules.

Starting Character Hatred

Hatred starts at B0. You answer questions about your character to determine the starting exponent. You can spend five points of Hatred exponent to start with a gray shade (or 10 points for a White). This, of course, requires GM approval.

Starting Hatred Questions:

—Add one if the character has ever been horribly wounded.
—Add one for each 1 rolled on the Brutal Life table.
—Add one if the character has ever been tortured.
—Add one if the character has ever been a slave to another.
—Add one if the character has ever killed his superior or parents.
—Add one if the character has ever attempted to command a unit of goblins in battle.
—Add one if the character's Will exponent is 2 or lower.
—Add one if the character's Steel is 5 or higher.
—Add one if the character's Perception exponent is 6 or higher.

Hatred Traits

In addition to the above questions, certain traits inspire Hatred. Each of the following adds one to the character's starting exponent: Kicking the Beast, Yowling, Where There's a Whip..., Charging Blindly, Cry of Doom, Unrelenting Savagery, Humiliation, Life Is Death, Pain Life, Intense Hatred, Silent Hatred, Savage Consequences, Unrelenting Hatred and (of course) Naked Hatred.

Advancing Hatred

In addition to being tested for Summoning Fury, Hatred advancements are earned by meeting conditions in play as described in the following list.

Like Greed, routine tests always count for advancement. When logging tests for advancement, Hatred behaves like an exponent 4 or lower skill all the way up to exponent 10—fill any two difficulty categories and the attribute advances.

Hatred Conditions

Obstacle 1 Hatred

Witnessing murder. Eating the dead. Traveling through the woods. Lying. Cheating. Stealing.

Obstacle 2 Hatred

Being whipped. Having your possessions stolen. Being convinced to do something you don't want to do. Falling ill. Witnessing genuine laughter or personal beauty.

Obstacle 3 Hatred

Killing in battle. Suffering a midi wound. Seeing your "friend" killed. Brief exposure to sunlight. Discovering you've been lied to. Succumbing to the *Black-Blooded Rage*. Idyllic villages.

Obstacle 4 Hatred

Murder. Suffering a severe wound. Being tortured. Starvation. Long exposure to sunlight. Cleanliness and order. Being poisoned. Tasting Elven mirrorwine, eating Elven bread, drinking Dwarven Nog.

Obstacle 5 Hatred

Killing your "friend" because you found out he stole your nice sword (or axe or dolly). Betrayal. Murdering your superior. Watching your bad-ass demon commander dragged into the pit by some treasonous, tricksy wizard. Losing an important fight. Nearly dying of thirst. Confronting something ageless, timeless, deathless or ineffable and being unable to enslave it or destroy it.

Obstacle 6 Hatred

Murdering your mother/father/brother because he/she stands in the way of your advancement in the ranks. Suffering a traumatic wound. Losing a battle.

Obstacle 7 Hatred
Having your unit slaughtered in battle. Losing a precious heirloom.

Obstacle 8 Hatred
Suffering a mortal wound and surviving. Being dominated by a sorcerer (and knowing it).

Obstacle 9 Hatred
Being the architect of a great plan (like an invasion) and watching it dismantled by your enemies—no matter what you do. Being excluded from salvation. Attempting to overcome Hatred and failing.

Obstacle 10 Hatred
Giving in to Hatred and letting it consume you, body and soul. Realizing that there is no hope for you, and in fact, there never was.

Succumbing to Hatred

If an Orc's Hatred should ever reach exponent 10, he snaps. He either commits suicide (in an orgy of bloodletting) or retreats into catatonia. Everyone has their limits—an Orc with an exponent 10 Hatred is no longer playable as a character.

Summoning Fury

Hatred is a powerful emotion. Once per session, an Orc player may test his Hatred in place of any stat or skill so long as the intent of the test involves destruction, corruption or cowardice. Hatred is open-ended. This test counts toward Hatred for advancement.

Deeds of Hate

Orcs may tap their inner fury and call forth seething rage. When spending a deeds artha point to double dice, an Orc player may add his Hatred exponent onto the roll instead. The greater the Hatred, the greater the fury. Hatred dice are open-ended.

A Black Destroyer with a B5 Hatred is about to be ridden down by an Elven Outrider. Such humiliation! Rather than be outmaneuvered by his opponent, the player decides to spend a deeds point and add his five Hatred dice to his B4 Riding skill. He'll roll nine dice, five of which are open-ended.

For the purposes of advancement, this feat always counts as a difficult Hatred test. For the purposes of artha, the player can choose whether he wants to assign the deeds point to Hatred or the other ability.

Orc Resources

Rags	1
Traveling Gear	3
Hobnailed Boots	1
Orc Arms	See Description
Orc Armor	See Description
Orc Missiles	See Description
Black Iron Helmet	5
Black Iron Shield	4
Riding Mount or Pack Animal	9
Great Wolf Mount	15
Whip	2
Poison	5
Brazen Horn or Clan Banner	9
Skill Tool Kits	9
Riding Harness for Wolf	5
Spoils of War	See Description
Clans and Warbands	See Description

Servant Resources

Black Robes	1
Leather Apron	1
Ceremonial Knives	3
Ceremonial Axe or Sword	7
Tools of the Trade	7
Poisoner's Toolkit	7

Orc Arms— You may purchase run of the mill or poor quality weapons for your character: Poor quality arms cost 3 rps. Run of the mill arms cost 5 rps. You may purchase beaks, spikes and weights for your character's weapons at +1 rp per modification, per weapon.

Orc Armor— Orc players may purchase the following types of armor for their characters: poor quality hides (gambeson equivalent), 1 rp; poor quality reinforced hides (reinforced leather equivalent), 3 rps; poor quality light mail, 5 rps; poor quality heavy mail, 8 rps. Run of the mill reinforced leather, 8 rps; run of the mill light mail 12 rps; run of the mill heavy mail, 20 rps. Superior quality reinforced leather for 25 rps. They may purchase armor piecemeal as described in the Mannish Resources section. See the Spoils of War for more options.

Orc Missiles— Poor quality bow (+1 Ob to hit), 3 rps; poor quality crossbow (+1 Ob to hit), 4 rps; run of the mill bow, 5 rps; run of the mill crossbow, 6 rps. Iron-cased bombs, 10 rps. Included in the costs of these weapons are enough missiles to adequately outfit the character. Special heads for arrows and bolts can be purchased for 1 rp apiece. Take as many of each head as you like. Rules for special arrowheads are given in the Weapon Appendix of the Burning Wheel.

Black Iron Helmet— A helmet complete with spikes, horsehair tassels and a prison-gate mask. 5D, +2 Ob to Perception tests.

Black Iron Shield— A large, iron, circular shield, stained coal black. The outer edge is sharpened to add a little surprise for those who want to get close. 3D shield. Power 2, Add 2, VA 1, Slow, short weapon.

Great Wolf Mount— The Great Wolf is the preferred mount of the Orcish cavalry. Though not as swift as horses, they make up for their loss in cunning and ferocity. Use the stats in the Monsters section in the

Burning Wheel for the Black Destroyer and Astride the Beast wolves (they're too long to list here) or burn up the wolf using the Monster Burner. Burned wolves have one less lifepath than their master and obey the other rules for relationships. Lastly, the wolf can be burned up as a character by another player. This creates a powerful partnership, rather than a master/slave, rider/mount relationship. When using a player character wolf, lifepath limits are the same as for any other character.

Whip— The lash is required for making use of the *Where There's a Whip, There's a Way* trait. The whip is not a weapon of any consequence. This may only be purchased by characters with the *Where There's a Whip, There's a Way* trait.

Poison— Three doses of one of the types of poison listed under Vile Poisoner.

Brazen Horn or Clan Banner— The Brazen Horn adds +1D to the Brazen Horn of Despair skill and allows Despair Shouters to help a Named with Command or Brutal Intimidation. The banner reduces hesitation by one for all in the clan who can see it.

Riding Harness— The saddle, bit and bridle, stirrups and reins add +1D to Riding tests for wolves. This can't be used with spiders.

Spoils of War— Named, Great Ones, Whisperers, Head Takers, Summoners and Masters may purchase one item from any character stock resources/gear list they wish. Troll Lords may purchase gear from the Troll resources list in the Monster Burner. Any Orc character who has "failed" a Brutal Life test may also purchase Spoils of War from other character stocks, but the cost of the item/property may not exceed half the Orc's total resource points. Named, Great Ones, etc. may take a second item, but to do so counts as failing a Brutal Life roll at his current lifepath level. If an Orc player takes property as part of their Spoils of War, be sure to include its cost when calculating his Resources.

Clans and Warbands— Orcs frequently gather together in groups, warbands, clans and hordes. A typical/minor clan falls into the 1D affiliation category. An important or powerful clan or horde is a 2D affiliation. Relationships in the group/clan are purchased as normal. Additional characters and functionaries can be generated using the Circles rules in play. Orc commanders are often unaware of who precisely is working under them. It's usually a nest of rabble, a few bitter enemies and one or two diehard heavies. The exact nature of who's who is up to the Circles tests. The character's own position in the warband/horde is dependent on his reputation. Use the standard rules described in *Step 8. Spending Resource Points* to generate this.

Servant Resources

Servants may purchase their resources from the Orc Resources list and from this list. You must pay for Rituals of Night spells with resource points.

Tools of the Trade— These are a collection of knives, blades, pins, clamps and other strange devices. Tools of the Trade add +1D to the Torture skill.

Ceremonial Weapons— These ornate and hallowed weapons are vital to the Servant for performing his dark rituals. At the GM's discretion, these weapons may count as superior quality specimens. Otherwise they are simply ornate run of the mill weapons.

Poisoner's Kit— This kit allows the Knower of Secrets to mix poisons. All of the ingredients necessary for concocting the poisons listed under the Vile Poisoner skill are present in this foul smelling pouch. After using this kit, roll the Die of Fate. On a 1, the supplies have run out and the character must refill the kit via a Resources, Foraging or Scavenging test (or another means sanctioned by the GM).

Void Embrace

When he is taught the Void Embrace, a Servant destroys his sense of self—his Hatred—and opens himself up to the dark powers.

Void Embrace

When the Void Embrace trait is acquired, Hatred is transformed into a new power. The character may no longer perform any of the feats described under Summoning Fury. Hatred no longer advances. Instead a new emotional attribute is added to the character: Void Embrace.

Void Embrace is rolled to resist tax from Rituals of Blood and Night. It is also used to sustain spells from Rituals of Night (rather than Will), and is used to maintain a spell after a distraction. Tax can't be resisted without it!

Choose one of the following voids that you embrace: Darkness (magic, obscurity), Destruction (death, decay) or Madness (trickery, insanity). For one persona point, the Orc player may add any amount of dice from his Void Embrace to a skill or stat test involving that which he embraces—or an act of self-destruction.

Void Embrace advances like a skill. Like Greed, routine tests always count for advancement. When adding dice from a persona point to a test, log an advancement for Void Embrace with the obstacle equal to the number of dice added to the other ability. Add 1D, log an Ob 1 test for Void Embrace. Dice added to a stat or skill count as persona dice.

Starting Void Embrace

The Void Embrace emotional attribute starts at exponent B3. The GM asks the Servant's player the following questions. Each "correct" answer adds +1 to starting Void Embrace.

Question: Who is thy Master?
Answer: The God of Darkness and Blood.

Question: Who controls thy fate?
Answer: The Darkness and the Blood.

Question: What is the wellspring of thy power?
Answer: Darkness and Blood.

Yes, all the answers are the same. The idea is that the Orc has been trained to be the servant of a force much greater than himself. In order to tap into this fully, he must submit utterly to it. All sense of self must be effaced: To serve is all. Relying on himself or another Orc only limits his access to the Void Embrace. The Servant of the Dark is alone in this world—no allies, no companions, no friends—all are just tools in his grand design.

Rituals of Blood and Night

Orc magic is divided into two sorcerous skills: Rituals of Blood and Night.

Rituals of Blood

The Rituals of Blood are a potent series of closely interlinked spells and rituals. They focus on influencing the blood of the target: calling him, twisting his mind or even transforming the body.

Test the skill against the obstacles listed below. Test Void Embrace for tax at the same obstacle after using a Ritual of Blood.

If a Rituals of Blood summoning test is failed, any summoned creatures are hostile or an unexpected entity responds—a monster, a powerful Elf, an enemy warlord, etc. If Wormtongue or Whispers in the Dark are failed, the caster suffers the effects of the spell rather than the target. If Walk in Shadow or Lord of Werewolves is failed, the caster takes an injury equal to the obstacle of the spell plus one per margin of failure. Thus, if you fail Walk in Shadow (Ob 3) by one, you suffer a B4 wound. You can reverse a transformation at will in a few moments.

Rituals of Blood — Will

In imitation of his Master, the Servant casts Rituals of Blood to gather allies, twist minds and transform himself. Each obstacle requires a blood sacrifice of a particular sort. To answer a call requires time, usually a few hours. Callings stretch a few miles in all directions from the caster. Results can vary according to the situation or the setting—the GM makes the final call. Lastly, it only requires a few minutes to effect a transformation.

Obstacles: *Wormtongue*, Ob 1: Implant a seed of doubt in your victim's mind. Requires a small blood sacrifice. *Cry of the Black Wolf*, Ob 2: Call a single wolf (regular, not great) to the summoner's side. The wolf will perform one task or serve as long as it is fed. Requires an animal sacrifice. *Walk in Shadow*, Ob 3: The Servant transforms himself into a black wolf (regular, not great). Requires a blood sacrifice from the summoner. *Black Wings*, Ob 4: Summon bats to harry your enemies, giving them +2 Ob until bats are dispersed. Requires sacrifice of an animal. *Gathering of Stones*, Ob 5: Call nearby trolls to the summoner. Trolls must be negotiated with for service. Requires the sacrifice of a child or lamb. *Pack Lord*, Ob 5: Call forth Orcs—friend and enemy. Orcs must be cowed into service. Requires sacrifice of an intelligent being. *Dark Friend*, Ob 6: Summon a great wolf to the summoner's side. The wolf must be bargained with for service. Requires a large animal sacrifice. *Lord of Werewolves*, Ob 7: This spell transforms the summoner into a Great Black Wolf. Use either Astride the Beast or Black Destroyer stats, your choice. Requires sacrifice of a wolf. *Call Forth His Might*, Ob 8: This spell sends a signal to any earth-bound demons within 100 miles of the Servant. The demon must answer even if he is on another errand. He must be

bargained with for service. Requires human sacrifice. *Whispers in the Dark*, Ob 9: Drive your victim mad. Impose a trait representing insanity—jealousy, greed, pride, grief, wrath—on victim. Requires human sacrifice.
FoRKs: Doctrine of Night's Blood. Torture
Skill Type: Sorcerous **Tools:** Yes, ritual knives.
Restrictions: Orcs only

Rituals of Night

The Rituals of Night are quite different from the Rituals of Blood. This skill taps the Darkness—the Void—to bring magic, death and destruction into the world. It acts like Sorcery for purposes of spellcasting—carefully, patiently and hastily. These spells do not require sacrifice. Void Embrace is used to resist tax, and to sustain spells.

Rituals of Night Perception

The ancient Rituals of Night grant the Knower of Secrets power beyond the ken of his brethren.

Obstacles: See the Rituals of Night spell list. Spells must be purchased or learned separately.
FoRKs: None
Skill Type: Sorcerous **Tools:** No.
Restrictions: Orcs only

Like Sorcery, spells must be purchased or learned for Rituals of Night. Since their magic is crude, Servants have very few spells available to them: Dark of Night, Black Rust, Death's Howl, His Creeping Hand, Black Cloak, Enemy of the Sun, Black-Blooded Rage and Call of the Pit. However, Orcs can make use of Abstractions as described in the Magic Burner. The Rituals of Night skill starts with Personal Origin, Instantaneous Duration and Caster Area of Effect facets for free. During character burning, Servants with Rituals of Night may purchase Anima, Earth and Heaven elements, all Impetus except Create and Transmute, all Origins, Sustained and Instantaneous Duration and all Area of Effects. Other facets and spells may be learned during play according to the rules in the Sorcery chapter.

Black-Blooded Rage Ob 6 8 Actions

Calling upon memories of torture in the pits, goading them with visions of hated enemies, the Black-Blooded Rage sends Orcs into a howling fury. While under this spell, Orcs add +2D to Steel and half hesitation (round up). Also, so furious are they, these Orcs ignore pain—they do not suffer the +1 Ob effects of superficial wounds.

Origin: Personal **Area of Effect:** Double presence
Element: Anima **Impetus:** Influence
Duration: Minutes **Resource Points:** 12

Black Cloak — Ob 4^ — 10 Actions

The Servant covers himself in a humming field of ebon eldritch power. This spell combines the effects of *Eldritch Shield* and *Turn Aside the Blade.* Divide successes between physical and spell protection.

Origin: Personal
Element: Arcana, Earth
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Caster
Impetus: Tax, Control
Resource Points: 16

Black Rust — Ob 2^ — 3 Actions

At the touch of the Servant's black hand, the Black Rust turns flesh into a charred, twisted ruin. The Black Rust ruptures skin and bone. Damaging Effect: Power exponent of caster plus 1 per extra success; *straight damage*, no DoF or IMS. Caster need only touch his victim (Ob 1 Agility test or Strike). Armor does not work against this spell. The caster may poison his hand as he would a blade and use the touch of the Black Rust to deliver the venom. Weapon length: as Knife. Range dice: as Melee.

Origin: Personal
Element: Anima
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Caster or Single Target
Impetus: Destroy
Resource Points: 8

Call of the Pit — Ob 5^ — 14 Actions

Violent, black words tear a rift in the skin of the earth, spewing fire and vapors: tremors shiver the ground into shards like a hammer shatters a mirror. This spell counts as five successes of Siege Engineer against materials. Extra successes allocated to effect (rather than area) increase the Siege Engineer successes by one per success. All characters caught in the area of effect must make a Speed test with an obstacle equal to all effect successes. Failure indicates they have fallen into the pit and must climb out or be rescued. Weapon length: as Missile. Range dice: as Heavy Crossbow +2D.

Origin: Sight
Element: Earth
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: 100s of paces
Impetus: Destroy
Resource Points: 20

Dark of Night — Ob 3^ — 5 Actions

A dim pall suffocates the hall as the Servant enters; shadows lengthen and deepen; lamps shine but give no light. This spell creates darkness and smothers light. Thus a candle can be seen as a point of light, but it illuminates nothing. Successful casting creates the dim light condition (+1 Ob to any action requiring light). Extra successes can be spent to increase the level of darkness up to a maximum of +4 Ob. Extra successes can also increase the area of effect.

Origin: Personal
Element: Heaven
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: 10s of paces
Impetus: Tax
Resource Points: 12

Death's Howl Ob 3^ 7 Actions

A frigid wind erupts howling from the mouth of the Servant of Night. The cold is so terrible it freezes flesh on the bone, the wind so powerful it topples trees. Damaging effect: Base Power equals caster's Will. Roll DoF for IMS. VA 8. Weapon length: as Missile. Ranged dice: as Great Bow. The caster may also allocate successes to knock down targets. Successes so allocated count as the obstacle for a Forte test. Failure indicates the character is knocked supine. These successes count on the Natural Effect list, too.

Origin: Personal
Element: Air
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: Natural Effect
Impetus: Destroy, Control
Resource Points: 12

Enemy of the Sun Ob 5 8 Actions

A grey haze falls across the sky, shielding the Orcs from the sun's rays. This spell turns the light in the sky to a dim twilight—ideal conditions for Orcs going to war.

Origin: Personal
Element: Heaven
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Miles
Impetus: Influence
Resource Points: 10

His Creeping Hand Ob 4^ 6 Actions

His Creeping Hand flings forth a crawling black vapor. The vapor is noxious to breathe and obscures light. However, once released, His Creeping Hand has a will of its own and is not under the control of the caster—it goes where it wants, moving with a Speed equal to the caster's Will and a Stride of 8. Successes over the spell obstacle increase obstacles for all in the cloud due to the darkness and noxious vapors (+1 Ob per success). Anyone touched by His Creeping Hand must make a Steel test. Extra successes may also be spent to increase the duration (one exchange per extra success).

Origin: Personal
Element: Air, Heaven
Duration: Exchanges
Area of Effect: Double Presence
Impetus: Tax
Resource Points: 16

Impenetrable Gloom Ob 5 10 Actions

The Servant summons gloom to conceal his den from the prying eyes of Elves and Men. Impenetrable Gloom conceals caves and warrens from normal sight. Spotting them requires an Ob 5 Observation test. Any attempts to track the Orcs to their den suffer an +5 Ob penalty. Impenetrable Gloom also conceals the Orcs from magical detection; even the spell itself is difficult to detect. Increase Magesense or Second Sight obstacles by +2 Ob. Air of Gates requires an Ob 5 test in order to detect Impenetrable Gloom and those it protects.

Origin: Personal
Element: Arcana, Heaven
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Natural Effect (the caves)
Impetus: Control
Resource Points: 20

Intonation of Earth's Dark Secrets Ob 4 7 Actions

Dirt and loam foam and froth, marking a pathway to the nearest caves.

Origin: Personal
Element: Earth
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Miles
Impetus: Influence
Resource Points: 8

Orcs in Play

These Orcs are not mindless, savage brutes hell-bent on flexing their muscles while screaming gibberish. Burning Wheel Orcs are a little more complex. First, they are cowards. Ninety percent of the Orcs created in these lifepaths are going to have an incredibly high hesitation, which means they flinch from pain and run from danger. They may strike quickly, but they flee even more swiftly. Only the top tier have the Will and Steel combination to overcome their inclination to cowardice.

Second, these Orcs have a culture firmly embedded in their lifepaths. Every time you make an Orc, you are birthing the product of a brutal, callous society, beholden to hatred and focused on unreasoning revenge. It's important for an Orc player to be aware of this (primarily when dealing with other Orcs) because when that whip cracks, he may find himself brought to heel and in a whole lot of trouble.

When creating Orcs, I urge you to give them an extra lifepath to flesh them out. Young and inexperienced Orcs are, for the most part, fodder. The clan doesn't nurture its young; it weeds out the weak through a violent and endless sorting. Three and four lifepath characters won't quite have their feet under them. Five and six lifepath characters will often be better able to meet the demands that adventure (and GMs) will put upon them. They are quite different from humans, where four lifepaths is close to an optimum for a starting character. It's a rather long plateau, but once Orcs survive past five lifepaths and/or a few adventures, they tend to be incredibly potent—lots of physical points and a good host of nasty skills to play with.

It is difficult to incorporate Orcs into a mixed party of Elves, Dwarves and Men. These Orcs have a bad attitude and don't get along well with others. However, it can be done. I've seen some inspiring examples where Orcs are part of a tapestry of civilized cultures in a game world, no better or worse off than any of their brethren. If that's your desire, simply shake the Tolkien out of your head and think, "wiry, smart, tough bastards," and you should be fine. Keep the Hatred, though. It's just too fun not to play with it.

The Lists

Handsome gifts that fate and nature lend us are very often those that least befriend us.

—Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*

Skill List

Welcome to the General Skill List. The descriptions of the majority of the skills from the lifepaths are found here. All character types may pick from this list when spending general skill points.

§ Skills

These skills are magical in nature. All tests made with these skills are open-ended—6s explode. They also have special rules and restrictions. Check them first before opening the skill.

Restrictions

Many skills have restrictions as to when they can be learned. Some skills are restricted to a certain stock in character burning.

A skill restricted to a certain stock can only be learned or opened by characters of that stock or with the appropriate Fey Blood trait. Characters of another stock may not make Beginner's Luck tests for the skill and may not open or advance this skill in character burning or in play.

Fey Blood Traits

Characters who have the Fey Blood trait may take traits that allow them to choose skills from other stocks. *Shaped from Earth and Stone* allows the player to choose Dwarf Only skills. *First Born* allows the player to choose Elf Only skills. *Loathsome and Twisted* allows the player to choose Orc Only skills that are not rooted in Hatred. A character must have Hatred to choose Hatred rooted skills.

If a player uses Fey Blood to change his stock, he may not choose skills restricted to his original stock. He may only choose in the new stock. For example, if a Man takes Fey Blood: First Born, he may not take Mannish-only skills.

Restricted in Character Burning

Some skills are restricted in character burning. They may not be purchased or opened in character burning. They may be learned in play. I recommend that instruction from a member of the native stock be required to learn these skills.

Sorcerous Skills

The first test toward learning a Sorcerous-type skill must be taught. It cannot be gained through Beginner's Luck.

Wises

There are so many different wises, I did not even attempt to describe them all. A general entry for them can be found in W, but by and large, the specifics are left up to your imagination. All Wises are rooted in Perception. When testing for a wise, if there is no risk of an interesting, compelling or important failure, the GM should Say Yes to the request.

History

The history skills—though they are each a separate skill—are all lumped together under the *History* heading. This was done in an effort to save space and sanity.

Tools

Tools are described as either Yes, No, Traveling Gear or Workshop. They may be additionally described as expendable. Skills require the appropriate item purchased with rps or Resources lest the character suffer a double obstacle penalty for all tests.

When using expendable tools, roll a Die of Fate each time they are used after the first. A result of 1 indicates the tools have been used up and must be replenished by the appropriate means: Resources, Scavenging, Foraging, etc.

A

Abbey-wise

Accounting — Perception

Accountants keep track of expenses, income, stocks and taxes. This skill is primarily used to recover taxed Resources.

Obstacles: Calculating taxes for a single income, single residence individual, Ob 1. Maintaining simple personal finances, Ob 2. Maintaining a family's income, Ob 3. A small business' books, Ob 4. An estate's books, Ob 5. A large business' books, Ob 6. A town's books, Ob 7. A city's books, Ob 8. A province's books, Ob 9. A nation's books, Ob 10.

FoRKs: Research, Reading, Administration, Estate Management

Skill Type: Academic

Tools: Yes.

Acting — Perception

The skill of imitation and recitation used to affect a performance.

Obstacles: Mummery, Ob 1. Morality, Ob 2. Religious miracle, Ob 3. Religious mystery, Ob 4. Classics, Ob 5.

FoRKs: Conspicuous, Falsehood

Skill Type: Special

Tools: No.

Administration — Perception

Administration is the skill of running a business or organization. This skill is primarily used to recover taxed Resources.

Obstacles: Just you, Ob 1. A shop, Ob 2. Confraternity, Ob 3. Small commune, Ob 4. Small guild, Ob 5. Small secret society, Ob 6. Large

secret society, Ob 7. Small trading concern, Ob 8. Large guild, Ob 9. Giant trading concern, Ob 10.
Skill Type: Special
Tools: No.

Ages of the Etharch§ Will/Per

This is a specialized History skill relating to the ages of the Etharchs.
Obstacles: Etharchs of the current age, Ob 1. Etharchs of the Third Age, Ob 2; of the Second Age, Ob 3; of the First Age, Ob 4; of the Years of the Sun, Ob 5. Before the first Etharchs, Ob 6.
Skill Type: Academic
Tools: No.
Restrictions: Elves only

Alchemy Perception

Alchemy is the distillation of materials in order to divine their essence. Also, alchemists can create mixtures of arcane substances to generate a specific effect.
Obstacles: Distilling the essential components of earth, Ob 1; of water or liquid, Ob 2; of metal, Ob 3; of blood, Ob 4.
FoRKs: Enchanting, Herbalism, Apothecary, Munitions, Poisons
Skill Type: Sorcerous
Tools: Yes. Expendable.
Restrictions: Men only

Almanac Perception

This particular and peculiar skill comprises a deep traditional and historical knowledge of the seasons, tides, weather, lunar phases and other climatic phenomena. A character with the Almanac skill can always tell the time of year, nearly to the day. In addition, he can make accurate predictions about this season's weather.
Obstacles: General seasonal weather, Ob 1. Planting and harvest times, Ob 2. Reasonably accurate weather prediction, Ob 3. Festivals and holidays, Ob 4.
Skill Type: Peasant
Tools: No.

Althing-wise

Ambition-wise

Amercement Perception

Amercement is the knowledge of fees and criminal fines given as judicial punishment. Such amercements are almost always offered in place of corporal punishment, e.g. "Ye may take 30 days in the stocks or ye may pay the court a fee." Using this skill the character may set the Resources obstacle for a fine. The skill test obstacles indicate how accurate and just the amount is according to the law.
Obstacles: Low justice (where the punishment is only a fine), Ob 2. Middle justice (where the punishment would be amputation or branding or the amercement), Ob 3. High justice (crimes punishable by death—like murder, adultery or grand larceny), Ob 5.
Skill Type: School of Thought
Tools: No.

Ancient Languages Perception

Through this skill, the character knows defunct languages appropriate to the game setting. Use the mechanics for Foreign Languages.
Skill Type: Academic
Tools: No.

Anatomy — Perception

Anatomy is the study of the human body's internal functions and structure.

Obstacles: Dog anatomy, Ob 1. Superficial human anatomy, Ob 2. Major human organs, Ob 3. Circulatory system, Ob 4. Proper human dissection, Ob 5.

FoRKs: Surgery, Field Dressing

Skill Type: Academic

Tools: No.

Animal Husbandry — Will

Animal Husbandry involves the raising, care and breeding of animals.

Obstacles: Chickens, Ob 1. Pigs and goats, Ob 2. Cows and horses, Ob 3. Exotic animals, Ob 4. Tending to wounds and illness, use the Field Dressing or Apothecary skill obstacles.

Skill Type: Peasant

Tools: Yes.

Antiphon Union Training — Will*

This specialized training allows the Elven artisan to blend his crafts or arts with spell songs. Any of the items or materials he creates via a skill song can be imbued with the power of a spell song.

An artisan who wishes to enchant an item, must first create it with a skill song like Jewelcraft, Riddle of Steel or Weaving Way. Once the item is created, the spell song must be sung. The singer has one chance to transfer his power. The song is sung according to its rules, but the effect generated is imbued into the item, and active whenever the item is used. No enchantment will hold unless the structure is of highest quality. Any item created by any skill song can be used. However, whether it's a shoe or a crown, the base obstacle to create the item is 5. If the obstacle would naturally be higher, use that instead. If the item is cheap or shoddy, it simply will not hold the spell.

Skill Type: Artisan

Tools: No, but see skill song.

Restrictions: Elves only

*Training Root is for Aptitude only.

Apothecary — Perception

Apothecaries use herbs, roots, minerals and animalia to cure and prevent common and chronic ailments. Apothecaries may mitigate the symptoms of infection and illness; they may also alleviate wound die penalties.

Obstacles: Stop itching, Ob 2. Cure warts, Ob 3. Medicine to alleviate +1 Ob of pain, Ob 3. Medicine to numb an area, Ob 4: This reduces the wounded die penalty by one but increases all obstacles by one and lasts four hours.

FoRKs: Herbalism

Skill Type: Medicinal

Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Appraisal — Perception

This skill is used to judge the value or worth of certain items such as jewelry, gems, artwork and antiquities. The Appraisal skill can be used by a player before testing his Resources to ensure that he is getting an accurate price.

Obstacles: Coin and precious metals, Ob 1. Gems, Ob 2. Tapestries, Ob 3. Armaments, Ob 3. Antiquities, Ob 4. Art, Ob 5. Ephemera—wine,

drugs, candles, Ob 6. If something is magical, add +1 Ob penalty to appraisal.

FoRKs: Appropriate wises, academic, artisan or craftsman skills

Skill Type: Special

Tools: No.

Appropriate Weapons

This blanket entry is provided so the player may choose any and all of the weapons appropriate to his lifepaths, character concept and game setting. See the listing for the individual weapons obstacles and roots.

Archcraft§ Will/Agility

Archcraft is a comprehensive discipline teaching the principles of both architecture and engineering. Using this broad skill, Elven artisans create halls of sweeping beauty and depth. Combined with Antiphon Union and various spell songs, this skill can be used to create enchanted dwellings for the Elves. The following are but a few examples: Using Song of Arbors, buildings can be constructed to weave in and out of ancient trees; with Alarm, certain gates will warn of intruders; with Weathersong, an atrium can be built so it predicts the coming weather.

Obstacles: Simple arch, Ob 1. Small gate, Ob 2. Large gate, Ob 3. Chamber, Ob 4. Domed hall, Ob 5.

FoRKs: Woodcraft, Stonecraft

Skill Type: Artisan

Tools: Workshop.

Restrictions: Elves only

Architect Perception

Architects possess knowledge of the design and construction of complex structures, such as buildings, arches and bridges. This skill can be used in game to draw accurate plans of a proposed structure, attempt to draw structural plans for an extant building or use existing plans and designs to navigate buildings and structures.

Obstacles: Simple plans like a cottage, Ob 1. A longhouse, Ob 2. Two story structure, Ob 4. Tower, Ob 5. Complex or weird designs like temples, Ob 6. Non-Euclidean Geometric Designs of the Outer Gods, Ob 10.

FoRKs: Engineer, Mason, Carpenter

Skill Type: Academic

Tools: Workshop.

Armor Training Power/Speed*

To the unaccustomed, armor is heavy, hot and uncomfortable. Characters without Armor Training who wear light mail suffer +1 Ob penalty to all tests. Wearing heavy mail or heavier without Armor Training incurs a +2 Ob penalty. Armor Training mitigates these penalties completely. Clumsy Weight penalties still apply.

Skill Type: Martial Training

Tools: No.

***Training Root is for Aptitude only.**

Armorer Per/Agi

This specialized and dedicated craft is used to manufacture personal protection worn by soldiers in battle. The skill's knowledge base is diverse, encompassing aspects of a blacksmith, a tailor and a tanner.

Obstacles: Gambeson, skull cap or leather hood: Ob 1. Reinforced leather armor, light helmet, pot helm: Ob 2. Light mail, spangenhelm: Ob 3. Heavy mail, open-faced bascinet, barbute: Ob 4. Plated mail, sallet, closed bascinet:

Ob 5. Full plate, great helm: Ob 6. Target, Ob 1. Buckler, Ob 2. Great Shield, Ob 3. Kite, Ob 4.

FoRKs: Blacksmith, Sewing, Tanner

Skill Type: Craftsman

Tools: Workshop.

Army-wise

Arson Per/Agi

This skill allows the character to use common household items to quickly set a building on fire.

Obstacles: Thatched cottage, Ob 1. Munitions dump or powder room, Ob 2. House, Ob 3. Manor, Ob 4. Fortress, Ob 5. Prison, Ob 6. Catacombs, Ob 7. Castle, Ob 8.

Skill Type: Special

Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Restrictions: Men and Roden only in character burning

Artificer-wise

Artillerist Perception

Artillerists use basic physics and mathematics topped with some healthy guesswork to lob indirect-fire projectiles from war machines. They also know the designs for constructing various war engines. Actual construction requires teams of laborers and at least one carpenter.

Obstacles: Carving shot from stone, Ob 1. Scavenging suitable shot, Ob 2. Building a small traction trebuchet, Ob 2. Building a large traction trebuchet, Ob 3. Building a small catapult, Ob 4. Building a counterweight trebuchet or siege crossbow, Ob 5. Building a large catapult, Ob 6. Ranging shots (aka hitting the broadside of a barn): Siege crossbow, Ob 2. Small catapult or traction trebuchet, Ob 3. Counterweight trebuchet, Ob 3. Catapult, Ob 4.

Alternate Rule: In campaigns that use black powder weapons, the Artillerist skill can be used to cover the manufacture and operation of cannons, bombards and shot. If this is the case for your game, use Munitions to manufacture bombs and powder.

FoRKs: Engineer, Architect

Skill Type: Military

Tools: Workshop.

Artillery Hand Per/Agi

Dwarven artillerists and engineers are always in short supply. Therefore, when the Host is on the march, Arbalesters are assigned to crew the army's war engines. This skill allows the character to assemble and dismantle artillery pieces, as well as fire direct-fire type mechanisms like siege crossbows or ballistae. Effectively operating indirect-fire artillery requires the Artillerist skill.

FoRKs: Artillerist

Skill Type: Special

Tools: Yes.

Restrictions: Dwarves only in character burning

Astrology Perception

The study of the stars, the planets and the zodiac—astrology is a deep and ancient science that describes the relations of the celestial sphere to the terrestrial.

Astrology may be FoRKed with any skill except those of martial or physical type. However, the Astrology FoRK die is different from other FoRKs: The die is open-ended. But unlike standard open-ended dice, it open-ends both ways. 6s are

rerolled as per the normal open-end rules, but 1s are open-ended as well. If a 1 is rolled, reroll the die. If the second roll is a failure, then a success is subtracted from the result. For a less risky roll, use this skill as a linked test toward any endeavor or gambit. In this case do not use the open-ended die.

FoRKs: Doctrine, Symbology.

Obstacles: Naming the stars and constellations, Ob 1. Constructing a person's horoscope, Ob 2. Determining the auspices of beginning an enterprise, Ob 3. Calling upon the stars to answer a question, Ob 4. Interpreting celestial phenomena or omens, Ob 5.

Skill Type: Academic

Tools: Yes.

Restrictions: Men only

Atilliator — Per/Agi

The manufacture and maintenance of crossbows.

Obstacles: Crossbow, Ob 2. Heavy crossbow, Ob 3. Hand crossbow, Ob 4. Siege crossbow, Ob 5.

FoRKs: Bowyer, Blacksmith, Carpenter

Skill Type: Craftsman

Tools: Workshop.

Aura Reading — Will/Per

This is the talent to read an aura and see within it the present, future and past. Aura readers can decipher gossamer veils of emotion, deception, clarity and purpose. This skill does not grant the character the ability to *see* auras. That ability must be acquired through a trait, prayer or spell.

Obstacles: Detecting if the subject is alive, dead, from this plane or another, Ob 1. Reading an aura trait (like Aura of Fear), Ob 1. Reading mood (angry, calm, etc.), Ob 2. Seeing a character trait, Ob 3. Seeing a die or call-on trait, Ob 4. Sensing a person's intent (to deceive, for example), Ob 4. Seeing an Instinct, Ob 6. Seeing a Belief, Ob 7. Seeing a character's past, Ob 8. Seeing a character's future, Ob 9. Reading an object to see if it is magical or mundane, Ob 1. Reading a school of magic, Ob 2. Deciphering a facet of a spell or enchantment (impetus, trigger, effect, breadth, duration etc.), Ob 3. Naming a spell as it is being cast, Ob 6. Detecting the presence and nature of a spirit, Ob is 10 minus spirit's Strength.

Skill Type: Sorcerous

Tools: No.

Axe — Power/Agility

This skill teaches the character how to use one- and two-handed axes to chop off arms, legs and heads in battle. The Axe skill can be used to make blade strikes with the weapon, as well as strikes with the haft.

FoRKs: Brawling, Martial Arts or appropriate melee weapon skills

Skill Type: Martial

Tools: An axe.

B

Back Alley-wise

Bad End-wise

Baking — Per/Agi

His bread, flatcakes and pastries make the baker an important fixture in any civilized town.

Obstacles: Peasant bread, Ob 1. Flatcakes, Ob 2. Nice bread, Ob 2. Cream-filled buns, Ob 3. Advanced Pastry Mechanics, Ob 4.

FoRKs: Cooking

Skill Type: Peasant

Tools: Workshop.

Ballad of History§ — Perception

Elves learn their history and that of many others in mnemonic songs.

Obstacles: Events of the current age, Ob 1; of the Third Age, Ob 2; of the Second Age, Ob 3; First Age, Ob 4; of the Years of the Sun, Ob 5; of the Creation and before time, Ob 6.

FoRKs: Any appropriate history or Wise skill or song

Skill Type: Academic

Tools: No.

Restrictions: Elves only

Banner-wise

Bannerman-wise

Bat-wise

Bastions of Hatred§ — Hatred

Channeling his mind-numbing rage, the Gate Forger is able to create terrifying edifices. This skill blends Architect and Engineer for the purpose of creating the looming tower fortresses in which the Orcs dwell. Also, using this skill, Orcs may corrupt or adopt caves or pre-existing towers and turn them into something more suitable to the horde's taste. All tests are open-ended.

Obstacles: Trench, Ob 1. Battlefield fortifications, Ob 2. Palisade wall, Ob 3. Small tower, Ob 4. Convert Mannish structures to something more Orc-like, Ob 1. Convert Dwarven structures, Ob 2. Defile Elven structures, Ob 3.

FoRKs: Siege Engineer

Skill Type: Artisan

Tools: Workshop.

Restrictions: Orcs only

Beast of Burden-wise

Beer Appraisal — Will/Per

Years of training are required to fine-tune the sensitive taste of a discerning Dwarf. But once honed, said taste can determine the type of grain used, the type and length of the brewing, how long it has been in the cask and even the wood of the barrel.

Obstacles: Dwarven brews, Ob 1. Mannish swill, Ob 2. Rat wine, Ob 3. Elven crap, Ob 4. Orcish puke, Ob 5.

FoRKs: Grain Appraisal, Nogger

Skill Type: Craftsman

Tools: No.

Restrictions: Dwarves only in character burning.

Beer-wise

Begging — Will

Begging can elicit a few coins from the victim (1D of cash). It may also be used to replenish taxed Resources.

Obstacles: Typically, obstacles are equal to the victim's Will. Award advantage dice to a convincing beggar.

FoRKs: Persuasion, Falsehood, Soothing Platitudes.

Skill Type: Social

Tools: No.

Bird Husbandry — Will

Bird Husbandry is the art of raising and caring for our avian friends.

Obstacles: Chickens, Ob 1. Pigeons, Ob 2. Raptors, Ob 3. Exotic birdies, Ob 4. Tending to wounds and illness, use the Field Dressing or Apothecary skill obstacles.

Skill Type: Forester

Tools: Yes.

Black Legion-wise — Perception

Orcs with this skill know the power structure and inner workings of their clan's legion and other legions in the region.

FoRKs: Orc-wise
Skill Type: Wise
Tools: Yes.

Black Metal Artifice§ — Will/Agility

This is the skill with which Dwarves create all their mundane and household metals. However, the Artificers know a secret or two and may imbue even their pots and horseshoes with intense quality. Using the obstacles listed below, a Dwarf can create various tool kits. If he so desires, he may increase his obstacles by +2 Ob and grant the final product a special +1D bonus to all skill tests in which the tools are used.

Obstacles: Horseshoes, Ob 1. Mason, Stone Art, Cooking, Blacksmith, Black Metal Art tools: Ob 2. Armorer, Weaponsmith, War Art tools, Ob 3. Khirurgeon's tools, Ob 4.
FoRKs: White Metal Artifice, War Art
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Workshop.
Restrictions: Dwarves only

Blacksmith — Agility/Power

A blacksmith forges iron and steel tools, implements and weapons. This is an arduous and time-consuming task, requiring tools and a workshop. Blacksmith can also be used to replenish taxed Resources if the character can find a suitable place to ply his trade.

Obstacles: Nails, Ob 1. Horseshoes, knives, stirrups, arrowheads: Ob 2. Spear tips, plow: Ob 3. Simple tools (Cooking, Blacksmith), Ob 3. Swords, Ob 4. Complex tools (Surgery, Astrology), Ob 5.
FoRKs: Armorer, Weaponsmith
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Workshop.

Bloodletting — Perception

Bloodletters believe that when a person is ill, his blood is contaminated with disease and impurities. By draining blood from the system, the bloodletter seeks to purify him.

Obstacles: See the Anatomy of Injury chapter.
FoRKs: Apothecary, Surgery
Skill Type: Medicinal
Tools: Yes.

Boatwright — Per/Agi

This skill allows the character to construct small watercraft, including canoes, dugouts, barges and planked and tarred longboats.

Obstacles: Repair or retarring, Ob 1. Dugout, skiff or raft, Ob 2. Rowboat or small barge, Ob 3. Large barge or longboat, Ob 4. Small sailing vessel, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Carpenter
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Workshop.

Boss-wise

Bow ____ **Agility**

The bow is a simple, effective, tension-drawn weapon that launches thin shafts at high velocity. This skill allows characters to use said device as a weapon in battle.

Obstacles: Rules for hitting targets with bows are detailed in the Range and Cover and Fight chapters.
Skill Type: Martial
Tools: A bow.

Bowcraft§ ____ **Will/Agility**

An Elven bowman learns more than just how to fell an opponent with a shaft. For years he trains to discover the very heart and soul of the bow. When he joins the ranks of his fellow protectors, the Bowyer comes forth with his own personally crafted weapon—a product of a decade of learning and labor. This skill counts as Bowyer and Fletcher.

Obstacles: Hunting bow, Ob 2. Great bow, Ob 3. Horse bow, Ob 4. Elven Bow, Ob 6. Arrows and flights, Ob 2.
FoRKs: Woodcraft
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Yes. Expendable.
Restrictions: Elves only

Bowyer ____ **Per/Agi**

A Bowyer creates bows and arrows from suitable wood. He also knows how to make bowstrings from gut.

Obstacles: Making arrows, Ob 1. Making a hunting bow, Ob 2. Making longbow or great bow, Ob 3.
FoRKs: Carpenter, Carving
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Boxing (Martial Arts) ____ **Pow/Ag**

This is the blanket term used to describe all trained, unarmed "martial arts." Boxing and Martial Arts skills allow a character to use all attack, defense, basic and special actions. Use the skill in place of Power for Push and Lock.

Obstacles: The obstacles for Boxing are described in the Fight and Weapons chapters.
FoRKs: Brawling or an appropriate melee weapon skill
Skill Type: Martial
Tools: No.

Brawling ____ **Power**

Brawling is the "undisciplined" side of bare-fisted combat. Brawling grants access to attack, defense and basic actions, but not special actions. Using the Brawling skill in place of Power for the Lock and Push actions. Brawlers may also use "found weapons." Found weapons include: clubs, brooms, lamps, rocks, sharp pieces of glass, towels and pencils. These count as melee weapons but rely on the Brawling skill rather than a weapons skill.

Obstacles: The obstacles for Brawling are described in the Fight and Weapons chapters.
FoRKs: Boxing, or melee weapon skill
Skill Type: Martial
Tools: No.

Brazen Horn of Despair§ ____ **Hatred**

Cavernous horns are sounded before the Orcs join battle. The horns strike one note: Despair. If the Despair Shouters exceed the mean Will of their opponents, their margin of success is added to their opponents' hesitation for the duration of the conflict. Brazen Horn tests are open-ended.

Skill Type: Musical
Tools: Yes, the brazen horn!
Restrictions: Orcs only

Brewer — Perception

A Brewer is a specialized miller who grinds grain to ferment into alcohol. Obviously, this practice requires a mill (or at least some ground grain) and a vat, if not an actual brewery.

Obstacles: Peasant brew, Ob 1. Priest's brew, Ob 2. Merchant's brew, Ob 3. Nobles' brew, Ob 4. Amount: for home, no penalty; for a small hostel, +1 Ob; for a tavern or pub, +2 Ob; for a brewery, +3 Ob.

FoRKs: Miller

Skill Type: Craftsman

Tools: Workshop

Bribe-wise

Brutal Intimidation§ — Hatred

The most cunning and brutal of Orcs learn how to channel their own inner fires to cow their brethren. Brutal Intimidation is a special Intimidation skill, rooted from Hatred. All tests are open-ended.

FoRKs: Torture (when applicable), Interrogation

Skill Type: Social

Tools: No.

Restrictions: Orcs only

Burden of the Crown-wise

Bureaucracy — Will

Bureaucracy is the knowledge of the hierarchies within a codified government of officials (or bureaux). This skill allows characters to navigate said structures in order to accomplish certain tasks or impel the bureaucracy to move in a certain direction. Often it involves filling out lots of forms, researching obscure laws and paying bribes to people who are very bored with their jobs.

Obstacles: Locating a bureau or office, Ob 1. Filing forms, Ob 3. Forming a committee, Ob 4. Finding a coherent policy, Ob 5. Locating a mid-level bureaucrat, Ob 6. Obtaining useful information in a timely manner, Ob 7. Finding Lord Julius, Ob 8.

FoRKs: Research, Etiquette, Soothing Platitudes, Falsehood

Skill Type: Special

Tools: No.

Butchery — Per/Agi

Butchers know how to kill, cut and carve an animal or carcass into edible portions.

Obstacles: Fowl, small game: Ob 1. Pig, lamb, goat, Ob 2. Cow, deer, horse, Ob 3. Exotic animal, Ob 4. Monster, Ob 5. Human, Ob 6.

Skill Type: Peasant

Tools: Yes.

C

Cadence-wise

Call of the Wild§ — Per/Agi

Call of the Wild obeys the same rules as the Hunting skill.

FoRKs: Song of Paths and Ways, Rhyme of Rules

Skill Type: Peasant

Tools: Yes.

Restrictions: Elves only

Calligraphy Per/Agi

Calligraphy is a formal, stylized handwriting that is required for communicating with religious, royal or governmental bodies.

Obstacles: Signature or identifying mark, Ob 1. Formal letter, Ob 2. Sacred texts, Ob 3. Imitating writing style, Ob 4. Imitating sacred style, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Write
Skill Type: Academic
Tools: Yes.

Campaign-wise

Cargo-wise

Carpentry Per/Agi

A carpenter can select suitable trees, cut the lumber and use it to build structures, implements and furniture. Carpentry is a great way to replenish taxed Resources.

Obstacles: Simple box or shelf, Ob 1. Cup, bowl, stool, ladder: Ob 2. Wall, table, chair, cabinets: Ob 3. A slatted floor, Ob 4. A wooden staircase, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Engineer, Carving
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Workshop

Cartography Per/Agi

Cartography is the school of map-making. This skill imparts a hand for illustration and an eye for detail. And since Cartography is somewhat a language of its own, this skill also allows the interpretation of other maps.

Obstacles: Simple local, rural area maps, Ob 1. Detailed rural area maps, Ob 2. Simple urban maps, Ob 3. Detailed urban maps, Ob 4. Simple sea charts, Ob 5. Detailed sea charts, Ob 6. Topographical maps, Ob 7.
FoRKs: Calligraphy, Illumination
Skill Type: Academic
Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Cartwright Per/Agi

Cartwrights build wheeled conveyances to be hauled by animals.

Obstacles: Wheelbarrow or pushcart, Ob 1. Rickshaw or two-wheeled cart, Ob 2. Four-wheeled wagon, Ob 3. Jitney, Ob 4. Carriage, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Carpentry
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Workshop

Carving Per/Agi

Carving is the careful shaping and engraving of wood.

Obstacles: Simple carving or shape, Ob 1. Wood blocks with pictograms, Ob 2. Complex carving or shape, Ob 3.
FoRKs: Carpentry, Etching, Engraving
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Traveling Gear

Cave-In-wise

Cave-wise

Champion-wise

Chandler Per/Agi

The Chandler skill allows characters to make candles from wax and tallow.

Obstacles: Single use candle from fat, Ob 1. Single use candle from wax, Ob 2. Multi-use candle, Ob 3. Candle of hours, Ob 4. Pope candles, Ob 5.
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Chattel-wise

Cheating-wise

Child-Rearing Will

Child-Rearing is used to raise children with the proper values and manners. The skill can also be used as Instruction, Cooking and Field Dressing, but only for the benefit of children.

Obstacle: Will of the child or as appropriate skill.
Skill Type: Social
Tools: No.

Chronology of Kings Perception

A ballad of history, telling the story of all the great Dwarven kings, their deeds and their riches.

Obstacles: Your clan's noble lineage, Ob 1. Your current king or prince, Ob 2. Princes and kings of old, Ob 3. Original kings, Ob 4. Oathbreaking kings and princes, Ob 5. Cowardly princes and kings, Ob 6. Adventurer princes and kings, Ob 7.
FoRKs: Ancient and Obscure History
Skill Type: Academic
Tools: No.

Church Law Perception

This is a specialized legal skill dealing only with ecclesiastical law. Church Law is quite different than civil or courtly law. The punishments for crimes are religious in nature, not monetary or corporal.

Obstacles: Jurisdiction, Ob 1. Sentencing, Ob 2. Calling a council or issuing edict or bull, Ob 3. System of tithe, Ob 4. Interpreting scripture, Ob 5.
Skill Type: School of Thought
Tools: No.

Citadel-wise

City-wise

Clan History Perception

This Dwarf knows the long and sordid past of the various clans—their oaths, grudges, great works of art and the probable size of their hoards and halls.

Obstacles: General history and well-known names, Ob 1. Grudges, Ob 2. Oaths, Ob 3. Obscure deeds or names, Ob 4.
Skill Type: Academic
Tools: No.
Restrictions: Dwarves only in character burning

Clan-wise

Climbing Speed

This skill allows the character to navigate sheer surfaces using rope, harnesses and really strong finger muscles. In addition, rougher surfaces can be scaled with bare hands.

Obstacles: Easy climb (a rocky hill, a tree or a fence), Ob 1. Moderate climb (inclined rock wall, a treacherous tree), Ob 2. Difficult climb (straight rock wall), Ob 3. Dangerous climb (sheer rock wall), Ob 4. Impossible climb (ice climbing), Ob 5. Suicidal climb (bad conditions, overhangs, ice), Ob 7.
FoRKs: Knots, Rigging
Skill Type: Physical
Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Cloth Dyeing Per/Agi

The fine art of dyeing cloth and making the color keep.

Obstacles: Red, orange, yellow, green, brown, gray, Ob 1. Blue and purple, Ob 2. Crimson and scarlet, Ob 3. Black, Ob 4. Royal purple, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Herbalism, Vintner
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Yes.

Coarse Persuasion§ — Will

This bizarre social art is apparently a method of coercion and persuasion among Dwarvenkind and consists of a lot of backslapping, grinning and reassurances: "Come on! You'll love it." That other folk often find it charming and endearing is one of the wonders of the world.

Obstacles: Obstacle is equal to the victim's Will. Obstacle increases for really outlandish requests and proposals.

FoRKs: Intimidation, Interrogation, Ugly Truth

Skill Type: Social

Tools: No.

Restrictions: Dwarves only

Cobbler — Per/Agi

Shoes, glorious shoes. The Cobbler makes all types of foot coverings, from the utilitarian to the fashionable.

Obstacles: Sandals or sabots, Ob 1. Shoes, Ob 2. Boots or fashionable shoes, Ob 3. Extravagant courtly fashion, Ob 4.

Skill Type: Craftsman

Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Code of Citadels§ — Will/Per

This is a specialized natural magic skill that is similar to Etiquette. The Elves' long years allow them to delve deep into the culture of a place and people. When dealing with any Citadel-born Elf, Code of the Citadels may be used in place of Etiquette.

Skill Type: Social

Tools: No.

Restrictions: Elves only

Command — Will

Command is the ability to deliver curt and effective orders on the field of battle. A character's "command radius" only stretches as far as the sound of his voice—a fairly short distance on the battlefield. But to those around them, a commander can be a great boon.

Obstacles: Command can be used to negate hesitation of characters in battle. The obstacle is the amount of hesitation. Margin of success is subtracted from all hesitation within the Commanding character's presence. Obviously, the Commanding character can't be hesitating during this. In the Range and Cover mechanics, a Command test vs the highest Will on your team may count as a linked test for the team members' field maneuvers.

FoRKs: Oratory, Conspicuous

Skill Type: Social

Tools: No.

Composition — Will/Per

Composition is the discipline of formally arranging one's ideas in written form. Using this skill, a character may compose lengthy books or pen erudite letters.

Obstacles: Letter, Ob 1. Essay, Ob 2. Editorial, Ob 3. Book, Ob 4.

FoRKs: Write, Research and skills applicable to the content

Skill Type: Academic

Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Conspicuous _____ Will

Characters with the Conspicuous skill can make themselves noticed above all in a crowd or scene.

Obstacles: Attracting attention to oneself in a crowded room, Ob 1. In a busy shop, Ob 2. On a busy street, Ob 3. In a massive, gathered crowd, Ob 4. In a pitched battle, Ob 5.

FoRKs: Command, Oratory

Skill Type: Social

Tools: No.

Contract-wise

Cooking _____ Perception

Preparing meat, veggies and grains for yummy consumption (or not).

Obstacles: Simple meal for one, Ob 1. Simple meal for the group, Ob 2. Whipping up a meal from inadequate ingredients, Ob 3. Cooking something special or fancy, Ob 4. Cooking something exotic and important, Ob 5.

FoRKs: Herbalism, Apothecary, Baking

Skill Type: Peasant

Tools: Traveling Gear

Cooper _____ Per/Agi

A Cooper uses iron, wood and wax to make barrels to store wine, grain and other sundries necessary for the survival of the village.

Obstacles: Barrel staves, Ob 1. Barrel hoops, Ob 2. Barrel lids, Ob 3. Watertight barrels, Ob 4.

FoRKs: Carpenter

Skill Type: Peasant

Tools: Workshop.

Coppersmith _____ Per/Agi

Similar to a Blacksmith or Whitesmith, a Coppersmith specializes in the use of copper.

Obstacles: Roof tiles, Ob 1. Bowls and cups, Ob 2. Coins, Ob 3. Cooking tools, Ob 3.

FoRKs: Blacksmith, Whitesmith

Skill Type: Craftsman

Tools: Workshop.

Counterfeiting _____ Per/Agi

Counterfeiting is the time-honored art of illegally duplicating money—either clipping coins or cutting dies to replicate printed material.

Obstacles: Coin clipping, Ob 1. Die stamps, Ob 3. Coins, Ob 4. Printed material, Ob 5-10 depending on complexity.

FoRKs: Forgery, Whitesmith, Alchemy, Etching

Skill Type: Craftsman

Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Countryside-wise

Crop-wise

Crossbow _____ Agility

The crossbow is a mechanical, tension-drawn missile weapon. The most basic crossbow uses a hook system to hold the drawn bow string so the weapon can be loaded. More complex examples use a stirrup, lever or winch to draw the bow. They are very powerful weapons; however, they are slow to load and difficult to manufacture. The Crossbow skill allows the character to this weapon in battle situations. Consult the Range and Cover and Fight chapters.

Skill Type: Martial

Tools: Yes, a crossbow.

Crowd-wise

Cryptography — Perception

Cryptography is the art of creating and deciphering codes.

Obstacle: Cryptography successes set the obstacle to decipher with Research or Cryptography.
FoRKs: Symbology, Astrology, Obscure History
Skill Type: Academic
Tools: No.

Cudgel — Agility

This skill allows the character to use short, single-handed and long, double-handed blunt implements (aka clubs and staffs) as weapons.

Obstacles: See the Fight chapter.
FoRKs: Brawling, Martial Arts, Boxing, or any melee weapon skill
Skill Type: Martial
Tools: Yes, a big stick.

D

Daily Bread-wise

Dance — Speed

The art of moving the body in time with rhythm in an expressive manner.

Obstacles: Simple folk dance, Ob 1. Proper, polite dance, Ob 2. Formal or seductive dance, Ob 3. Complex or ritualistic dance, Ob 4. Arcane or cabalistic dance, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Acting, Seduction
Skill Type: Physical
Tools: No.

Darkened Streets-wise

Darkness-wise

Demonology — Perception

Demonology is the study of the history and behavior of demons and devils. This is an academic skill that does not necessarily involve the act of summoning.

Obstacles: Identifying spirit activity as opposed to magic or a prank, Ob 1. Identifying type of spirit (named, unnamed, lesser, greater, dead, deity, etc.): Ob 2. Identifying type of summoning (circle, blood calling, binding, unwanted, etc.): Ob 3. Identifying a spirit's price, Ob 4. Identifying a spirit's powers or abilities, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Ancient and Obscure History, Summoning, Doctrine
Skill Type: Academic
Tools: No.

Dignity of the Wilderlands[§] — Will/Per

Dignity of the Wilderlands is an exploration of the culture and ritual of the Elves of the Wilderlands. This skill song may be used in place of Etiquette when dealing with Wilderborn Elves.

Skill Type: Social
Tools: No.
Restrictions: Elves only

Disguise — Per/Agi

Disguise is the art of changing one's face or appearance to look like another person or ethnicity.

Obstacle: *Disguise gender*, Ob 1. *Disguise social class:* City dweller, Ob 1; Merchant or priest, Ob 2. Peasant, Ob 3. Noble or wizard, Ob 4. *Disguise stock:* Man/Orc, Ob 2; Dwarf/Man, Orc/Troll, Orc/Roden, Ob 3; Roden/Man, Elf/Man, Ob 4; Dwarf/Roden/Troll,

Ob 5. Elf/Roden/Troll, Ob 6. Orc/Elf, Ob 7. Roden/Wolf, Ob 8. Other/Wolf, Ob 9. Any/Spider, Ob 10.
FoRKs: Acting, Theatrics
Skill Type: Special
Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Ditch Digging — Power

The fine and rarefied art of putting holes in the ground.

Obstacles: Grave, Ob 1. Latrine, Ob 2. Trench, Ob 3. Mass grave or pit, Ob 4. Moat, Ob 5.
Skill Type: Peasant
Tools: Yes.

Doctrine — Perception

Doctrine describes the tenets and beliefs of a particular religious faith.

A character may only take the following variations if they were available on his lifepaths or through general skill points:

Cult Doctrine is the application of a belief system to a non-standard, unapproved or independent school of thought.

Foreign Doctrine is the knowledge or study of an accepted popular religion from another land or culture.

Heretical Doctrine is the understanding and knowledge of a set of beliefs and tenets that are an offshoot of the popular religion but are not commonly accepted by the religious power structure.

Obstacles: Common, popular beliefs, Ob 1. Citing relevant passages from common religious texts, Ob 2. Naming an obscure saint, Ob 3.
FoRKs: Philosophy
Skill Type: School of Thought
Tools: No.

Doctrine of Night's Blood — Will/Per

The Doctrine of Night's Blood contains the terrible laws of the Servant's Cult—whom they serve and why.

Obstacles: Destruction, Ob 1. Madness, Ob 2. The Powers of the Master, Ob 3. The Void, Ob 4. Self-Abnegation, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Servant-wise
Skill Type: School of Thought
Tools: No.
Restrictions: Orcs only in character burning

Drama-wise

Drinking — Forte

Drinking is skill of getting drunk and not showing it.

Obstacles: This skill is best used as a versus test between drinkers.
Skill Type: Special
Tools: No.

Driving — Will/Agility

Motivating a team of oxen or horses is an arduous task that requires skill and a certain delicacy. The Driving skill is used for maneuvering carts and carriages over roads.

Obstacles: Use this skill in place of Riding when determining pursuit or the celerity of travel. It would also be used in the rare case of field maneuvers involving carts and chariots.
Skill Type: Peasant
Tools: No.

Drum Maker — Per/Agi

The Drum Maker skill involves the curing of skins, carving of wood and tuning of hollows for the manufacture of percussion instruments.

Obstacle: Small hand drum, Ob 1. Bhadràn or tabor, Ob 2. Timbrel or tambourine, Ob 3. Kettle drum, Ob 4.
FoRKs: Carpentry
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: No.

Drunkard-wise

Drunking§ — Will/For

Dwarves can really put it away. They don't try to hide their inebriation, either. They drink to get roaring drunk. And they let everyone know it. Use this skill when a Dwarf needs to get drunk and loud quickly. The more successes, the faster he gets drunk. This is not meant to imply that he needs less alcohol than another, less skilled drinker. On the contrary, he needs more, in bigger cups, faster!

Obstacles: Make a versus test between you and your friends for getting drunk the fastest. And Drunking vs Perception for appearing sober to your wife, superior or the guards.
FoRKs: Beer-wise
Skill Type: Special
Tools: No. (Unless you count beer.)
Restrictions: Dwarves only

Dwarf-wise

Dwarven Art-wise

Dwarven Heroes-wise

Dwarven Rune Script — Per

Dwarven Society is a literate one. Dwarven children are taught to decipher and inscribe runes from a very young age. This skill counts as both Read and Write for Dwarves.

Obstacle: As for Read and Write.
FoRKs: History skills, Chronology of Kings
Skill Type: Academic
Tools: Yes, writing only. Expendable.
Restrictions: Dwarves only in character burning

Dye Manufacture — Per/Agi

Dye Manufacture teaches where to find materials and how to convert natural substances into dyes.

Obstacle: Common colors, Ob 1. Exotic colors, Ob 2. Royal colors, Ob 3.
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Yes. Expendable.

E

Earth-wise — Per

A Dwarf with this skill can tell the type of earth and stone, where it came from and generally how old it is.

Skill Type: Wise
Tools: No.

Elf-wise

Elven Artifact-wise

Elven Art-wise

Elven Blade-wise

Elven Citadel-wise

Elven Ranger-wise

Elven Script — Perception

Elven Script combines disciplines of reading and writing into one literacy skill. Elven culture is more disciplined in educating its youth than nearly any other.

Obstacle: As for Read and Write.
Skill Type: Academic
Tools: Yes, writing only. Expendable.
Restrictions: Elves only in character burning

Embroidery — Per/Agi

An embroiderer stitches designs into cloth.

Obstacles: Simple embellishment, Ob 1; Fancy dress, Ob 3; Complex patterns, Ob 4; Ornate Finery, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Sewing, Weaver
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Empyrealia — Perception

Empyrealia is the study of the hierarchies, courts, and denizens of the celestial halls of light. It is essentially the opposite of Demonology.

Obstacles: Identifying spirit activity as opposed to magic or a prank, Ob 1. Identifying type of spirit (named, unnamed, lesser, greater, dead, deity, etc.): Ob 2. Identifying type of summoning (circle, blood calling, binding, unwanted, etc.): Ob 3. Identifying a spirit's price, Ob 4. Identifying a spirit's powers or abilities, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Doctrine, Summoning and any ritual type skill
Skill Type: Academic
Tools: No

Enchanting — Perception

Enchanting is a school of magic that instructs the sorcerer on techniques for imbuing seemingly mundane objects with wondrous and magical properties.

Obstacle: See the Enchanting chapter in Magic Burner.
Skill Type: Sorcerous
Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Engineering — Perception

Engineers are learned men. They possess the knowledge of the myriad factors used in designing and constructing complex structures. Usually engineers direct a team of masons, carpenters, blacksmiths and laborers in the construction of a building or bridge.

Obstacles: Determining load on structural wall of simple building, Ob 1. Wall, obelisk or column, Ob 2. Stone arch, Ob 3. Stone bridge, Ob 4. Dome, Ob 5. Fortress gate, Ob 6.
FoRKs: Architect, Mason, Carpenter
Skill Type: Artisan
Tools: Yes.

Engraving — Agility

Engraving is the careful art of carving symbols into unyielding stone.

Obstacles: Simple low reliefs, Ob 1. Complex low reliefs, Ob 2. Simple high reliefs, Ob 3. Mezzo-relievo, Ob 4. Complex high reliefs, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Etching, Mason
Skill Type: Artisan
Tools: Workshop.

Estate Management — Perception

Ensuring that an estate—its workers, animals, rolling stock and crops—are all well managed and tended to is a demanding and tedious task. The primary use of this skill is to recover taxed Resources.

Obstacles: Managing a household, Ob 1; Manor, Ob 2. Fortress, Ob 3. Castle, Ob 4.
Skill Type: Special
Tools: Nothing but an estate.

Estate-wise

Etching — Agility

Etching is the delicate skill of scratching indelible symbols into metal.

Obstacles: Burnishing, Ob 1. Embossing simple pattern, Ob 2. Inlaying a simple pattern, Ob 3. Embossing a complex pattern, Ob 4. Damascening, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Etching, Whitesmith
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Workshop.

Etharch-wise

Etiquette — Will/Per

Etiquette is proper courtly behavior. One cannot make requests of the court without knowing the appropriate social rituals.

Obstacles: Proper etiquette for a minor lord, Ob 1. Proper etiquette for a baronial lord, Ob 2. For a ducal lord, Ob 3. For the king, Ob 4. For the queen, Ob 5. For the queen-mother, Ob 6.
FoRKs: Soothing Platitudes, Falsehood
Skill Type: Social
Tools: No.

Everybody's Innocent-wise

Excavation§ — Per/Pow

For Dwarves, delving into the earth and quickly removing rock, dirt and stone is a special art.

Obstacles: Trench or pit, Ob 1. Small foundation, Ob 2. Shallow mine shaft or hurried tunnel, Ob 3. Moderate foundation, Ob 4. Mine shaft, Ob 5. Canal or moat, Ob 6. Large foundation or tunnel, Ob 7. Deep mine shaft, Ob 8. Massive foundation or tunnel, Ob 8. Clearing a rockfall or cave-in, Ob 4. Clearing a bad collapse, Ob 7.
FoRKs: Mining, Prospecting, Engineering
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Yes.
Restrictions: Dwarves only

Extortion — Will

Extortion is a popular skill at parties! Using it you can threaten friends and enemies alike so they pay you to remain safe and healthy. Makes a great way to recover taxed Resources.

Obstacles: Extortion can be used in the Duel of Wits. Outside of those rules the obstacle for an Extortion test is the Will exponent of the victim plus any situational disadvantages.
FoRKs: Intimidation, Interrogation, Falsehood, Ugly Truth
Skill Type: Social
Tools: No.

F

Faith-wise

Falconry — Will/Per

A falconer trains hunting hawks. Falconry is a very popular and expensive sport among nobility of all stripes.

Obstacles: Falconry contests can be resolved with a versus test between two falconers. Otherwise use the following: Capturing small game, Ob 1. Spotting or signaling, Ob 2. Dispatching a message, Ob 3.

Skill Type: Forester

Tools: Yes and a falcon.

Falsehood — Will

Falsehood is bare-faced lying.

Obstacles: Base obstacle for Falsehood is always the Will of the character you are deceiving. Add an advantage die if the lie is believable, damn good or has some kernel of known truth to it. Increase obstacle if it is a whopper or just a bad lie: "That wasn't me, that was my twin brother!" +2 Ob...

FoRKs: Persuasion

Skill Type: Social

Tools: No.

Family-wise

Family Secret-wise

Farming — Perception

Farming is the prodigious knowledge of seeding, planting and harvesting.

Obstacles: Barley and millet, Ob 1. Wheat and oats, Ob 2. Flax and hemp, Ob 3. Hiring samurai to protect crops from bandits, Ob 7.

Skill Type: Peasant

Tools: Yes.

Fealty-wise

Fence Building — Per

Dwarves are very particular about their boundaries. This skill teaches the art of constructing sturdy fences and walls, and the etiquette of deciding where they should lie.

Obstacles: Dividing farm fields, Ob 1. Dividing pasturage, Ob 2. Dividing mines and veins, Ob 3. Dividing tax districts, Ob 4.

FoRKs: Chronology of Kings, Mason Accounting, Carpenter

Skill Type: Special

Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Restrictions: Dwarves only in character burning

Field Dressing — Perception

Field Dressing is the skill acquired by soldiers in the field who are forced to tend to their own wounded. It imputes a bare knowledge of anatomy and assumes a splash of common sense.

Obstacles: See the Anatomy of Injury chapter in the Burning Wheel for Field Dressing treatment obstacles.

FoRKs: Herbalism, Surgery

Skill Type: Medicinal

Tools: Traveling Gear. Expendable.

Fire and Steel-wise

Firearms — Per/Agi

Pistols, arquebuses and even muskets may be safely and accurately discharged using this skill. This skill may be taken under the Appropriate Weapons heading if it is indeed germane to your game. Use Munitions for building and creating ammunition for said weapons.

Obstacle: See Range and Cover and Fight chapters.

FoRKs: Crossbow

Skill Type: Martial

Tools: Just a gun.

Firebuilding — Perception

Firebuilding teaches characters how to light and maintain a fire suitable to their needs under any conditions. Characters without Firebuilding who light fires in the forest are liable to get into trouble.

Obstacles: Campfire, Ob 1. Bonfire, Ob 2. Smokeless fire, Ob 3. Concealed fire, Ob 4. Increase obstacles by +1 for poor quality wood and wet weather.
Skill Type: Forester
Tools: Traveling Gear. Expendable.

Fishing — Per/Agi

The basic skill teaches characters the nature of fish, where they live and what they like to eat. Hopefully, this knowledge should help catch some.

Obstacles: Feed yourself, Ob 1. Feed a small group, Ob 2. Feed the house, Ob 3. Feed the village, Ob 4. Feed the congregation, Ob 5.
Skill Type: Peasant
Tools: Yes.

Fletcher — Per/Agi

A fletcher creates suitable arrows and bolts for bows and crossbows.

Obstacles: Hunting bow, Ob 1. Crossbow or great bow, Ob 2. Heavy crossbow, Ob 3. Hand crossbow, Ob 4. Artillery, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Carving, Tanning
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Flock-wise

Folklore — Perception

Folklore encompasses the folk beliefs in a culture—a catalog of superstitions, tall tales and legends.

Obstacles: Folklore obstacles are described in the Magic Burner.
FoRKs: Symbology, Ancient and Obscure History
Skill Type: Special
Tools: No.

Foraging — Perception

Using Foraging, a character can gather enough roots, fruit and greens from the land to feed himself in times of austerity. Usually Foraging is a day long endeavor.

Obstacles: Starvation rations, Ob 1. Feeding yourself in the wild, Ob 2. Feeding yourself near civilization, population or an army, Ob 3. Feeding yourself in wasteland, Ob 4. Feeding yourself in winter, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Hunting, Herbalism
Skill Type: Forester
Tools: No.

Foreign Languages — Perception

A character with this skill has learned foreign languages over the course of his life. Test this skill when attempting to communicate with another character in a language that is not your native tongue.

There are constraints based on which level of speech you aim for. You can cover basic ground with survival/conversational language, but there are whole swaths of meaning that are simply beyond your grasp if you can't express ideas in metaphor or other abstract concepts. Good luck expressing the meaning behind your actions.

Here are some suggested failure results: The character is able to communicate, but screws up the words for numbers, ordinal directions, etc. Or the character can understand what is said, but can't make his speech understood. Or you can only use single words and gestures to get across your meaning.

Obstacles: Close dialect to your native tongue, Ob 1. Obscure or thick dialect of your native tongue, Ob 2. Simple or related language, Ob 2.

Difficult language, Ob 3. Complex language, Ob 4. Mystical/esoteric language, Ob 5.

Conditional modifiers: Using gestures, pointing, visual references, +1D. Survival language/conversational language, No penalty. Philosophical/abstract concepts, +2 Ob. Formal/ritualistic concepts: +1 Ob. Dead language: +1 Ob.

Skill Type: Social

Tools: No.

Forest-wise

Forge Artifice§ — Will/Per

This special skill teaches the secrets of building the sacred fires of Dwarven forges, which burn hotter and cleaner than the forges of Men, Elves and Orcs. Such heat allows the Artificers to further refine their incredible metalworks. When building a forge, an Artificer may imbue it with runes of everlasting heat and unwavering temperature, which grant advantage dice to the user. To do so, the Artificer must increase his own obstacle by +2 Ob. Each +2 Ob builds +1D into the forge, so long as the final obstacle is met, of course.

Obstacles: Forge Bellows and pumps, Ob 1. Small Kiln, Ob 2. Large Kiln, Ob 3. Small forge (one smith), Ob 4. Mid-sized forge (two smiths), Ob 5. Large forge (five smiths), Ob 6.

Skill Type: Artisan

Tools: Workshop.

Restrictions: Dwarves only

Forgery — Per/Agi

Forgery is the ability to copy documents, signatures and seals flawlessly.

Obstacles: Mimic document style, Ob 1. Mimic handwriting, Ob 2. Forge signature, Ob 3. Forge stamp/seal, Ob 4. Perfectly duplicate a document, Ob 5. Perfectly duplicate a signature, Ob 6. Perfectly duplicate handwriting, Ob 7. Perfectly duplicate stamp/seal, Ob 8.

FoRKs: Calligraphy, Scribe, Illuminations

Skill Type: Special

Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Formation Fighting — Will*

Characters with Formation Fighting training have been taught how to fight shoulder-to-shoulder in a regiment. Characters in formation may help each other with Steel-based maneuvers in Range and Cover. In Fight, if fighting shoulder to shoulder with an ally (or allies), reduce the outnumbered penalty by one.

Skill Type: Military Training

Tools: No.

***Training Root is for Aptitude only.**

Fortifications — Perception

Fortifications is a specialized military skill centering on the construction of defensible positions. This skill works well with the Range and Cover rules.

Obstacle: Fences, barricades (increase level of cover by one), Ob 1. Walls (+1D position), Ob 2. Palisades (+1D position and increase cover), Ob 3. Dugouts and trenches (+2D position and increase cover by one), Ob 4.

FoRKs: *Engineer, Mason, Architect*

Skill Type: Military

Tools: Yes.

G

Gambling — Will/Per

This skill represents the character's skill, knowledge and luck with gambling. To use this skill, first make a wager or set a prize: an item, animal, piece of property or cash generated from a Resources test. Then make a versus test against another gambler. The winner walks away with the prize.

FoRKs: Strategy Games
Skill Type: Special
Tools: Traveling Gear.

Games of Chance — Per

There is a certain cult among the Dwarves fascinated by, and very knowledgeable about, games of chance. The games include dice, cards, and keg and mug spinning. To use this skill, first set a Resources obstacle for the prize. Then make a versus test against the other gambler. The winner of the test walks away with the prize. The loser must make a Resources test equal to the prize obstacle. If the loser passes his Resources test, the winner notes the same obstacle test toward advancing his own Resources. If the loser is taxed, those dice are granted to the winner as cash.

This skill does not cover games of skill such as pins or darts.

FoRKs: Gambling
Skill Type: Special
Tools: Traveling Gear.
Restrictions: Dwarves only in character burning

Gas Pocket-wise

Gem Artifice§ — Will/Agi

Gem Artifice teaches the secrets of cutting precious stones so they shine like stars in candlelight and shimmer like eldritch fire in the sun. Any gem cut using this skill may be used as a matrix by an enchanter to create an item of power. Secondly, the Resources obstacle of any gem or stone manufactured using Gem Artifice is increased by one automatically. The value may be further increased by one by adding +2 Ob to the test before the dice are rolled.

Obstacles: Polishing Gems, Ob 1. Shaping opals, Ob 2. Working jade, Ob 3. Cutting and faceting sapphire, Ob 4. Cutting and faceting rubies and emeralds, Ob 5. Cutting and faceting diamond, Ob 6. Arkenstone, Ob 10.
FoRKs: White Metal Artifice
Skill Type: Artisan
Tools: Workshop.
Restrictions: Dwarves only

Gemcraft§ — Will/Agility

Many Elves delight in the simple and straight-forward art of cutting and polishing gems. Their experience, dedication and patience in the art shows in the quality of their work. Any gem stone cut by an Elf adds +1D of Resources value compared to what it would normally be. In addition, this skill shares the same flexibility with Antiphon Union as Smithcraft.

Obstacles: Jade, Ob 1. Emerald, Ob 2. Ruby and sapphire, Ob 3. Opal and pearls, Ob 4. Diamond, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Jewelcraft, Smithcraft
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Workshop.
Restrictions: Elves only

Genius-wise

Gossip-wise

Grain Appraisal — Per

Dwarves are very proud of their ability to discern the fine grain from the chaff; only the finest grains are selected for famous Dwarven nogs.

Obstacles: Sorting the wheat from the chaff, Ob 1. Finding Nog-worthy grain, Ob 2.
FoRKs: Nogger
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: No.
Restrictions: Dwarves only in character burning

Grain Song§ — Perception

Elven Millers grind the finest grain in any land. This skill is similar to the Miller skill.

Obstacles: Barley and millet, Ob 1. Wheat and oats, Ob 2.
FoRKs: Round of Harvest, Rhyme of Rules
Skill Type: Peasant
Tools: Workshop (a mill).
Restrictions: Elves only

Grain-wise

Graybeard-wise

Great and Black-wise

Great Masters-wise

Great Wolf Husbandry — Will

The particularly dangerous art of raising and tending to Great Wolves.

Obstacles: Most Husbandry obstacles are based on the Will of the animal. It counts as Field Dressing for tending the animal's wounds.
FoRKs: Animal Husbandry, Wolf-wise
Skill Type: Peasant
Tools: Yes.

Grift-wise

Guilder-wise

H

Haggling — Will

Haggling is the skill required to negotiate prices, terms of purchase and contracts.

Obstacles: Make a versus test between the buyer and seller. The buyer can lower the obstacle by one.
FoRKs: Persuasion, Soothing Platitudes
Skill Type: Social
Tools: No.

Hallmaster§ — Will/Per

This is the skill that built the sweeping halls of the great delvings. Using this skill, a Dwarven Artificer may reinforce his hall's structure. By adding +2 Ob to his test when building a structure, he may add +1 Ob to any test to alter or destroy the structure.

Obstacle: Simple wall, Ob 1. Column or door, Ob 2. Arch or gate, Ob 3. Chamber, Ob 4. Hall, Ob 5. Small hold, Ob 6. Modest hall, Ob 7. Large hall, Ob 8. Great hall, Ob 9.
FoRKs: War Engineer, Stone Artifice
Skill Type: Artisan
Tools: Workshop.
Restrictions: Dwarves only

Hammer — Agility

Hammer is a weapon skill focusing on the use of heavy, blunt, crushing weapons typically mounted with reversed beaks or spikes.

FoRKs: Mace, Cudgel, Axe
Skill Type: Martial
Tools: A hammer.

Handwriting-wise

Hatchet-wise

Hauling — Will/Power

Use this skill in place of Power when hauling improbable loads on your back.

Obstacles: 40 lb. pack, Ob 1. 80 lb. pack, Ob 2. Bowl on head, Ob 3. Ridiculously heavy container, Ob 4.

Skill Type: Peasant

Tools: No.

Heraldry — Perception

Heraldry is the skill of recognizing and deciphering heraldic coats of arms. Medieval family crests exist in a bewildering array of iterations and combinations, and the herald's knowledge of them is encyclopedic.

Obstacles: Common/prominent family, Ob 1. Second tier families, Ob 2. Lesser known cousins, Ob 3. Dead lines or remote branches, Ob 4. Obscure houses, Ob 5.

FoRKs: Etiquette

Skill Type: Special

Tools: No.

Herbalism — Perception

Herbalism uses herbs and roots to cure and prevent common and chronic ailments. Herbalism can be used as a medical skill for treating wounds and stopping bleeding.

Obstacles: See the Anatomy of Injury section in the Burning Wheel to treat wounds. Identifying common herbs, Ob 1. Diagnosing common ailments, Ob 2. Identifying uncommon herbs, Ob 3. Sleeping potion, Ob 4. Mixing a poison, Ob 5. Determining proper dosage of a poison, Ob 6.

FoRKs: Apothecary or Alchemy for creating potions, Surgery or Field Dressing for tending wounds.

Skill Type: Medicinal

Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Hills-wise

History — Perception

History is the knowledge of the records of past events pertaining to one culture or society. The character is assumed to have studied the popular history of his culture/people unless the player or lifepath decides otherwise. Specific histories are often listed in the lifepaths. They are fairly self-explanatory: *Ancient History*, (Military) *Campaign History*, *Foreign History*, *Religious History*, *Local History*, *Obscure History* and *Religious History*. Each of these is a separate skill that must be purchased and opened.

Obstacles: Common historical fact, Ob 1. Classical history, Ob 2. Recent history, Ob 3. Obscure figure in history, Ob 4. History of counter cultural movements, Ob 5. History of the ones who lost the war, Ob 6.

FoRKs: Research, Philosophy, Doctrine, other history skills

Skill Type: Academic

Tools: No.

Hold-wise

Hoof-wise

Host-wise

Hunting — Per/Agi

Hunting is used to capture or kill prey animals in the wild so that they might be consumed as food.

Obstacles: Hunting domestic animals, Ob 1. Hunting feral animals, Ob 2. Hunting wild animals or goblins, Ob 3. Hunting Trolls, Ob 4. Hunting Great Spiders, Ob 5. Hunting Great Wolves, Ob 6. Hunting monsters, Ob 7.

FoRKs: Tracking, Trapper

Skill Type: Forester

Tools: Yes: bow or javelin.

Hymn of Scales and Fins§ Per/Agi
Elven fishermen sing to the waters and the fish seem to leap into their nets. Functions like the Fishing skill.
FoRKs: Slip of Currents, Rhyme of Rules
Skill Type: Peasant
Tools: Yes.
Restrictions: Elves only

Hypocritical Bastards-wise

I

Illuminations Agility
Illumination is the patient art of embellishing manuscripts with illustrations.
Obstacles: Doodles, Ob 1. Flourishes, Ob 2. Illustrations, Ob 3. Color illustrations, Ob 4. Gold foil, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Painting, Calligraphy
Skill Type: Artist
Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Imperfections-wise

Inconspicuous Will
Quite simply, Inconspicuous is the ability to go unnoticed in a crowd.
Obstacles: Inconspicuous is tested in versus tests against Observation. Inconspicuous tests are penalized under the following conditions: Garish or inappropriate dress, +1 Ob. Character is above/below his station, +1 Ob. Character is not from the region, +1 Ob. Character is of a different race than those he is trying to blend in with, +2 Ob.
FoRKs: Acting
Skill Type: Social
Tools: No.

Infection-wise

Insect Husbandry Will
Insect Husbandry is the art of raising and caring for our six-legged friends.
Obstacles: Ants, Ob 1. Bees, Ob 2. Silkworms, Ob 3. Exotic bugs, Ob 4. Tending to wounds and illness, use the Apothecary skill obstacles.
Skill Type: Forester
Tools: Yes.

Instruction Will
Using the Instruction skill, a character may teach another character.
Obstacles: See Learning from Another in the Burning Wheel.
FoRKs: Command, Persuasion
Skill Type: Social
Tools: No.

Interrogation Will
Using a peculiar logic, interrogators gain information from unwilling subjects. A successful interrogation means the victim character has given up the information the players are looking for.
Obstacles: Obstacle for Interrogation is the (current) Will exponent of the person being interrogated plus any traits plus situational disadvantages—like if the victim has Beliefs that prevent him from revealing what is being sought.
FoRKs: Intimidation, Torture, Ugly Truth or Soothing Platitudes
Skill Type: Social
Tools: No.

Intimidation Will
Intimidation is the communication of threat.
Obstacles: Intimidation can be used in the Duel of Wits. Outside of the Duel of Wits the skill can be used to force a character to hesitate. Obstacle is equal to the Will of the

victim. If successful, make a Steel test. Add extra successes to the hesitation obstacle.
FoRKs: Ugly Truth
Skill Type: Social
Tools: No.

Intrigue-wise

J-K

Jargon — Perception
Jargon is the specialized speech used by masons, architects and engineers.
Obstacles: Identifying yourself or another as a speaker of the secret language, Ob 1. Otherwise, use the skill versus the skill of anyone trying to eavesdrop on the conversation.
Skill Type: Social
Tools: No.

Javelin — Agility
Javelins are short throwing spears.
Obstacles: Use the thrown weapon rules in Range and Cover and Fight.
FoRKs: Throwing
Skill Type: Martial
Tools: No.

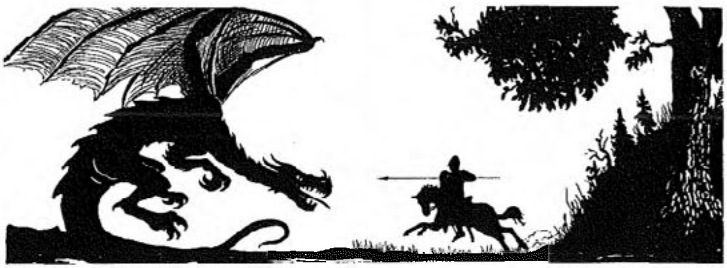
Jewelcraft§ — Will/Agility
Jewelcrafters manufacture delicate brooches, subtle rings, fine tiaras and magnificent crowns. Using Antiphon Union, many of these objects can be enchanted: a crown with the Paean of Deeds, a mask with the Ballad of Rage or a tiara imbued with the Strain of Far Sight.
Obstacles: Brooch, Ob 1. Ring, Ob 2. Necklace, Ob 3. Tiara, Ob 4. Crown, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Smithcraft, Gemcraft
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Workshop.
Restrictions: Elves only

Jeweler — Per/Agi
This skill provides the character with a knowledge of metals and precious gems used to create jewelry. With the proper tools, characters can build necklaces, form bracelets and create brooches.
Obstacles: Polishing and cleaning metal, Ob 1. Weighing and counting elements, Ob 1. Gewgaws and baubles, Ob 2. Chain, Ob 3. Ring, Ob 3. Necklace, Ob 3. Bracelet, Ob 3. Locket, Ob 4. Carcanet, Ob 5. Coronet, Ob 6. Diadem, Ob 6. Crown, Ob 7.
FoRKs: Etching, Whitesmith, Lapidary
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Workshop.

Khirurgy — Per/Agi
Dwarves are a clean and thorough people in all their crafts, including their medicinal traditions.
Obstacles: Use the rules found in the Anatomy of Injury chapter in the Burning Wheel.
FoRKs: Herbalism, Field Dressing, Bloodletting, Apothecary
Skill Type: Medicinal
Tools: Yes.
Restrictions: Dwarves only in character burning

Kingdom-wise

Knives — Agility
The Knives skill teaches hand-to-hand knife fighting techniques. This is not a throwing skill.
Obstacles: Use the obstacles in Range and Cover and Fight.
FoRKs: Brawling, Boxing or an appropriate weapon skill.
Skill Type: Martial
Tools: Something knife-like.



Knots Per/Agi

Knots is the knowledge of many rope ties vital to sailors to keep a ship running.

Obstacles: Securing cargo, Ob 1. Setting up a sailboat, Ob 2. Setting up a small ship, Ob 3. Setting up a ship, Ob 4. Securing a person: Knots vs Escape Artist or Power at double obstacle penalty. Making a carrying harness, Ob 1. Making a net, Ob 2.
FoRKs: Rigging
Skill Type: Seafaring
Tools: Traveling Gear. Expendable.

L

Lance Agility/Power

This skill trains the fighter to use a couched lance from horseback

Obstacles: See the Fight and Riding and Mounted Combat chapters in the Burning Wheel.
Skill Type: Martial
Tools: A really big, pointy stick.

Lapidary Perception

Lapidary is the careful art of refining gems to be sold on the market or placed into jewelry.

Obstacles: Polishing gems, Ob 1. Cutting and faceting zircon, Ob 2. Shaping opals, Ob 3. Working jade, Ob 3. Cutting and faceting sapphire, Ob 4. Cutting and faceting rubies and emeralds, Ob 5. Cutting and faceting diamonds, Ob 6.
FoRKs: Jeweler
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Workshop.

Latrine-wise

Lazy Bastard-wise

Leathercraft§ Will/Agility

This skill teaches Elven clothiers how to work leather into supple boots, soft gloves and sturdy belts. Combining this skill with Antiphon Union and the Song of Silence can produce fabled Elven boots (+1D to Stealthy), or with the Doom of Strength, can create a belt of terrible fortitude.

Obstacles: Belt, Ob 1. Leather cloak or boots, Ob 2. Satchel or gloves, Ob 3. Gambeson, Ob 4. Boiled (reinforced) leather armor, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Weaving Way
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Workshop.
Restrictions: Elves only

Ledger-wise

Leverage-wise

Links Will/For

When on the march, Dwarven armies use a complex system of horn signals to transmit information between camps. The system is called "links" because it connects the Dwarven

regiments like links of sausage. The Links skill gives the character the ability to perform and decode the signals.

Obstacles: Start and stop signals, Ob 1. Danger signals, Ob 2. Marching orders, Ob 3. Battle commands, Ob 4. Other complex communications, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Stentorious Singing
Skill Type: Academic
Tools: Yes, a big brass horn.'
Restrictions: Dwarves only in character burning

Lithography§ _____ Per/Agi

Dwarven Artificers learn a special art of inscribing runes into stone. These runes can be carved into walls for decorative or instructional purposes or placed onto blocks, dipped in ink and pressed on paper.

Obstacles: Simple characters, Ob 1. Words, Ob 2. Simple image or moon runes, Ob 3. Complex image, Ob 4. Lifelike image, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Dwarven Rune Script, Symbology
Skill Type: Artisan
Tools: Workshop.
Restrictions: Dwarves only

Lock Pick _____ Per/Agi

The skill of disabling and disarming mechanical locks.

Obstacles: Simple lock, Ob 1. Decent lock, Ob 2. Rusted simple lock, Ob 3. Rusted decent lock, Ob 3. Complex lock, Ob 4. Rusted complex lock, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Locksmith, Sleight of Hand
Skill Type: Special
Tools: Yes.

Locksmith _____ Per/Agi

Locksmithing is the knowledge of the pins, slides, levers and keys that comprise locks. A locksmith can build locks as well as disarm those he happens upon in his travels. This skill includes the knowledge and ability of Lock Pick, as well.

Obstacles: Cleaning a lock, Ob 1. Cutting keys, Ob 2. Building a simple lock, Ob 3. Building a decent lock, Ob 4. Building a complex lock, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Lock Pick
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Workshop.

Logistics _____ Perception

Logistics is a rare skill. It is the knowledge of supply lines, resources, consumption rates and rates of travel of armies. The skill is used by particularly thoughtful commanders to keep their troops in supply while on campaign.

Obstacles: Supplying a dozen dismounted thugs to waylay peasants on the King's highway in rich, idyllic farmland for one week, Ob 1. Supplying a small homogeneous free company of two dozen similarly armed and dismounted routiers, brigands, archers, or crossbowmen for one week, Ob 2. Supplying a mounted lance (a knight or mounted man-at-arms, a squire or sword bearer, a page, two archers or crossbowmen, a lightly armed servant or varlet, and all mounts and pack animals) for one week, Ob 3. Supplying several large homogenous companies of 500 to 600 similarly armed, dismounted men for one week, Ob 4. Supplying several large heterogeneous companies of 500 to 600 dismounted

men (i.e. a large mixed force of foot and archers) for one week, Ob 5. Supplying 100 lances for one week, Ob 6. Supplying a battalion of two to three hundred lances and supporting large free company for 1 week, Ob 8. Supplying a host (three battalions) for one week, Ob 10.

+1D for testing Logistics with a force where the majority of troops have the Hatred attribute. +1 Ob for any non-Dwarven force testing Logistics in the mountains or underground. +1 Ob in heavily wooded countryside with a force containing war mounts, i.e. destriers or coursers. +1 Ob with a force that includes anyone with the Prince of the Blood, Aman, Fëa, or Dvergar trait, princes and their hangers-on have large appetites, even on campaign. +2 Ob in countryside the enemy has devastated with a scorched earth policy. +2 Ob in countryside you have already tested Logistics within the last Resources maintenance cycle

+2 Ob for testing Logistics in the winter with a force containing war mounts, riding mounts, or pack animals. Skill Type: Military
Tools: Supplies for an army.

Lost Treasures-wise

Lyric of Law§ — Perception

Elven law is a tradition stretching back to the dawn of time. This skill song concerns itself with the nature and application of Elven law.

Obstacles: Citadel law, Ob 1. Protector's law, Ob 2. Etharchal law, Ob 3. Wilder law, Ob 4.
FoRKs: Any appropriate history or Wise skill or song
Skill Type: Academic
Tools: No.
Restrictions: Elves only

M

Mace — Power/Agility

A mace is a short-hafted, metal-flanged club. Its main purpose in battle is to crush through heavy metal armor.

Obstacles: Use the rules for Fight in Burning Wheel.
Skill Type: Martial
Tools: Mace.

Maker's Mark-wise

Man-wise

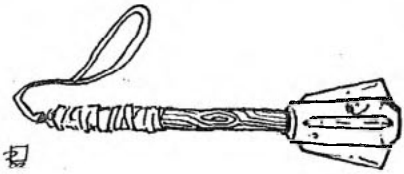
Martial Arts — Pow/Ag

This is a catch-all skill for any specialist hand-to-hand fighting techniques. We prefer the term Boxing, and you can see a slightly more detailed entry under that heading.

Mason — Per/Agi

A mason knows how to choose suitable stone, carve it and use it to build structures. Also, masons are skilled in mixing mortar and setting foundations.

Obstacles: Cutting blocks of soft stone or making bricks, Ob 1. Cutting gravestones or making mortar, Ob 2. Cutting marble, granite or basalt, Ob 3. Making a slate floor, a simple wall or an obelisk, Ob 2. Arch or reinforced wall, Ob 3. Small stone house or bridge, Ob 4. Large, reinforced wall, Ob 5. Tower, Ob 6. Donjon, Ob 7.
FoRKs: Engineer, Architect
Skill Type: Artisan
Tools: Workshop.



Meditation — Will

First and foremost, Meditation is a way for a character to calm and center himself. It is both rest and a method for divining solutions to problems via deep thought.

While meditating, a character is vaguely aware of his surroundings—cognizant of changes in the environment like noise or the presence of someone near him. He may make Perception/Observation tests to detect Stealthy characters.

A Sorcerer can maintain any spells he is currently sustaining while meditating. He must retest Tax as per The Power Still Flows Through Him rules in the Burning Wheel.

Obstacles: Meditation can be used in place of sleep for rest. Each hour of meditation counts as an hour of rest for the purposes of recovering from wounds and tax. This is an Ob 1 test plus 1 per additional hour meditated. For example, meditating for 4 hours is an Ob 4 test. Failing the test indicates that the character falls asleep at some point.

Using Meditation, a character may "center" before taking a test for another skill. This is a linked skill test. When centering for a versus test or detailed conflict, make a versus test between the Meditation skill and the opponent's skill. If Meditation wins, the character earns a +1D advantage.

Skill Type: School of Thought
Tools: No.

Mending — Per/Agi

Mending is a useful skill. It encompasses the knowledge of the form and function of everything on the farm. This skill allows characters to fix, repair or darn just about anything.

Obstacles: Mending fences or socks, Ob 1. Making household repairs, Ob 2. Mending stuff broken on the road or at work, Ob 3. Mending something badly broken, Ob 4. Mending Armor: Lightly damaged (1D), Ob 1. Moderately damaged (2D), Ob 2. Badly damaged (3D), Ob 4. Shredded (4D), Ob 6. Ruined (5D), Ob 8.

FoRKs: Any appropriate craftsman skill could suffice.
Skill Type: Peasant
Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Mercenary Company-wise

Metal-wise

Midwifery — Will/Per

Midwives are an important fixture in any village. They help women give birth to children and survive.

Obstacles: Keeping the mother and child healthy, Ob 2. Uncomplicated birth, Ob 3. Caesarean, Ob 4. Breach birth, Ob 5. Determining the child's sex before birth, Ob 6.

FoRKs: Herbalism
Skill Type: Medicinal
Tools: No.

Mill-wise

Miller — Perception

Milling is the knowledge of building, maintaining and operating the machinery used to grind grain for consumption.

Obstacles: Windmilling, Ob 1. Water milling, Ob 2. Manual milling, Ob 3. Building a manual mill with the help of your carpenter friends, Ob 4. A water mill, Ob 5. A windmill, Ob 6.
FoRKs: Brewer
Skill Type: Peasant
Tools: Workshop (a mill).

Mimicry — Perception

Using this skill, a character may imitate animal sounds and voices.

Obstacles: Squirrels, Ob 1. Bird calls, Ob 2. Cats, dogs, monkeys, Ob 3. Human voices, Ob 4.
Skill Type: Forester
Tools: No.

Mining — Perception

Mining is the technique of excavating earth in order to remove valuable ore or minerals like salt. Mining includes prospecting ore, sinking the shafts and setting up a system to remove the ore.

Obstacles: Clay pit, Ob 1. Open pit mine (iron, salt), Ob 2. Shallow mine shaft (salt, lead, copper, quartz), Ob 3. Mine shaft (silver, iron), Ob 5. Clearing a rockfall or cave-in, Ob 5. Deep mine shaft (gold, gemstones), Ob 9.
FoRKs: Engineer, Architect
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Yes.

Monk-wise

Mounted Combat Training — Will/Power*

Mounted Combat Training gives the character the ability to fight effectively from horseback. If appropriate to the character and the game setting, players may choose Mounted Combat: Bowman instead of the traditional lancer archetype. See the Riding and Mounted Combat chapter.

Skill Type: Martial Training
Tools: No.
*Training Root is for Aptitude only.

Mouth of Hell-wise

Mule-wise

Munitions — Per/Agi

This skill allows a character to manufacture firearms, powder, shot and bombs. Absolute failure (no successes) while manufacturing powder or explosives indicates a cook-off or misfire. The character takes the Mark result for the device he was building.

Obstacles: Cleaning, loading or repairing a firearm, Ob 1. Making a small bomb (B4 Mark), Ob 2. Making an arquebus, making shot or making a medium-sized bomb (B6 Mark), Ob 3. Making a pistol or powder, Ob 4. Making a large bomb, (B8 Mark), Ob 5. Making a very large bomb (B12 Mark), Ob 7.
FoRKs: Alchemy
Skill Type: Artisan
Tools: Workshop.
Restrictions: Men only

Music Composition Will/Per

A character with this skill can write musical notation and compose various types of songs, both for voice and instrument.

Obstacles: Simple, single instrument, Ob 1. Simple choral arrangement, Ob 2. Ensemble piece, Ob 3. Complex single instrument, Ob 4. Complex ensemble piece, Ob 5.

Skill Type: Musical

Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Musical Instrument Will/Agility

Musical performance is a powerful tool. It can impress an emotion upon the listener—seducing, enraging, pleasing, etc. Choose an instrument: Drum, Flute and Lyre are but a few of the many options.

Obstacles: Will of the listener. If the music is suitable to the mood, add advantage. The obstacle can be used for linked tests or to convey an idea.

FoRKs: Sing, Composition, and additional instruments

Skill Type: Musical

Tools: Yes, an instrument.

Mystery Meat-wise

N

Name Ritual Will/Per

The vast majority of Orcs bear no name—they are too insignificant in their miserable lives to warrant anything more than a grunt or at most an epithet commensurate with their role in the clan. The granting of proper names is an ancient rite and ritual. Name Ritual teaches the requirements and strictures governing the bestowal of such names. A successful Name Ritual test bestows a +1D reputation and a name. Failure indicates the character cannot be named and earns an infamous reputation.

Obstacle: Target's Will. It's best to be named when you're young, stupid or badly hurt.

FoRKs: Orc-wise

Skill Type: Special

Tools: No.

Restrictions: Orcs only in character burning

Navigation Perception

Using charts of the stars, winds and currents, a navigator safely guides his ship from port to port. True navigation allows ships to journey away from the coastline into the open sea without becoming hopelessly lost.

Obstacles: Navigating in clear weather through well-charted coastal or river, Ob 1. A short coastal or river journey, Ob 2. A moderate coastal or river journey, or a short seagoing journey (like crossing the Channel), Ob 3. A long coastal journey or a moderate sea journey, Ob 4. A dangerous coastal journey or a long sea journey, Ob 5. A dangerous sea journey, Ob 6. An oceanic crossing, Ob 10.

FoRKs: Astrology, Orienteering, Pilot

Skill Type: Seafaring

Tools: Yes.

Nogger§ Will/Per

Dwarven brew is renowned throughout the known lands. Some say a single mouthful of the finest Dwarven nog is worth the price of the greatest kingdom of Men. For Dwarves, nog has a restorative effect. Downing a full cool draught of the stout brew grants +1D to the next Health test. It also adds +1 Ob to all social skill tests for the scene. No matter how much he

drinks, only one bonus/penalty is bestowed. However, if a Dwarf downs a number of steins equal to or greater than his Forte exponent, he becomes drunk—+1 Ob to all tests for hours equal to 10 minus Health. If any other creature so much as sips a mouthful of the powerful beverage, it becomes drunk (+1 Ob to all tests) and receives no benefit.

Obstacle: Revered, sacred and most secret ritual of preparing the grain, Ob 2. Sanctifying the vats in preparation for the most holy, Ob 3. Brewing the nectar of the gods, Ob 5.

FoRKs: Grain Appraisal
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Workshop.
Restrictions: Dwarves only

O

Oath-wise

Obligation-wise

Obscure Text-wise

Observation — Perception

Observation is the skill used to spot the hidden—characters, traps, ghosts, etc. Test this skill in versus tests against Inconspicuous, Stealthy, Sleight of Hand or Trapper. Note: Do not use Observation for standard Perception tests—to spot a weakness in armor, to notice details of a flag or to look for an escape tunnel. Some spells and traits allow Perception to act as Observation.

Obstacles: Observation is almost always a versus test.
Skill Type: Forester
Tools: No.

Oratory — Will

Oratory is the ability to rouse the masses with a stirring speech. It teaches how to project the voice and speaking techniques used to get a point across.

Obstacles: The obstacle of Oratory is the most common Will exponent in the crowd. This skill is also used in Duel of Wits.
FoRKs: Command, Persuasion, Rhetoric
Skill Type: Social
Tools: No.

Orc-wise

Ore-wise

Orienteering — Perception

Orienteering is the ability to navigate across land both with and without maps. Maps do, however, provide an advantage die to Orienteering tests.

A successful Orienteering test indicates the character has found his way without delay. A failed test indicates the character and his companions have gotten lost. This result either causes the characters to miss any appointments they were trying to keep (but still arrive at their destination) or causes them to arrive in an unintended location.

Obstacles: Determining your compass directions during the day in familiar land, Ob 1. At night in familiar land, Ob 2. In unfamiliar land, Ob 3. In unfamiliar land at night, Ob 4. In familiar land during a storm, Ob 5. During a storm at night, Ob 6.
FoRKs: Navigation
Skill Type: Forester
Tools: No.

P

Paean of Deeds§ — Will

Striding forth, full of confidence, the Elven Lieutenant announces himself in rhythm, setting the tenor to which he shall best his foe! This skill song acts like Conspicuous.

FoRKs: Silent Fury
Skill Type: Social
Tools: No.
Restrictions: Elves only

Painting — Will/Agility

Painters use dyes, pigments and brushes to craft images on a variety of surfaces.

Obstacles: Simple monochromes, Ob 1. Caricatures, Ob 2. Complex monochrome, simple polychrome, Ob 3. Likenesses, Ob 4. Complex polychromes, Ob 5. +1 Ob for painting on wet plaster.
FoRKs: Illuminations
Skill Type: Artist
Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Pattern-wise

Personal Effects-wise

Persuasion — Will

Persuasion is the art of convincing someone to act on your behalf because it is in his best interest. This skill often involves an exchange of agreements—something very different from Falsehood or Oratory. Those two skills tell someone what to do or believe, whereas using Persuasion, one carefully crafts a suggestion for the victim to agree with. With luck, he'll think it was his idea in the first place.

Obstacles: Will exponent of the intended victim.
FoRKs: Falsehood, Haggling, Soothing Platitudes, Ugly Truth
Skill Type: Social
Tools: No.

Philosophy — Will/Per

Philosophy is the pursuit and discussion of wisdom, discussing the nature of truth, logic, reason, good, evil and the divine. Often it is at odds with Law and Doctrine.

Obstacles: Ascertaining the metaphysical substance of the object to be venerated during a religious ritual, Ob 2. Divining the original meaning of symbols originating from a particular school of thought, Ob 3. Brooding over the futility of material gain in a truly just society, Ob 4. Recalling the allegorical and instructive purpose of the demon or angel you are about to summon, Ob 5. Estimating the mystery that is the divine, Ob 6. Figuring out the number of angels that fit on the head of a pin in a manner that is easily explained to a child, i.e. a rustic cleric without letters, Ob 10.
FoRKs: Doctrine, Rule of Law, History
Skill Type: School of Thought
Tools: No.

Pilgrimage-wise

Pilot — Perception/Power

The pilot is the all-important crewman who guides the ship through storm and calm. A good pilot can stay the course through the most terrible gale.

Obstacles: Piloting into a large port, Ob 1. Piloting into a busy port, Ob 2. Piloting into a small, busy port, Ob 3. Piloting through narrow or shallow channels, Ob 4. Piloting through rough or dangerous waters, Ob 5.

FoRKs: Navigation

Skill Type: Seafaring

Tools: No.

Playwright — Will/Per

A playwright composes dramatic dialogue into scripts to be read and performed by actors on stage. This skill allows a character to convey his own ideas into a written form so that others may transmit them via performance. Writing is required in order for this skill to be taken.

Obstacles: Religious or farce, Ob 1. Historical or dramatic, Ob 2. Tragedy, Ob 3. Comedy, Ob 4.

FoRKs: Composition

Skill Type: Academic

Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Plumbing — Perception

The fine art of plumbing. Using this skill a character may design systems to convey water from one location to another. Typical plumbing in the middle ages was made of lead, wood and stone.

Obstacle: A well, Ob 1. Troughs or ducts, Ob 2. A pump, Ob 3. Plumbing, Ob 4. Hot and cold running water, Ob 5.

Skill Type: Artisan

Tools: Yes.

Poetry — Will

Poetry allows the expression of ideas and emotions through metered verse.

Obstacles: Doggerel or crass verse, Ob 1. Atmospheric verse, Ob 2. Expressing sadness or tragedy, Ob 3. Expressing love, Ob 4. Expressing a truth or mystery about life, Ob 5. Mimicking another's style, +1 Ob.

FoRKs: Sing

Skill Type: Musical

Tools: No.

Poison-wise

Poisonous Platitudes§ — Hatred

Flattery is a rare gift among the Orcs. Whisperers use compliments and ingratiation like an assassin uses knives and poisoned barbs. This skill combines Persuasion and Soothing Platitudes into one unholy mess. Like all Hatred-based skills, Poisonous Platitude tests are open-ended.

Obstacles: Will of the victim. Poisonous Platitudes is also used in the Duel of Wits.

FoRKs: Falsehood, Persuasion

Skill Type: Social

Tools: No.

Restrictions: Orcs only

Poisons — Perception

Poisons is a specialized apothecary skill that allows the character to concoct harmful substances from herbs, minerals and animalia.

Obstacles: Sickening poison (+1 Ob), Ob 2. Debilitating poison (+2 Ob), Ob 3. Deadly poison (B10 wound), Ob 4. These poisons must be imbibed or ingested. For a blade

poison, add +1 Ob. For an inhaled vapor, add +2 Ob. For a contact poison, add +3 Ob.
FoRKs: Herbalism, Apothecary, Alchemical
Skill Type: Special
Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Polearm — Power/Agility

A polearm is a versatile weapon. When using this weapon in combat, the player must decide whether his character is using the blade to cut, or the beak (or blade tip) to thrust. Cutting and thrusting have different damages and weapon lengths.
Skill Type: Martial
Tools: A halberd, a glaive or a voulge.

Potter — Per/Agi

'Tis a most ancient and honorable craft. A character with the Potter skill knows how to make vessels of fired clay.
Obstacles: Simple bowls and cups, Ob 1. Amphorae or small statuettes, Ob 2. Tea service or lamp, Ob 3. Cookware or tiling, Ob 4. Large grain jars, Ob 5.
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Prospecting — Perception

The Prospecting skill allows the character to locate seams and veins of minerals and metals so that they may be mined.
Obstacles: Salt, Ob 1. Copper and lead, Ob 2. Iron, Ob 3. Silver, Ob 4. Gold, Ob 5. Gemstones, Ob 6.
FoRKs: Appropriate wises, Mining, Mason
Skill Type: Artisan
Tools: No.

Protector-wise

Purple Song§ — Per/Agi

Elven vintners are possessed with a unique perspective—they are able to literally watch their wines age. A hundred-year vintage is a matter of course for them. This skill is similar to the Vintner skill except that wine made using the Purple Song may be treated with the Antiphon Union and imbued with either the Lyric of Healing or the Doom of Strength. It is by this method that Elven Mirrorwine is created.
Obstacles: Cheap wine, Ob 1. Passable wine, Ob 2. Good wine, Ob 3. Excellent wine, Ob 4 Special wine, Ob 5. Legendary wine, Ob 6.
FoRKs: Grain Song, Rhyme of Rules
Skill Type: Peasant
Tools: Workshop.
Restrictions: Elves only

R

Ratiquette — Will

Rats have a particular etiquette they prefer in all their dealings. If one is willing and nimble, this social art can be learned and even mastered. Use this skill in place of Etiquette whenever dealing with rats or their cousins. Roden consider Ratiquette a mortal insult.
Obstacles: Proper etiquette for a house rat, Ob 1; for a ship rat, Ob 2. For a granary rat, Ob 3. For the rat king, Ob 4. For the rat queen, Ob 5. For the rat queen mother, Ob 6.
FoRKs: Etiquette
Skill Type: Social
Tools: No.

Read — Perception

In the middle ages, reading and writing were two separate and distinct skills. It's difficult for the modern mind to comprehend this, but it is a fact. Therefore, a character may be able to read but not know how to transcribe his thoughts onto paper.

Obstacles: A note or sign Ob 1. Letter, Ob 2. Essay or article, Ob 3. Book, Ob 4. Contract, Ob 5. Reading silently, +1 Ob.

FoRKs: Research

Skill Type: Academic

Tools: No.

Reason of Old Stone§ — Will

This curious skill allows the Master Engraver to extract knowledge from a stone. Merely by seeing, touching, tasting and smelling the stone—and considering it for a long while—the Dwarf can discern a number of facts: How old it is, how long it has been in this place and what events have transpired around it.

Obstacles: Type/name of stone, Ob 1. Age of stone, Ob 2. Length of time the stone has been in its current location, Ob 3. Recent events surrounding the stone that left physical evidence, Ob 4. Recent events that left no physical mark, Ob 5. Past events that left their mark on the stone, Ob 6. Past events that left no mark, Ob 7.

Skill Type: Sorcerous

Tools: No.

Restrictions: Dwarves only

Religious Diatribe — Will

This is a specialized form of Oratory for angry religious types.

Obstacles: Will of interlocutor. This skill is also used in the Duel of Wits.

Skill Type: Social

Tools: No.

Reputation-wise

Research — Perception

Research is the art of navigating libraries, gathering data and collating coherent reports.

Obstacles: Common knowledge, Ob 1. Interesting facts, Ob 2. Collating relevant information from a native language text, Ob 3. Deciphering a handwritten monograph in your own language, Ob 4. Deciphering handwritten monograph about an obscure subject, Ob 5. Deciphering a monograph about heretofore unknown subject, Ob 6.

FoRKs: History, Ancient and Obscure History

Skill Type: Academic

Tools: No.

Rhetoric — Perception

Rhetoric is a form of discourse centered on the conveyance of thoughts, ideas and concepts in the interest of winning an argument.

Obstacles: Perception of the victim. This skill is used in the Duel of Wits.

FoRKs: Oratory, Soothing Platitudes, Ugly Truth

Skill Type: Academic

Tools: No.

Rhyme of the Gatherer§ Perception

Elven foragers are wise and know the name and shape of many plants, flowers, herbs and roots. This skill song acts as Foraging.

FoRKs: Round of Harvest, Rhyme of Rules

Skill Type: Peasant

Tools: No.

Restrictions: Elves only

Rhyme of the Mariner§ Agility/Speed

When away aloft, the Seafarers sing playful songs to the wind and cloth. These chanting tunes are meant to please the wind and soothe the rope as the sailors harness their powers to drive their vessel. This skill acts like Rigging.

FoRKs: Rope Chant

Skill Type: Seafarer

Tools: No.

Restrictions: Elves only

Rhyme of the Pathfinder§ Perception

The Rhyme of the Pathfinder is the skill song that mimics Tracking.

FoRKs: Song of Paths and Ways, Rhyme of Rules

Skill Type: Forester

Tools: No.

Restrictions: Elves only

Rhythm of the City-wise

Riddle of Steel§ Will/Agility

The first Elven Bladesmiths learned the Riddle of Steel ages ago from their Dwarven allies. The Riddle teaches Elves how to shape metal so it will quickly and efficiently kill a foe. With this skill song, the Bladesmith may create swords and knives of all types, axes if he wishes and arrowheads for the Bowyers. Spearheads are left to the ancient rites of the Spearbearers. Combining the Riddle of Steel with Antiphon Union and various songs can create some very interesting results.

Obstacles: Run of the mill knives or bodkin arrow, Ob 1. Run of the mill sword or axe or hunting arrow, Ob 2. Elven knife or leaf head arrow, Ob 3. Elven (superior quality) sword or axe, Ob 4. Elven polearm, Ob 5.

FoRKs: Smithcraft

Skill Type: Craftsman

Tools: Workshop.

Restrictions: Elves only

Ridiculous Request-wise

Riding Will

This skill teaches the character to effectively maneuver a mount.

Obstacles: See the Riding and Mounted Combat chapter for obstacles.

Skill Type: Physical

Tools: A horse or some such thing.

Rigging Agility/Speed

Rigging is the knowledge of setting the sails of seagoing vessels. This includes how they work, and the ability to climb the rigging like a monkey climbs a tree.

Obstacle: A sailboat or longboat, Ob 1. Single mast (sampan, cog, balinger, longship), Ob 2. Junk, Ob 3. Felucca, Ob 4. , Carrack, Ob 5. Caravel, Ob 6. A large seagoing vessel with many masts, Ob 10.

FoRKs: Knots

Skill Type: Seafaring

Tools: No.

Ritual — Will/Per

Priests and monks perform religious rituals for the community

Obstacle: Baptism, Ob 1. Coming of age, Ob 2. Wedding, Ob 3. Funerary rites, Ob 4. Consecrating ground, Ob 5.

Skill Type: Academic

Tools: No.

Rituals of Blood§ — Will

The Rituals of Blood imitate the Lord of Darkness and Blood's abilities to gather allies, twist minds and transform himself. Using the obstacles described in the Orc chapter, the Servant can cast a variety of spells with this skill.

Obstacles: See the Rituals of Night and Blood section of the Orc chapter.

FoRKs: Doctrine of Night's Blood

Skill Type: Sorcerous

Tools: Yes, ritual knives.

Restrictions: Orcs only

Rituals of Night§ — Perception

The ancient Rituals of Night grant the Knower of Secrets power beyond the ken of his brethren. Through this skill, the Orc may cast spells listed under Rituals of Night.

Obstacles: See the Rituals of Night spell list. Spells must be purchased or learned separately.

FoRKs: None

Skill Type: Sorcerous

Tools: No.

Restrictions: Orcs only

Rituals-wise

Road-wise

Rope Chant§ — Agility

This curious song teaches the art of weaving ropes and tying knots. It also grants the Elf a chance at unravelling any knot or tangle, no matter how complex. The skill acts as Knots, with additional abilities as described by the obstacles below.

Fabled Elven rope may be created by combining this song with Antiphon Union, Rhyme of Rules and the Song of Merriment.

Obstacles: Repairing rope, Ob 1. Weaving regular ol' rope, Ob 2. Weaving Elven rope, Ob 5. Untangling a twist, Ob 1. Undoing a snarl, Ob 2. Unbinding a deliberate and forceful knot, Ob 3. Deciphering a mind-bending tangle, Ob 4. Gordian Knot, Ob 5.

FoRKs: Threading Chant, Rhyme of Rules, Rhyme of the Mariner

Skill Type: Seafarer

Tools: Traveling Gear or Elven Rope.

Restrictions: Elves only

Round of Harvest§ — Perception

Elves are attuned to the earth and the seasons in ways that Men and Dwarves are not. This song describes their methods of planting and harvesting. Round of Harvest obeys the same rules as Farming.

FoRKs: Grain Song, Weathersong, Rhyme of Rules

Skill Type: Peasant

Tools: Yes.

Restrictions: Elves only

Royal Secret-wise

Rude Carpentry Per/Agi

This skill is similar to carpentry, except that Orcs never bother to finish, smooth, polish or plane their work. Their products are always rough, warped and quickly done.

Obstacles: Wooden spikes, Ob 1. Frame pack for goblin, Ob 2. Barricades or cart, Ob 3. Mining supports, Ob 4. Shelter, Ob 5.

FoRKs: Mending

Skill Type: Craftsman

Tools: Yes.

Restrictions: Orcs only in character burning

Rule of Law Perception

The Rule of Law is the body of rules and guides set up to maintain order within the state. Characters familiar with law may act as advocates, lawyers and magistrates within the system.

Obstacles: Jurisdiction (king, duke, church, etc.), Ob 1. Common law, Ob 2. Royal law, Ob 3. Commercial law, Ob 4. Technicality, Ob 5.

FoRKs: For researching a case: Doctrine, Philosophy, History, Research. For presenting a case: Oratory, Rhetoric and Ugly Truth. Only an idiot—or a very powerful man—intimidates or commands a court.

Skill Type: School of Thought

Tools: No.

Rumor-wise

Rune Casting§ Will/Per

Learned Elves, Orcs and Men would consider Rune Casting an innocent use of the arcane forces at play in the world, but most Dwarves consider its use a mad and profane act. You see, the Rune Caster uses a set of specially designed runes to discern the future. When cast to the ground, their pattern and order reveal to him another's fate.

A successful test of this natural magic skill allows the Rune Caster player to pronounce the target character's fate. The Rune Caster player may look at the target's Beliefs. The fate that he pronounces must tie in to one of the Beliefs—and it must be suitably dire: a rise to power, a tragic death or a pyrrhic victory, for example.

In order for the pronouncement to even have a chance of coming true, the Rune Caster player must change one of his character's Beliefs to match the fate. (Playing on or against that Belief earns artha as per the standard rules.) If he does not or if the Belief changes, then the fate is rendered invalid.

It is ultimately up to the target whether or not he will embrace his fate or veer from it. If a scene is played out in which the fate is fulfilled, that player earns a deeds point. If the fated character is killed in fulfillment of his pronounced fate, the player's next character in this campaign starts with a deeds point.

FoRKs: Rune Casting can also be used as a FoRK just like Astrology.

Obstacle: Writing moon runes, Ob 1. Carving the runes onto the small stones necessary to Rune Casting is Ob 2. The obstacle for pronouncing a fate is equal to 10 minus the target's highest Circles+reputation+affiliation dice total or 10 minus the point value of the character's most expensive non-common trait. Use whichever obstacle is lower.

Skill Type: Sorcerous

Tools: Yes, rune stones.

Restrictions: Dwarves only

S

Saddlery Per/Agi

Saddlery is the fine art of creating horse furniture from suitable hides. Saddlers work closely with local tanners to create saddles, bits, bridles and stirrups.

Obstacles: Saddle repairs, Ob 1. Riding saddle, Ob 2. War saddle, Ob 3. Ornate saddle, Ob 4. Royal saddle, Ob 5. Howdah, Ob 7.
FoRKs: Tanner
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Workshop.

Saint-wise

Scavenging Perception

A player using his character's Scavenger skill may state what he is looking for—it can be any type of item, but it cannot be a specific or unique thing.

Obstacles: Detritus or junk (rags, scraps), Ob 1. Common household goods (clothing, food, cookware), Ob 2. Hard to find items (medicine, weapons, tools), Ob 3. Valuable items (money, antiques), Ob 4. Rare objects (documents, books, specialized tools), Ob 5. Obscure or out of place items (oddities, head in a jar, a crown), Ob 7.
FoRKs: Foraging and appropriate wises
Skill Type: Peasant
Tools: No.

Sculpture Will/Agility

Sculptors carve forms and images from obdurate stone.

Obstacles: Simple forms in clay, Ob 1. Simple forms in soft stone, Ob 2. Simple forms in hard stone, Ob 3. Complex forms in clay, Ob 4. Complex forms in soft stone, Ob 5. Complex forms in hard stone, Ob 6.
FoRKs: Mason, Engraving
Skill Type: Artist
Tools: Yes.

Scutwork-wise

Seamanship Perception

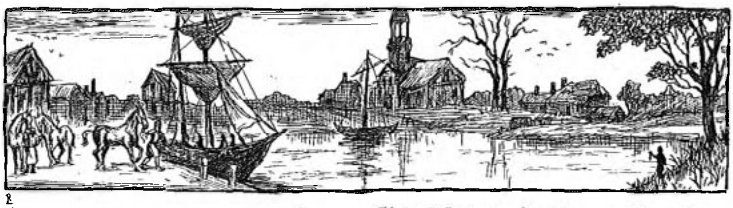
Seamanship covers all of the basic knowledge and skills, short of actual sailing, necessary to survive on board a boat or ship: stowing, cleaning, mending shipboard paraphernalia and water discipline.

Obstacles: Rowboat or skiff, Ob 1. Longboat, Ob 2. Junk, Ob 3. Caravel, Ob 4. Carrack, Ob 5. Felucca, Ob 6. Treasure ship, Ob 7.
Skill Type: Seafaring
Tools: No.

Seduction Will

Seduction involves the extraction of information or the persuasion of action from a subject through the manipulation of sexual desire and intention. This does not necessarily entail sexual intercourse.

Obstacles: Basic obstacle is always victim's Will. This skill can also be used for actions in the Duel of Wits.
FoRKs: Persuasion, Soothing Platitudes, Poetry
Skill Type: Social
Tools: No.



Servant-wise — Perception

The prime mystery of the Servants is the nature of their own cult. They are part of an internecine hierarchy governed by laws and customs apart from the clan.

FoRKs: Great and Black-wise
Skill Type: Wise
Tools: No.
Restrictions: Orcs only in character burning

Sewing — Agility

Sewing is used to make garments, blankets and pillows from swatches of cloth.

Obstacles: Linens, sashes, scarves, Ob 1. Mending clothing, Ob 2. Fashioning clothing, Ob 3. Fancy clothing, Ob 4.
FoRKs: Weaver, Embroidery
Skill Type: Peasant
Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Shield Training — Agility*

Shield Training allows a character to incorporate a shield into his defense. Characters without Shield Training must actively block with a shield in order to gain its benefits. See Armor and Shields in the Burning Wheel for rules. When performing a Strike with a shield use Brawling, an appropriate Boxing skill or Agility.

Obstacles: See Armor and Shields.
Skill Type: Martial Training
Tools: No.
***Training Root is for Aptitude only.**

Ship Management — Perception

Use this skill for to manager supplies and cargo for sea voyages. Success indicates there's no problem. A failed test and the ship runs short of supplies—food, water, medicine, lumber, ammunition, etc—and serious complications arise. Sailors start dying from one thing or another, because whatever's missing is what is sorely needed, of course! A bad steward is bad for morale.

Obstacles: Rowboat or skiff, Ob 1. Longboat, Ob 2. Junk, Ob 3. Caravel, Ob 4. Carrack, Ob 5. Felucca, Ob 6. Treasure ship, Ob 7. Moderate journey, +1 Ob. Long journey, +2 Ob. Ocean crossing, +3 Ob.
Skill Type: Seafaring
Tools: No.

Ship-wise

Shipwright — Perception

Shipbuilding is the art of designing and constructing seagoing vessels. A master shipwright usually directs a team of carpenters, blacksmiths and laborers in the construction process.

Obstacles: Rowboat or skiff, Ob 1. Barge, Ob 2. Longboat, Ob 3. A cog or junk, Ob 4. A felucca, longship or galley, Ob 5. Carrack, Ob 6. Caravel, Ob 8. Treasure ship, Ob 9. Barque, Ob 10.
FoRKs: Engineer, Carpenter, Boatwright
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Workshop.

Shortcut-wise

Shrewd Appraisal§ — Per

The Dwarven eye for detail, especially in regard to craftsmanship, jewel work or gemcraft, is legendary. Shrewd Appraisal is the art of noting every single flaw in an item—thereby reducing its price.

Obstacle: Common goods, Ob 2. Expensive goods, Ob 3. Rare goods, Ob 4. Unique goods, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Appropriate wises, Haggling
Skill Type: Social
Tools: No.
Restrictions: Dwarves only

Siege Engineer — Perception

Orcs love to construct massive and roaring engines of war that spit fire and shatter stone. Use the skill to build war machines; the war machines then count as tools for destroying structures.

Obstacles (building): Simple ram or scaling ladder, Ob 1. Metal capped ram, Ob 2. Covered ram or siege tower, Ob 3. Massive traction trebuchet, Ob 4. Massive metal-capped covered ram, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Blacksmith, Munitions, Rude Carpentry
Skill Type: Artisan
Tools: Yes.
Restrictions: Orcs only in character burning

Signaling — Perception

Using this skill and a specially designed lantern or set of flags, a sailor can relay predetermined codes or signals over great distances.

Obstacles: Simple commands, Ob 1. Questions, Ob 2. Complicated orders, Ob 3.
FoRKs: Cryptography
Skill Type: Seafaring
Tools: Yes.

Silent Fury§ — Will

With but a glare, the Captain can send shivers down the spine of those who cross him. This skill follows the same rules as Intimidation.

Obstacle: Victim's Will.
FoRKs: Paean of Deeds
Skill Type: Social
Tools: No.
Restrictions: Elves only

Silver Trumpet — Will

Elven silver trumpets are renowned and fabled throughout the known world. Heralds are taught how to produce wondrous and clear strains from the instrument so that the arrival of the Loremasters, Althings and Etharchs may be properly heralded.

Obstacles: Morning calls, Ob 1. Danger or warnings, Ob 2. Funerary calls, Ob 3. Arrival of Feâ, Ob 4. Song of the Aman, Ob 5.
Skill Type: Musical
Tools: Yes, an Elven silver trumpet.
Restrictions: Elves only in character burning

Sing — Will

Singing is the art of celebrating and communicating through voice, verse and tune. Singing can be used to soothe, invigorate and inform.

Obstacles: Will of the listener. If the song is suitable to the mood, add advantage. The test can be used for linked tests or to convey an idea.

FoRKs: Poetry

Skill Type: Musical

Tools: No.

Skirmish Tactics — Will/Per*

Soldiers trained in skirmish tactics know how to act as a unit when fighting in dispersed formations. Skirmish Tactics allow a fighter with the training to help another fighter with the training on his team. You can help with maneuver rolls in Range and Cover. Up to five skirmishers may help one another.

Skill Type: Military Training

Tools: No.

*Training Root is for Aptitude only.

Slave Deck-wise

Sleight of Hand — Agility

Sleight of Hand allows the character to perform minor tricks with small objects in the hands. The skill also allows the character to surreptitiously place objects on and remove objects from another person.

Obstacles: Simple card tricks, Ob 1. Parlor tricks, Ob 2. To pick a pocket or perform a similar trick of legerdemain on a victim, make a versus test: Sleight of Hand vs Observation.

Skill Type: Special

Tools: No.

Slip of Currents§ — Perception

With the Slip of Currents on his tongue, it is very rare an Elf is lost at sea. This skill acts like the Navigation skill.

FoRKs: Rhyme of Rules, Rhyme of the Mariner

Skill Type: Seafarer

Tools: No.

Restrictions: Elves only

Smithcraft§ — Will/Agility

Such is the experience of a life of centuries that an Elven smith learns the techniques for working many types of metals. This skill counts as Blacksmith, Whitesmith or Coppersmith. With Smithcraft, a forge and the proper tools, the Elf may fabricate nearly any type of metal item—pots, pins, chains, tools, cups and horseshoes. Combined with Antiphon Union, Smithcraft becomes immeasurably potent. Add the Gift of Speed to horseshoes, add the Lay of the Horse to a whistle,

add the Air of Gates to a headband or the Voice of Ages to a clasp. The list goes on and on.

Obstacles: Use Blacksmith, Coppersmith and Whitesmith.
FoRKs: Gemcraft, Jewelcraft, Riddle of Steel
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Workshop.
Restrictions: Elves only

Soldiering — Will/Per

This skill covers all the incredibly boring minutiae of being a soldier—marching, digging latrines, setting up tents, army procedures and dealing with the paymasters.

Obstacles: Marching, Ob 1. Latrines and foxholes, Ob 2. Forage and shelter, Ob 3. Procedure, Ob 4. Payment, Ob 5.
Skill Type: Military
Tools: Yes.

Song of the Eldar — Perception

The cycles of the of stars are of great interest to the wise Elves. This skill acts like Astrology.

FoRKs: Rhyme of Rules, Slip of Currents
Skill Type: Academic
Tools: No.
Restrictions: Elves only

Song of Feasting§ — Per/Agi

Elves are tremendous cooks and enjoy presenting bounteous feasts to their guests and relatives. This song mimics the arts of Cooking. Using this skill song along with Antiphon Union and the Lyric of Healing or the Doom of Strength allows the Elf to create Elven Bread.

FoRKs: Rhyme of Rules
Skill Type: Peasant
Tools: Yes. Expendable.
Restrictions: Elves only

Song of Flocks and Herds§ — Will

This skill follows the same rules as Animal Husbandry.

FoRKs: Rhyme of Rules
Skill Type: Peasant
Tools: No.
Restrictions: Elves only

Song of Form§ — Will

Using the Song of Form, the Elf may sculpt stone into shapes and curves pleasing to the eye. Combining the Song of Form with Antiphon Union and Alarm will create a warding statue. Combining it with Antiphon Union, Discerner and Voice of Ages creates a statue that will speak of the lies and deceit before it. Combine the Song of Form, Antiphon Union, Voice of Ages and the Strain of Farsight and a statue is created that can see far off lands and speak of them.

Obstacles: A simple shape, Ob 1. Crude mimicry, Ob 2. Anatomical approximation, Ob 3. Expressionistic depiction, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Stonecraft, Gemcraft
Skill Type: Artist
Tools: Yes.
Restrictions: Elves only

Song of Lordship§ — Will

The rights of rulership of the lord. This is a specialized Etiquette skill for use among characters with the Etharchal, Fêa and Aman traits.

Skill Type: Social
Tools: No.
Restrictions: Elves only

Song of Paths and Ways§ — Perception

This skill song is the Elven version of Orienteering.

FoRKs: Weathersong, Rhyme of Rules
Skill Type: Forester
Tools: No.
Restrictions: Elves only

Song of Soothing§ — Will/Per

Using this special song, the Elf can attempt to soothe the pain of another injured character. For treating injuries, this skill acts like Herbalism. The Song of Soothing can also cure the effects of poison. See the obstacles below.

Obstacles: If the poison causes injury (like Deadly Venom), the obstacle is the same as for Herbalism treating that wound. If successful, the effects of the poison (the die penalties) are reduced by half, rounded up. If the poison causes an obstacle penalty, the obstacle to cure is equal to the penalty. Successes over the obstacle reduce the penalty. For poison that subtracts dice directly, the obstacle is equal to double the dice subtracted. Successes over the obstacle restore one die each.
Skill Type: Medicinal
Tools: Yes.
Restrictions: Elves only

Soot-wise

Soothing Platitudes — Will

Soothing Platitudes is a skill for placating angered or irksome fellows with words that say nothing but compliment everything.

Obstacles: Basic obstacle for Soothing Platitudes is the victim's Will. "Looking good today, sire." "Good show, sir!" "A masterpiece of ingenuity, lord." "The *pope* isn't so benevolent as you, sire." "Looking fit and fine today, sir." "God's own judgment would falter where yours stands true, lord." "Your ingenious calculations are beyond compare, Prime Minister."
FoRKs: Persuasion, Falsehood
Skill Type: Social
Tools: No.

Sorcery§ — Perception

Sorcery is the skill that allows the character to understand written or spoken magical formulae. Should the character have the Gifted trait, he can then translate those formulae into spells and thereby cast magic. He may also use this skill to create new spells. The mechanics of Sorcery are described in detail in the Sorcery section of the Burning Wheel.

Obstacles: See the Sorcery chapter in the Burning Wheel.
Skill Type: Sorcerous
Tools: No.
Restrictions: Men or Roden only in character burning

Sorcery-wise

Spear — Agility

Spears, lances or pikes are versatile and intuitive weapons. They can be used as a quick slashing weapon, as a thrusting or even a smashing weapon. This is not a throwing skill.

Obstacles: See the Fight chapter of the Burning Wheel.
FoRKs: Martial Arts, Boxing or any appropriate melee weapon skill.
Skill Type: Martial
Tools: No.

Spearcraft§ — Will/Agility

Spearbearers, like Bowyers, learn more than just the art of killing. They learn to cherish and understand their weapon—they know it from its birth to the first time it sheds blood. For many, their spear is the last piece of this world they hold in their hands before their own life is cut short. Use Spearcraft with Antiphon Union to create magic spears.

Obstacle: Reshafting a run of the mill spear, Ob 1. Making a run of the mill spear, Ob 2. Making javelins or reshafting an Elven spear, Ob 3. Making superior quality javelins, Ob 4. Making an Elven spear, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Riddle of Steel, Smithcraft, Woodcraft
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Yes.
Restrictions: Elves only

Spider Husbandry — Will

The Master of Eight learns how to raise and train Great Spiders. This rare skill is reserved for the most calmly insane among the Servants. It acts as Instruction and Field Dressing for Spiders

Obstacles: Use these as your base obstacles for Instruction: Raising regular spiders, Ob 1. Training a Great Orb Weaver, Ob 2. Training a Great Master of the Hunt, Ob 3. Training a Sea Lord, Ob 4. Training a Great Undernest spider, Ob 5. For Field Dressing obstacles, see the Anatomy of Injury chapter.
FoRKs: Animal Husbandry
Skill Type: Peasant
Tools: Yes. Expendable.
Restrictions: Orcs only in character burning

Spiel-wise

Staff — Agility

A staff is a thin pole, usually shod with iron at the ends, useful for leaning on when walking and as a weapon.

FoRKs: Brawling, Boxing or any melee weapon skill
Skill Type: Martial
Tools: A staff.

Starcraft§ — Will/Agility

Certain Elves have a particular fascination with the manufacture of crystalline orbs. About the size of a fist, these "stars" are typically designed to be vessels for various enchantments. One of the most famous, and perhaps the first, was a star that had Mornsong sung over it. To the amazement of its creator, the vessel then took on the light of the sun—eternally projecting those very first rays which warmed the earth. All crystals produced with Starcraft make suitable vessels for the Enchanting skill.

Obstacles: Marble, Ob 1. Prism, Ob 2. Ball, Ob 3. Lens, Ob 4. Silmaril, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Gemcraft, Jewelcraft
Skill Type: Artisan
Tools: Workshop.
Restrictions: Elves only

Stealthy — Speed

Stealthy is the ability to use camouflage, natural surroundings, shadow, light and a quiet step to move undetected.

Obstacles: Stealthy vs Observation. Give advantage to Stealthy for light, weather and ground conditions.
Skill Type: Forester
Tools: No.

Stentorious Debate§ — Will

This skill is a combination of Haggling, Oratory and Persuasion. It is loud, boisterous and heated.

Obstacle: Will of the victim. This skill may also be used in the Duel of Wits.
FoRKs: Oratory
Skill Type: Social
Tools: A big Dwarvy mouth.
Restrictions: Dwarves only

Stentorious Singing§ — Will

This skill is simply loud, boisterous and *loud*. Dwarves love to sing, much to the chagrin of their guests and neighbors.

Obstacles: Will of the listener. If the song is suitable to the mood, add advantage. The obstacle can be used for linked tests or to convey an idea. Add +1 Ob disadvantage for singing to Men and Rodeu, +2 Ob for Orcs and Trolls, and +3 Ob to Elves and Wolves. Spiders don't care about your crappy singing. They just want to eat you. Dragons, too.
FoRKs: Stentorious Debate, Chronology of Kings, Drunking
Skill Type: Musical
Tools: No.
Restrictions: Dwarves only

Stone Artifice§ — Will/Pow

Stone Artifice teaches the proud craft of shaping stone into sturdy material suitable for building. Dwarves are so skilled at cutting and dressing stone that the material becomes more durable and harder to destroy. The artificer may add +2 Ob to any test to build a structure. This adds a +1 Ob penalty to any test to alter or destroy this structure.

Obstacles: Cutting blocks of soft stone or making bricks, Ob 1. Cutting gravestones or making mortar, Ob 2. Cutting marble, granite or basalt, Ob 3. Making a slate floor, a simple wall or an obelisk, Ob 2. Arch or reinforced wall, Ob 3. Small stone house or bridge, Ob 4. Large, reinforced wall, Ob 5. Tower, Ob 6. Donjon, Ob 7.
FoRKs: Hallmaster, Earth-wise
Skill Type: Artisan
Tools: Workshop.
Restrictions: Dwarves only

Stonecraft§ — Will/Agility

Elven Shapers learned their trade an age ago from the first Dwarves to emerge from their subterranean holds. Over the centuries, Elves have developed their own styles and methods. This skill is similar to the Mason skill—it is used to quarry, cut, move and place stone.

Obstacles: Cutting blocks of soft stone or making bricks, Ob 1. Cutting gravestones or making mortar, Ob 2. Cutting marble, granite or basalt, Ob 3. Making a slate floor, a simple wall or an obelisk, Ob 2. Arch or reinforced wall, Ob 3. Small

stone house or bridge, Ob 4. Large, reinforced wall, Ob 5. Tower, Ob 6. Doujon, Ob 7. Citadel, Ob 10.

FoRKs: Archcraft

Skill Type: Craftsman

Tools: Workshop.

Restrictions: Elves only

Strategy — Will/Per

Strategy is used to guide armies through war. You can use the Strategy skill to choose the field of battle, move your army unseen through an area, find your enemy's supply, choose the proper troops for a task, etc. This is a rare and highly specialized skill reserved for only the greatest of generals.

Obstacles: Use Strategy in versus tests between commanders or use the following: Recognizing a strategic ally or opponent, Ob 1. Creating a credible threat of force, Ob 2. Assessing a salient point, Ob 3. Plan of attack (order of battle), Ob 4. Plan of campaign, Ob 5. Proper provenance for your forces, Ob 6.

FoRKs: Logistics, Strategy Games, Tactics

Skill Type: Military

Tools: No.

Strategy Games — Will/Per

A character with this skill is well versed in games of strategy popular to his region. Game play was rather common in the middle ages, but this character has developed a particular knack and skill for it.

Obstacles: Versus Strategy Games skill of opponent.

Skill Type: Special

Tools: *Yes, a game.*

Streetwise — Perception

Streetwise is the etiquette of the city streets. This skill helps characters navigate urban centers safely, allowing them to find places only a native would know.

Obstacles: Finding a well-known establishment in a city you have never been to, Ob 1. Finding an out-of-the-way place in a familiar city, Ob 2. Staying out of neighborhoods where you don't belong, Ob 3. Acting *like you belong there*, Ob 4.

FoRKs: Inconspicuous, Orienteering

Skill Type: Special

Tools: No.

Structural Weakness-wise

Stuff-wise — Per

This Dwarf knows his stuff! He *knows all about it.* Where it's from, who made it, what it's made out of. Everything except what it actually does.

Obstacles: Your stuff, Ob 1. Your friend's stuff, Ob 2. Stuff about stuff, Ob 3. Shit versus stuff, Ob 4. What stuff to pack, Ob 5.

FoRKs: Dwarf-wise, Scavenging

Skill Type: Wise

Tools: No.

Restrictions: Dwarves only in character burning

Suasion — Will

Suasion is the verbal art of the priest. It is used to enlighten the benighted. This skill allows a Priest to convince others to act on his behalf (because

it is in the best interest of their immortal souls). It is a Persuasion skill for the clergy.

Obstacles: Obstacle: Will of the victim. This skill may also be used in the Duel of Wits.

FoRKs: Soothing Platitudes, Falsehood

Skill Type: Social

Tools: No.

Suicidal Bravery-wise

Summoning — Perception

The Summoning skill teaches the Gifted one how to call forth, bind and command spirits.

Obstacles: See the Summoning chapter of the Magic Burner.

Skill Type: Sorcerous

Tools: No.

Restrictions: Men only in character burning

Supplier-wise

Supply-wise

Surgery — Per/Agi

Surgery is a highly specialized art that involves cutting and sewing damaged body parts back into a position where they can heal properly. Surgery can be used to repair broken limbs, stop bleeding and remove bodily aberrations. Failed Surgery tests increase the blood clock for the wound by one stage. Can be used to treat wounds of all types.

Obstacles: See Anatomy of Injury for obstacles and mechanics.

FoRKs: Anatomy, Field Dressing, Apothecary

Skill Type: Medicinal

Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Survival — Will/Per

Survival teaches a character how to build shelters, find water and stay warm/cool in adverse conditions.

Obstacles: Basic shelter, Ob 1. Basic water, Ob 2. Survival food, Ob 3. Water or shelter in extreme conditions, Ob 4. Shrug off +1 Ob penalty, Ob 5.

FoRKs: Foraging, Hunting

Skill Type: Forester

Tools: Traveling Gear.

Sword — Agility

This skill covers the use of any long-bladed, one- or two-handed weapons. Bastard swords, broad swords, short swords, katana, falchions, machetes, rapiers, gladii or yataghans.

Obstacles: See the Fight chapter in the Burning Wheel.

FoRKs: Boxing, Brawling or any appropriate melee weapon skill

Skill Type: Martial

Tools: A sword.

Symbology — Perception

Symbology is the study of ancient & obscure symbols. A symbologist can recognize/interpret these marks + signs.

Obstacles: Common symbols, Ob 1. Common religious symbols, Ob 2. Common arcane symbols, Ob 3. Obscure religious symbols, Ob 4. Foreign pictograms, Ob 5. Obscure arcane symbols, Ob 6. Unknown religious symbols, Ob 7. Unknown arcane symbols, Ob 8. Truly alien symbology, Ob 9.

FoRKs: Ancient and Obscure History, Doctrine, Sorcery

Skill Type: Academic

Tools: No.

T, U

Tactics Will/Per

Tactics is knowledge of how to use small groups of soldiers to maximum effect on the battlefield.

Obstacles: This skill can be used to set an ambush: test Tactics vs Observation. It can also be used for field maneuvers in Range and Cover.
FoRKs: Strategy
Skill Type: Military
Tools: No.

Tall Grass-wise

Tanner Agi/For

A tanner treats and cures hides so that they can be used as enduring clothing, furniture and coverings.

Obstacles: Belt, Ob 1. Leather cloak or boots, Ob 2. Satchel or gloves, Ob 3. Gambeson, Ob 4. Boiled (reinforced) leather armor, Ob 5.
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Workshop (a tannery).

Taskmaster-wise

Tavern Tales-wise

Taxidermy Perception

Taxidermy is the process of preparing and preserving the dead for exhibition in a lifelike state.

Obstacles: Rabbits and small game, Ob 1. Insects and fish, Ob 2. Fowl and large game, Ob 3. Your aunt, Ob 4. Exotic creatures, Ob 4. Monsters, Ob 5. Mythical or heroic beasts, Ob 6. Supernatural creatures, Ob 7.
Skill Type: Medicinal
Tools: Yes.

Terroir-wise

Theatrics Will/Per

Theatrics is the familiarity with the mechanics of stage performance. This skill encompasses sets, make-up and costumes.

Obstacles: Stage makeup, Ob 1. Making simple masks, Ob 2. Disguising an androgynous woman as a man, Ob 3.
FoRKs: Acting, Disguise
Skill Type: Special
Tools: Yes.

Threading Chant§ Per/Agi

This skill acts like the Sewing skill.

FoRKs: Weaving Way
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Yes. Expendable.
Restrictions: Elves only

Throwing Agility

Throwing allows characters to accurately throw knives, pins, rocks and balls at targets.

Obstacles: See the Fight and Range and Cover chapters in the Burning Wheel.
FoRKs: Javelin
Skill Type: Martial
Tools: Something to throw.

Torture Will/Per

This is the unsavory skill of inducing pain in a victim in order to have the victim acquiesce to demands or reveal information. To use the skill, the torturer must state—exactly—what he wishes the victim to submit to or reveal. He does not ask a question of his victim.

Obstacles: *Obstacle is equal to the* victim's Will or Forte, whichever is higher. If successful, the victim submits or reveals exactly what the torturer stated in his intent. The victim also acquires a debilitating trait equal in value to the obstacle of

the Torture test—Maimed, Missing Eye, etc. Yes, the more willful you are, the worse the trait. If the test is failed, the GM can cause the victim injury or death, or grant him a beneficial trait to resist privation, torture or interrogation.
FoRKs: Anatomy, Surgery, Interrogation
Skill Type: Special
Tools: Yes.

Tracking — Perception
Tracking is the ability to follow prints, impressions and traces through wilderness. Trackers refer to their art as "following sign."
Obstacles: Fresh tracks on soft earth, Ob 1. Identifying common animals by tracks, Ob 2. Determining number of creatures from tracks on soft earth, Ob 2. Following fresh tracks on hard earth, Ob 3. Determining weight of creature, Ob 4. Following tracks on soft earth after rain, Ob 5. Identifying a man by his shoes, Ob 6. Following tracks on hard earth after rain, Ob 7.
FoRKs: Hunting
Skill Type: Forester
Tools: No.

Tragic End-wise

Trails-wise

Trapper — Per/Agi
Trapping is the art of setting traps and snares to catch small game.
Obstacles: Rabbits, Ob 1. Dogs and cats, Ob 2. Foxes and raccoons, Ob 3. Pit traps, Ob 3. Man snares, Ob 4.
Skill Type: Forester
Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Treasure-wise

Tree Cutting — Perception/Power
Tree Cutting is the technique of rapidly and safely felling live trees to be used as lumber and firewood.
Obstacles: Deadwood, Ob 1. Small tree, Ob 2. Medium-sized tree, Ob 3. Large tree, Ob 4. Stand of trees, Ob 5. Copse, Ob 6. Forest, Ob 10.
Skill Type: Peasant
Tools: Yes.

Tree Pulling§ — Hatred
Orcs don't merely cut trees down, they uproot them entirely. Using labor and ropes, Orc Woodcutters clear the forests until only tortured ground remains—all the wood is taken to the furnace.
Obstacles: Bush, Ob 1. Sapling, Ob 2. Young tree, Ob 3. Mature tree, Ob 5. Ripe old redwood, Ob 8. Ancient magic tree, Ob 10.
Skill Type: Peasant
Tools: Yes, expendable rope and goblins.
Restrictions: Orcs only

Troll Etiquette — Will/Per
Troll Lords learn the axe-blade etiquette for dealing with Troll Bellowers and Warlords.
Obstacles: Making the warlord angry, Ob 1. Determining dining order, Ob 2. Complimenting trophies, Ob 3.
FoRKs: Troll-wise, Intimidation
Skill Type: Social
Tools: No.

Troll-wise — Perception
Troll Lords live among the clan's Trolls. They learn their ways and habits.
FoRKs: Troll Etiquette
Skill Type: Wise
Tools: No.

Tune-wise

Tunnel-wise — Per

Life underground gives Dwarves a good sense of tunnels. Is it safe? How old is it? Who built it? All of these questions can be answered by Tunnel-wise.

FoRKs: Excavation, Mining
Skill Type: Special
Tools: No.

Two-Fisted Fighting Training — Agility *

This martial training skill allows a character to fight effectively with a weapon in his off hand. This secondary the weapon must be smaller or of equal weight to his other weapon. Both weapons must be one-handed and be at most long weapon length.

When fighting with two weapons, there is no penalty for striking with a weapon in the off hand. If a player wants to Strike with both weapons simultaneously, divide his dice between his two weapons. They must be of equal length to perform this. The character may perform Block & Strike actions as if he had Shield Training. Skill dice are divided between attack and defense as the combatant sees fit.

Skill Type: Martial Training
Tools: No.
*Training Root is for Aptitude only.

Ugly Truth — Perception

Ugly Truth is the singular ability to strip a situation or argument to its bare, naked core.

Obstacles: Stating the obvious worst possible outcome, Ob 1. Ugly truth about family, Ob 2. Ugly truth about your friends, Ob 3. Ugly truth about a complex political situation, Ob 4. Ugly truth about a nuanced or delicate situation, Ob 5. Ugly Truth can also be used in the Duel of Wits.

FoRKs: Falsehood, Intimidation
Skill Type: Social
Tools: No.

V

Vein-wise

Vile Poisoner§ — Per/Agi

This skill teaches the Knower of Secrets how to extract and preserve poisons from venomous and stinging creatures. Using his knowledge, he can create:

- A stinging and nettling contact poison, Ob 2. A dose on the skin causes the victim to break out in boils. +2 Ob to all physical, martial and social tests for one scene.
- A debilitating ingested poison, Ob 4. Victim must test Forte vs Ob 4. Margin of failure is permanently subtracted from Health (and Health maximum).
- A deadly poison, Ob 5. The poison must be slathered on a blade or arrowhead and injected into the victim with a Mark result hit. If so injected, the poison delivers one additional B9 wound in a number of exchanges equal to six plus the victim's Forte.

FoRKs: Herbalism
Skill Type: Medicinal
Tools: Yes. Expendable.
Restrictions: Orcs only

Village Secret-wise

Vine-wise

Vintage-wise

Vintner — Will/Per

A Vintner is an artist who grows grapes, mashes them and ferments them into wine.

Obstacles: Swill, Ob 1. Drinkable, Ob 2. Good wine, Ob 3. Excellent wine, Ob 4. Legendary wine, Ob 5.
FoRKs: Farming, Brewer
Skill Type: Peasant
Tools: Workshop.

Visage-wise

Voice of Thunder§ — Will/Forte

The Etharch's voice booms across the battlefield as he issues commands to his Sword Singers and vassals. This skill acts like Command. Also, all soldiers who have a trait, Instinct or Belief about the commander can hear his voice when he issues commands—no matter how far away they are on the battlefield.

Skill Type: Social
Tools: No.
Restrictions: Elves only

W-Z

Wagon-wise

Waiting Tables — Will

Despite what they may say, it takes skill, patience and cunning to serve customers. A great skill for replenishing taxed Resources.

Obstacles: Sleepy cafe, Ob 1. Hole in the wall bar, Ob 2. Busy restaurant, Ob 3. King's table, Ob 4. Queen's table, Ob 5.
Skill Type: Special
Tools: No.

War Art§ — Will/Agi

Mask Bearers spend much time in the terrible heat of the forges beating out wicked blades and unyielding armor. Using this skill, the Artificer may create weapons or armor.

Obstacles: Knives, Ob 1. Hammer, axe and sword, Ob 2. Spear and polearm, Ob 3. Arbalest, Ob 4. Bolts for crossbows and arbalests are Ob 2. You may do the following once per weapon: +1 VA—Ob=current VA plus 1. Add balance die, +2 Ob. +1 power—Ob=current weapon pow. Pot helmet, Ob 1. Light mail armor, Ob 2. Heavy mail armor, Ob 3. Plated mail, Ob 4. To make armor or shields "Dwarven-made" (reroll one 1 once), add +1 Ob. To make armor superior quality (reroll all 1s all the time), add +3 Ob.

To create gray shade devices, the Artificer must have a gray skill—either via a temporary Epiphany or due to his actual shade.

FoRKs: Black-Metal Artifice
Skill Type: Craftsman
Tools: Workshop.
Restrictions: Dwarves only

War Engineer§ — Will/Per

This master art contains many secrets of the Dwarven Hosts: how to construct and field terrible war engines, and how to destroy fortifications from below.

Obstacles: Battering ram, Ob 1. Building a small war tower, Ob 2. Covered ram, Ob 3. Small stone thrower, Ob 4. Siege arbalest, Ob 5. Large trebuchet, Ob 6. See the Materials chapter for obstacles to destroy buildings.
Skill Type: Artisan
Tools: Workshop.
Restrictions: Dwarves only

Weaponsmith Per/Agi

Weaponsmith is the specialized craft of manufacturing weapons of war.

Obstacles: Knife, Ob 1. Spear, short sword, mace or light axe, Ob 2. Arming or long sword, Ob 3. Polearm, Ob 4. To manufacture superior quality weapons, add +2 Ob. To make poor quality weapons, fail the test!

FoRKs: Blacksmith

Skill Type: Craftsman

Tools: Workshop.

Weaving Per/Agi

Weaving is the skill used for taking raw fiber like flax, cotton, wool or silk and turning it into usable cloth.

Obstacles: Linen from flax, Ob 1. Cloth from wool, Ob 2. Cloth from cotton, Ob 3. Cloth from silk, Ob 4.

FoRKs: Sewing

Skill Type: Peasant

Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Weaving Way§ Will/Agility

Elves know a trick or two on the loom. Long have they been playing at Fate's game with their threads and weaves, and their many years serve them well. Combine Weaving Way, Antiphon Union and the Threne of the Chameleon to create Elven Cloaks.

FoRKs: Threading Chant

Skill Type: Peasant

Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Restrictions: Elves only

Web-wise

Well-wise

Whip-Wise

Whispered Secrets-wise

White Metal Artifice§ Will/Agi

Dwarves truly love working with gold, silver, platinum and true silver, all of which they refer to as "white metal." This adoration, augmented by their superior skills, allows them to create works of intricate detail and wondrous beauty. Any item made using this skill may be used as a vessel by an enchanter. Second, the Resources obstacle of any item manufactured using White-Metal Artifice is increased by one. You may further increase the value: +2 Ob increases the Resources obstacle by one.

Obstacles: Hairpins, Ob 1. Spoons and cups, Ob 2. Jewelry, Ob 3. Embellishing armor or a weapon, Ob 3. Tea service, Ob 4. Scepters and rods, Ob 5. Crowns, Ob 6. If working with mithril, add +1 Ob to all tests and increase the Resources value by two.

FoRKs: Gem Artifice

Skill Type: Craftsman

Tools: Workshop.

Restrictions: Dwarves only

Whitesmith Per/Agi

Using similar techniques as the blacksmith, a whitesmith forges wares from the softer metals: silver and gold.

Obstacles: Hairpins, Ob 1. Spoons and cups, Ob 2. Silver bullets, Ob 3. Tea service, Ob 4. Silver swords, Ob 4.

FoRKs: Blacksmith, Jeweler, Etching

Skill Type: Craftsman

Tools: Workshop.

Windage-wise

Wine Tasting — Perception

Tasting wine and discerning its flavors and properties is a highly refined skill. Use the skill to determine the origins of the wine.

Obstacles: Grape, Ob 1. Terroir, Ob 2. Vintage, Ob 3. Estate, Ob 4. These obstacles are modified by the quality and age of the wine: Drinkable, +1 Ob. Swill, +2 Ob. Old, +1 Ob. Ancient, +2 Ob.

Skill Type: Special

Tools: No.

Wises — Perception

A wise is a skill through which a character can call upon the knowledge of various details of the game world—knowledge of "who's who" or "what's what" for the areas encompassed by his wises. For the most part, wises are fairly self-explanatory—their name says it all. Some of the more bizarre examples have detailed descriptions in the individual lifepath sections. The following are the general skill obstacles applicable to all wises.

Obstacles: Common knowledge of the subject, Ob 1. An interesting fact, Ob 2. Details, Ob 3. Uncommon knowledge, Ob 4. Rare goods, Ob 5. Bizarre or obscure, Ob 7. Freaky details or specifics, Ob 8.

Skill Type: Special

Tools: No.

Wolf-wise

Wood-wise

Woodcraft§ — Will/Agility

Elven carpentry is a marvel to behold. The Shapers use no saw, nails or glue. Simply by warping, bending, shaping and sculpting living wood they are able to produce stunning forms and functional designs.

Obstacles: Simple box or shelf, Ob 1. Cup, bowl, stool, ladder: Ob 2. Wall, table, chair, cabinets: Ob 3. A level floor, Ob 4. A staircase, Ob 5.

Skill Type: Craftsman

Tools: No.

Restrictions: Elves only

Write — Per/Agi

Write is the companion skill to Read. As I mentioned in the Read listing, it is possible to have this as a separate skill. Without the benefit of the ability to read, Write is a copyist's skill. The character knows the shapes of letters and how to reproduce them, but he does not know what they mean. A character with Write may transcribe his thoughts onto paper in reasonably coherent chunks.

Obstacle: Your name, Ob 1. Copying letters, Ob 2. Composing a letter, Ob 3.

FoRKs: Composition, Calligraphy

Skill Type: Academic

Tools: Yes. Expendable.

Trait List

The following section contains lists and descriptions of traits.

Create Your Own

If you find yourself dissatisfied with the options presented in this list, you are welcome to create your own individual traits for your character. The rules for trait burning can be found in the Monster Burner.

Trait Types and Restrictions

Some of the traits that appear in the lifepaths may also appear in this list. When a character has walked a lifepath, the player may purchase its traits at one point apiece. Buying the trait from this list, a player must pay the listed cost.

The rules for using traits can be found in the Burning Wheel.

Char=Character Trait

This is a quirk or appearance-based trait. There are no die mechanics associated with these traits. Character traits are fairly self-explanatory—the name usually says it all. Therefore, character trait descriptions are not included. Players may purchase character traits with the trait points earned from the lifepaths.

C-O=Call-On

The *C-O* abbreviation is short for "call-on." Call-ons allow for re-rolls or break ties.

Dt=Die Trait

Dt is short for die trait. Die traits modify stats, skills, attributes, limitations, restrictions and even other traits. They can also grant special abilities.

Common Traits

Dwarves, Elves and Orcs all come with a suite of common traits. These traits are free and obligatory for characters of the respective stock. Common traits may not be purchased. They may be voted off in play.

Restrictions

Buying Lifepath Traits

Unpriced lifepath traits may only be taken if the player has chosen the lifepath that contains this trait. These traits cost 1 pt in character burning. These traits may be voted onto the character in play.

If a trait from a lifepath is priced in this list, then it costs 1 pt if the character has the required lifepath. Otherwise, it may be purchased for its listed price.

Buying Special Traits

Special traits may only be purchased according to their restrictions. These traits may be earned by their respective stocks in play. They may not be earned by other stocks.

A

Abashed *Char* 1 pt

Abnormally Long Tongue *Char* 1 pt

Abused *Char* 1 pt

Accustomed to the Dark *Dt*

Contrary to popular belief, Dwarves cannot see in darkness. However, because they have lived many ages in halls lit by firelight and reflected sunlight, Dwarves do not suffer any penalty for twilight, starlight, candlelight, lamplight or torchlight. They do suffer from complete darkness as Men and Elves do.

Restrictions: Dwarven common trait

Aches and Pains *Char* 1 pt

Acute *Dt*

Elven Bladesmiths tend to be very sharp—their attention to detail and ability to reason is renowned even among the Elves. It is said that this ability to see a matter to its conclusion comes from centuries of staring at the tip of the blade. Bladesmiths may round up when factoring the roots for any skill that includes Perception in its root stat

Restrictions: Elven lifepath trait

Addicted *Char* 1 pt

Adorable *Char* 1 pt

Adventurer *Dt*

Dwarven society is very structured and rigid. Those that break its conventions are forever branded as outsiders—even if they're later let back into the fold. Characters who were once Adventurers bear the stain of their deeds for the rest of their lives. No matter how hard they try to hide it, other Dwarves can just smell it on them. Adventurers gain +1 Ob to all Circles tests when dealing with Artificers or Noble Born Dwarves. However, Adventurers may choose a minor affiliation (1D) outside the Dwarf hold for free.

Restrictions: Dwarven lifepath trait

Affinity for... *Dt* 4 pts

An Affinity trait represents something that the character loves so much, he excels at it. Players may choose one skill for which their character has an Affinity. The trait gives the character +1D to the skill.

Affinity for Business *Dt*

This character has a hard nose for the cutthroat world of business. Affinity for Business gives +1D to any Resources test.

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Affinity for Horses *Dt*

Affinity for Horses, like all Affinities, gives +1D when dealing with the subject of the trait. In this case, Animal Husbandry and Riding tests are +1D.

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Affinity for Sheep and Goats *Dt*

This trait adds +1D to any skill or stat when dealing with sheep or goats.

Restrictions: Dwarven lifepath trait

Affinity for Spiders *Dt*

The Master of Eight develops a special kinship with his spider slaves. He learns their ways and habits. This trait adds +1D to any spider-related stat or skill tests.

Restrictions: Orc lifepath trait

Aggressive	*Char*	1 pt
Agoraphobic	*Char*	1 pt
Agreeable	*Char*	1 pt
Alarming	*Char*	1 pt
Alcoholic	*Char*	1 pt

Alert *Dt* 2 pts

Little, electric voices echo round the character's skull. Character may Glance Assess and Aim (+1D) when Stand and Drool hesitating. Therefore, if your character hesitates for two actions in Fight, he may shit himself and get two aiming dice. In Range and Cover, Alert grants 1D to the next shot after the character finishes hesitating.

Alms-Taker	*Char*	1 pt
Aloof	*Char*	1 pt

Aman *Char*

This trait indicates the Elf is of a rare lineage—those first to walk even among the First Born. Down through the ages, the Aman have most often tread the path of the Etharch—they are the lords and kings of all Elves. This character need not be an Etharch himself, but he is eligible for that rank. In addition, the Elf-folk of the Wilderlands and Citadel treat him with a mixture of fear and adoration.

Restrictions: Elven lifepath trait

Ambidextrous	*Char*	1 pt
Ambitious	*Char*	1 pt
Amenable	*Char*	1 pt
Amenable to Other Options	*Char*	1 pt
Anemic	*Char*	1 pt

Apostate *Dt* 3 pts

The Apostate has forsaken one religion for another. Anyone can be an apostate—many Christians captured by the Muslims during the Crusades resorted to apostasy in order to save their lives. The Apostate character must have at least one religiously focused Belief. He also gains a 1D infamous reputation among his former co-religionists.

Restrictions: Men only, special trait

Appreciation for Beauty *Char* 1 pt

Apprehensive *Char* 1 pt

Arcane *Char* 1 pt

Arrogant *Char* 1 pt

Artful Dodger *Dt* 5 pts
This trait allows the character to see it coming—he knows Destiny has it in for him and knows what she looks like. In the Fight rules, he may forfeit one action for free per exchange: He does not have to lose one when he changes one. All the other normal rules and conditions for Forfeiting apply.

Atravieso *Dt* 1 pt
Someone who is Atravieso is always getting his hands into everything, fiddling with every little thing he can. When in any new place, or a stressful situation, the character must pass an Ob 3 Will test to resist touching and fiddling. If he fails the test, the character goes for the most fragile/breakable/dangerous objects around—beakers in the laboratory, eggs in the hen house, detonators in the bomb shop, the queen's dress at court, etc.—and, well, fiddles with them.

Aura of Innocence *C-O* 2 pts
This character projects the appearance of being completely free of taint and guilt in any crime. No one would ever suspect him. This is a call-on for Falsehood or Inconspicuous when dodging guilt.

Aura of Determination *C-O* 5 pts
This trait allows the character and everyone within his presence to reroll one test in a great effort.

Aura of Fear *Dt* 5 pts
This character emanates fear. When entering his presence, all must pass a Steel test. Once the Steel test is made, the victim character does not have to test again until the next time he encounters this fearful creature.

Aura of Holiness *Dt* 7 pts
This character is bathed in a divine light. Any character with the Lawbreaker, Dreaded, Spirit Nature or Aura of Malevolence trait must immediately take a Steel test when entering the holy character's presence. Add the holy character's Will exponent to the hesitation obstacle. In addition, the holy man's Suasion dice are always considered open-ended.

Aura of Malevolence *Dt* 6 pts
This character is evil, and everyone knows it. Little children run away crying, dogs bark maniacally. This character, and all of his cohorts within his Presence gain +2D to Intimidate or Interrogate. If the malevolent character has other characters helping him Intimidate, each character grants an additional helping die over what they would normally give. Only one effect may be used at a time.

Aura of Martyrdom *Dt* 3 pts
He will die for our sins. We all know it. We all want it (not that we would do anything to speed the process along...). In him we shall be redeemed. The player whose character possesses this trait earns persona artha for personal goals when taking steps in the game to martyr his character. The character must die for a lost cause—preferably religious. Should this glorious death

transpire, the character's remains instantly become holy relics. The first person to gather up those remains is granted all of the martyr's remaining artha. If he had no artha left at the time of his death, the relic grants a deeds point to its new owner. Lastly, after the artha/deeds point is spent from the remains, they become a suitable matrix for Enchanting. See the Enchanting rules in the Magic Burner.

Authoritative *Char* 1 pt

Avarice *Dt* 3 pts

A player may choose to make his Dwarven character especially Greedy. With this trait, he can raise his character's starting Greed to whatever exponent he desires (so long as it is higher than what it would start at). The downside of this is that Greed tests always count as the type of test the character needs to advance, no matter the obstacle. If he needs a routine, the next test counts as routine. See the Greed mechanics for the ramifications of this.

Restrictions: Dwarves only, special trait

B

Back-Breaking Labor *C-O*

Call-on for Power or Forte when performing hard labor.

Restrictions: Orcish and Mannish lifepath trait

Bad Egg *Char* 1 pt

Baleful Stare *C-O*

A call-on for Intimidation or Interrogation when attempting to inject gravity into a situation or to cow a subject: "He just gives you that *look*."

Restrictions: Dwarven lifepath trait

Barker *Char* 1 pt

Base Humility *Char* 1 pt

Bastard *Dt* 4 pts

This character is the illegitimate son of a noble of rank. He will only be heir to the lands and income if all the other heirs die or join the clergy. Bastards are not looked upon kindly, as they dilute claims to birthright and threaten the system of rightful inheritance. Bastards have a 1D infamous reputation among the nobility.

Restrictions: Men only, special trait

Batshit *Char* 1 pt

Bearded *Char*

A Dwarf's beard is a sign of rank and maturity. No male Dwarf would dare go about with a bald face.

Restrictions: Dwarven common trait

Bedside Manner *Char* 1 pt

Beespeaker *Dt*

This character understands the secret lives of bees. He can understand their signs and buzzing, but he can't really talk back to them. His Perception acts as Aura Reading on bees.

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Believer *Dt*

Believers fervently accept the truth of miracles and the power of Faith. All Faith obstacles used against Believers are made at -1 Ob.

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Bellicose *Char* 1 pt

Big Boned *Char* 1 pt

The Bigger They Come... *Char*

The Siege Master cannot resist big targets. Massive, sturdy donjons are an affront to his sensibilities. The Siege Master will always target the biggest hunk of bricks (or prettiest war machines) first and pound them into dust and ruin.

Restrictions: Orc lifepath trait

Bilge-Drinker *Char* 1 pt

Birdie Talk *Dt*

This character is just weird. He tweets and chirps at birds and they respond in kind—landing on his shoulders and twittering away. This character is considered to have Low Speech for birds only.

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

A Bit Deaf *Dt*

The incessant clanging and banging has made this character a bit deaf. +1 Ob to all auditory-based Perception tests.

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Bitter *Char* 1 pt

Black Bile Poison *Dt* 3 pts

Black Hunters know a little-known secret about Orc bile. It's toxic to other creatures. A Hunter with this training may simply vomit on his arrows or knives to poison them before a fight. The vomit stays fresh for about a half hour before it loses its potency. No roll is required. Any creature who takes a Mark result hit from such a coated barb must pass an Ob 4 Health test. Margin of failure is added to all Health and Steel test obstacles taken for the rest of the day. This poison does not affect Orcs.

Restrictions: Orcs only

Black Lung *Dt*

This Orc is beset with a wretched hacking cough. This wheezing gives him +1 Ob to all Health, Stealthy and Inconspicuous tests.

Restrictions: Orc lifepath trait

Blank Stare *Dt* 3 pts

No matter the emotion, the character never shows any sign of "getting it." The little light bulb never seems to come on. +1 Ob to all Persuasion and Soothing Platitudes tests made against this character.

Blasphemer *Char* 1 pt

Blind *Dt* 1 pt

This character cannot see clearly. He cannot make purely visual-based Perception tests, and he is at +2 Ob to all sight-based Speed and Agility tests.

Blisters *Char* 1 pt

Bloviatic *Char* 1 pt

Boaster *Char* 1 pt

Bookworm *Dt* 2 pts

"You've got to leave this library and go out and experience the world! Stop hiding in your books and *live*!" warned the old instructor.
"Yeah, right," thought the student. "All the knowledge I'll ever need is here...in these books!"
Characters with this trait reduce their aptitude for learning Academic skills by one.

Booming Voice *C-O* 2 pts

This character's voice cuts through walls and overpowers other speakers. This is a call-on for Conspicuous, Oratory or Command.

Bored *Char* 1 pt

Born to Be King *Char* 5 pts

This character is a son in the royal line. If he is the eldest, he is the direct heir to the throne. If he is a younger son, he bears no immediate obligation and is free to pursue his own aims. However, the character is a Prince and the obligations of said rank should play heavily on his life. He may, at some point, be called upon to take the throne!
Restrictions: Men only, special trait

Born to Rule Them All *Dt*

Those Born Great and Black are marked by distinctive features—tall stature, broad shoulders and deep-hued skin. This is the mantle of hereditary leadership among the Orcs. In order to be a Great One or a Servant, one must be Born to Rule Them All. This trait grants a 1D affiliation among Great and Black Orcs and a 1D infamous reputation among the chattel and the legion.
Restrictions: Orc lifepath trait

Born Under the Silver Stars *Char*

To those who look upon the Elves with clear eyes, there shimmers an unmistakable halo, like white light through a gossamer veil, like stars shining at night.
Restrictions: Elven common trait

Bottomless Stomach *Dt* 2 pts

Eat and eat and eat. "Nature's Cruel Joke." Characters with the Bottomless Stomach trait are at +1 Ob to all Resources tests involving food, drink and meals.

Branded a Coward *Dt*

Whether true or not, this character has been branded a coward. In Dwarven society, this stain comes not from breaking an oath, but from refusing to swear the oath in the first place. Branded a Coward grants the character a 1D infamous reputation with either Dwarven Nobles, Clansmen, Guilders, Artificers or the Host. Player's choice. And more important, this Dwarf may not swear an Oath until he has redeemed himself in the eyes of his longbeard.
Restrictions: Dwarven lifepath trait

Brash *Char* 1 pt

Brave *Char* 1 pt

Breeder *Char*

Though they loathe life and yearn for death, Orcs are compelled by their accursed nature to procreate often and quickly.
Restrictions: Orc common trait

Broken *Dt*

-1 Ob to all Intimidation, Interrogation, Command and Seduction tests used against this character. His Will has been broken.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Broken In *Dt*
The Apprentice is stripped of his pride and ego. The player must remove any lifepath traits related to pride or status—Noblesse Oblige, for example.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Broken Man *Char* 1 pt

Brooding *Dt*
The Great One is prone to profound mood swings. If ever beaten in a Duel of Wits or surpassed in a social skill test, the Great One must succumb to this trait. He must hesitate for his full hesitation (minimum of two actions). While Brooding, the player may invoke his Flights of Murderous Fancy trait. (Note that in order to access that trait, the Great One must have this trait.) If the Great One does not have the Flights of Murderous Fancy trait, he simply fumes for a few moments as he broods and then returns to his regular state of mind.
Restrictions: Orc lifepath trait

Bruiser *C-O*
The Marine has spent his days at sea a-bettin' and a-brawlin'. Take your bets, gents! This trait is a call-on for Brawling.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Brusque *Char* 1 pt

Brutal *Char* 1 pt

Brutish Efficiency *C-O*
This trait acts a call-on for Siege Engineer.
Restrictions: Orc lifepath trait

Bulbous Nose *Char* 1 pt

Bull's-eye Spitter *Dt*
"I spit in yer eye!" In calm weather and good light, this character simply does not miss his target. When spitting in the Fight rules, it's a "longer" weapon, it costs one action to use, and it gives your opponent +1 Ob to his next test. Use this in Duel of Wits and give your opponent +1D to his next action. Use this against a sorcerer to distract him—counts as a *may not*. Use this in Range and Cover and count your days numbered. This trait may only be used once per opponent—ever.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Burial Rites *Dt*
+1D to Consecration and Purification Faith tests for performing burial rites. Player also earns a persona point for each player character he buries.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Burial at Sea *Dt*
+1D to Consecration and Purification Faith tests for performing burial rites at sea. Player also earns a persona point for each player character he buries at sea.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Buxom *Char* 1 pt

C

Cadaverous *Char* 1 pt

Calm Demeanor *C-O*
The Elven Attendant learns that an implacable visage is crucial to winning favor and advancement in the Elven court. To portray fear and agitation is to betray oneself. Call-on for Steel in the Duel of Wits.
Restrictions: Elven lifepath trait

Call of the Sea *Char* 1 pt

Callous *Char* 1 pt

Calloused *Char* 1 pt

Callow *Char* 1 pt

Cannibal *Char*

So vile are they, Orcs will not hesitate to slay and eat their companions.

Restrictions: Orc common trait

Catamite *Char* 1 pt

Catamite has been chosen as the trait name to represent openly homosexual characters in the Burning Wheel. Honestly, it was a pejorative medieval term—a slur. It is how society would refer to them, not necessarily how they refer to themselves.

Any character may be homosexual via the player's choice, but by taking the Catamite trait, the player is acknowledging that his character is open about his orientation. The ramifications of such a decision in a conservative medieval society are grist for great game situations.

Restrictions: Men only, special trait

Charging Blindly *Dt*

Add +1D to Steel tests when at the van of an attack and charging across the field of battle.

Restrictions: Orc lifepath trait

Charismatic *C-O* 2 pts

There is something magnetic and enigmatic about this character that draws people to him. People generally enjoy his company. This is a call-on for Persuasion or Oratory. Pick one.

Charming *C-O* 2 pts

Suave and likable, this character possesses a certain *je ne sais quoi* that makes him affable (despite his cowardly, murderous personality). Call-on for Soothing Platitudes or Seduction. Pick one.

Child Prodigy *Dt* 2 pts

This trait is only available to one or two lifepath characters. The player may add +3D to the Perception or Will exponent of the character, or may shade shift one skill. Abuse this at your peril.

Chosen One *Dt* 5 pts

If a player's character possesses the Faithful trait, he may purchase this trait to make the Faith shade gray.

Restrictions: Men only, special trait

Chronologue *Char* 1 pt

An innate sense of time plagues this character. He always knows what time it is.

Chuffing *Char* 1 pt

Chuntering *Char* 1 pt

Cipher *Dt* 5 pts

It is not that the character is completely nondescript, but there is something about him that makes people not notice him. This trait shade shifts Inconspicuous to gray, but adds +1 Ob to all Circles tests.

Circumspect *Char* 1 pt

Claustrophobic *Dt* 1 pt

Claustrophobia is a specific phobia applying to enclosed spaces. A character afflicted with this trait will not willingly enter small spaces like prison cells, closets, tunnels, trunks or even cramped rooms. If he should find himself in an enclosed

space for a long period of time (more than a minute or two), he becomes agitated and eventually hysterical—the character must pass a Steel test. If failed, he must either Swoon or Run and Scream.

Clumsy *Dt* 1 pt
This character tends to trip or drop things at the wrong moment. Use this trait to further color failed tests involving holding precious or fragile things. A Clumsy character will always drop what he is holding in a rather spectacular manner if he fails a test.

Cold Black Blood *Dt*
The cold substance of night runs through their veins, rendering these tormented souls immortal. But it also makes them susceptible to the sun's burning rays. Orcs suffer +2 Ob to all tests while abroad in the sunlight. If it is cloudy, dawn or twilight, the penalty is only +1 Ob. But the night deadens their nerves as well: *Cold Black Blood* reduces hesitation obstacles by two for pain, but not fear or wonderment.
Restrictions: Orc common trait

Cold Blooded *Dt* 2 pts
This murderous soul has had a bellyful of killing and he won't hesitate to do more. Reduce hesitation for death, violence and pain by one. Do not reduce hesitation for surprise or wonderment.

Cold Hearted *Dt*
Reduce hesitation for surprise and fear (including Intimidation) by one. Pain hesitation is not reduced.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Collector *Char* 1 pt

Color Blind *Char* 1 pt

Colorful *Char* 1 pt

Comely *Char* 1 pt

Comfortable Shoes *Char* 1 pt

Commanding Aura *Dt* 6 pts
This character possesses an imperious and imposing demeanor. His merest words seem like fiat and his statements like edicts. His lessers feel compelled to obey. Add +1D to the character's Command skill. He may also help all those in his presence with any Steel tests they are compelled to make.

Complaining *Char* 1 pt

Compulsive Liar *Char* 1 pt
The character cannot help himself; the lies come unbidden and never ending. Note that this trait does not necessarily make the character a good liar.

Condescending *Char* 1 pt

Connected *Dt* 4 pts
This character has connections that belie his station. You may add one of the following new settings to your Circles: City dweller, Villager, Professional Soldier or Outcast (or equivalent from non-Mannish settings).

Confident *Char* 1 pt

Contortionist C-O 2 pts
A Contortionist can bend and twist the body into odd positions. Call-on for Speed and Agility in tight situations.

Cookie *Char* 1 pt

Cool Headed *Dt* 2 pts
Cool heads keep calm in crazy situations. Reduce hesitation from surprise and fear (not pain) by one.

Corrupt *Char* 1 pt

Cowardly *Dt* 1 pt
This is not the most flattering trait. Cowardly characters will not willingly put themselves at bodily risk and tend to run from danger—or at least be conveniently absent: +1 hesitation.

Cramped Hands *Char* 1 pt

Crippled *Dt*
This character is missing a limb or is horribly disfigured. Choose one stat. It cannot start higher than exponent 3 and it is capped at exponent 4. If this restriction creates an excess of stat points during character burning, the extra points are discarded.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Crotchety *Char* 1 pt

Cruel *Char* 1 pt

Cry of Doom *Dt*
He Who Sits Astride the Howling Black Beast learns to howl like a Great Wolf. He may deliver a potent and terrifying war cry from the back of his charging mount. The Cry adds +2D to Intimidation when mounted and bearing down on your prey. Intimidation requires two actions. Also using the Cry, the Orc may call his wolf to him over great distances—communicating with him as if he himself were a wolf.
Restrictions: Orc lifepath trait

Cry Wolf *Char* 1 pt

Cryptic *Char* 1 pt

Curious *Char* 1 pt

Curses like a Sailor *Char* 1 pt

Cursing *Char* 1 pt

Cynical *Char* 1 pt

D

Dangerous *Char* 1 pt

Dangerous Obsession *Dt*
Treasurers spend too much time with the Prince's hoard. They eat, sleep and drink coins and riches. They dream about—cannot stop thinking about—fantastic wealth. This trait adds +1D to starting Greed.
Restrictions: Dwarven lifepath trait

Daring *Char* 1 pt

Darling of the Court *Dt* 3 pts
This character is beloved at court. Increase any reputation by +1D.

Deadly Precision *Dt* 5 pts
Deadly Precision allows the character to choose one weapon skill that he favors. Use his *skill exponent* in place of his Power stat when factoring his IMS for weapons under this skill.

A character with a B4 Power and a B6 Throwing skill does damage with throwing knives using the 6 of his Throwing skill rather than his 4 Power. In the standard rules he does: I B3, M B5, S B7 with a throwing knife. Once trained to hit with Precision, he would do: I B4, M B7, S B10. Much better!

Deaf *Dt* 4 pts
This character cannot make auditory-based Perception tests, and is +2 Ob to all Perception tests in general.

Debauched *Char* 1 pt

Deep Sense *Dt*
This trait turns the character's Perception into an Orienteering-like skill when underground. He can discern direction, depth and inclination like surface dwellers can see the lay of the land, time of day and the weather.
Restrictions: Dwarven lifepath trait

Deep Sleeper *Dt* 3 pts
Deep Sleepers are very difficult to rouse from sleep. Loud noises, shouts, even calling their own names won't do it. To wake from sleep before the appointed time, this character must pass an Ob 5 Will test.

Deferential *Char* 1 pt

Demagogue *Char* 1 pt

Denouncer *Char* 1 pt

Desperate *Char* 1 pt

Despondent *Char* 1 pt

Determined *Char* 1 pt

Dexterity of the Cat *C-O* 2 pts
This trait can be called on when the character is trying to navigate narrow ledges, branches, rope or walkways. Call-on for Climbing or related Speed tests.

Devout *Char* 1 pt

Diligent *Char* 1 pt

Diminutive Hands *Char* 1 pt

Diminutive Stature *Char* 1 pt
Characters of Diminutive Stature are no taller than five feet (1.6 paces). This is the stature of Dwarves and Roden.

Diseased *Dt*
This character possesses an honest-to-god communicable disease. He is covered with scabs and sores, he stinks like a corpse and he can't sleep due to the itching. Should he ever fail a Health test for recovery from an injury, he loses 1D from his Health as his illness overcomes him. Any physical contact with him necessitates a Health test. Obstacle is equal to 10 minus the Diseased's Health. Failure means the character who came into contact with him is now Diseased as well.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Disciplined *Char* 1 pt

Dismissive *Char* 1 pt

Dispute-Settler *C-O*
This skill acts as a call-on for Persuasion, Coarse Persuasion or Oratory when trying to settle a dispute between two characters.
Restrictions: Dwarven lifepath trait

Distracted *Char* 1 pt

Disturbed *Char* 1 pt

Disturbingly Confident *Char* 1 pt

Disturbingly Large Mouth *Char* 1 pt

Dog Lover *Char* 1 pt

Dog-Faced Boy *Char* 1 pt

Domineering *Char* 1 pt

Domineering Presence *Dt*

Characters with Domineering Presence may, once per scene, make their verbal maneuver *first* in a Duel of Wits. In the case of a Rebuttal versus Point (or something similar), this trait doesn't have any effect. But if a Bishop is attempting to Dismiss while his opponent is making a Point, then the Bishop player makes his point and rolls his dice *first*. If he fails to win the Duel, then the other player may respond.

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Dour *Char* 1 pt

Down to Earth *C-O*

This character is very grounded. He understands the natural order and lives by it. Use this skill as a call-on for Farming, Plant-wise or any other earthy skill the GM approves. Pick one.

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Downtrodden *Char* 1 pt

Dramatic *C-O* 2 pts

Whatever happens to the character, it is very entertaining and over-wrought when he tells you about it later. This trait can be called on for Acting and Theatrics.

Dreadful *C-O* 2 pts

This character is so horrible to look upon, dread fills the hearts of his enemies and friends. The character can use this trait as a call-on for Intimidation and Interrogation.

Dreamer *Dt* 3 pts

This character's dreams have a lifelike and portentous quality. The prime function of this trait is to allow the character to have visions in his dreams. These visions are always relevant to the game at hand. The player then becomes the intermediary for this information between the GM and the rest of the group.

Driven *C-O* 2 pts

There is a distant goal which drives this character on. Something burns in his mind that will make all this suffering, hardship and pain worth it in the end. This trait is a call-on for one skill that is related to one of the goals listed in the character's Beliefs. Choose the skill before play starts.

Drop-Dead Gorgeous *Char* 1 pt

Drunk *Char* 1 pt

Dusty *Char* 1 pt

Dutiful *Char* 1 pt

Dvergar *Dt*

Dvergar are original, mythical Dwarves. Dwarven nobility all lay claim of blood ties to these ancient forebears. This trait grants a 1D affiliation with other Dwarven nobility and a 1D reputation among all Dwarves as a noble. Characters with this trait suffer a +1 Ob to all Inconspicuous tests among Dwarves.

Restrictions: Dwarven lifepath trait

E

Eagle Eye *Dt* 4 pts

Eagle Eye allows the character to see great distances clearly. For the purposes of shooting skill tests, characters with Eagle Eye count extreme range as optimal in the Range and Cover rules.

Ear for Voices *Dt* 3 pts

The character always remembers a voice and is able to pick out conversations over distance and noise. An Ob 3 Perception test allows the character to hear perfectly that conversation across the busy bar.

Ear to the Ground *Dt*

The harried Lieutenant serves his Captain as best he can. If the player purchases a relationship with an important or powerful captain, increase his base Circles by one.

Restrictions: Elven lifepath trait

Early Riser *Char* 1 pt

Earthen *Char* 1 pt

Earthy Smell *Char* 1 pt

Eating Maggots *Char* 1 pt

Ebullient *Char* 1 pt

Educated *Char* 1 pt

Effete *Char* 1 pt

Eidetic Memory *Dt* 4 pts

The character has the ability to remember nearly anything that he has read or seen. The player is allowed to consult the GM on occasion about certain important character memories. Whenever there is a question about whether or not the character remembers something, it is assumed that he does. The GM can provide the necessary information to the player.

Eldritch Sink *Dt* 8 pts

Magic does not and cannot directly affect this character. This includes both beneficial and detrimental effects. This isn't the best trait for sorcerers, as it would negate the Gifted trait.

Emotional *Char* 1 pt

Enemy of the Sun *Dt* 3 pts

The greatest, most fearsome of Orcs have been bred to resist the pure rays of the sun. They may travel by day and suffer no obstacle penalties as under the Cold Black Blood Orc common trait.

Restrictions: Orc characters only, special trait

Entropic *Dt* 5 pts

Things fall apart around the character. Any mechanic that involves something breaking—armor or materials, for example—counts double in its effect. One breach counts as two, one lost armor die counts as two. Any DoF mechanic for catastrophic failure is weighted by +1 toward the worst result. And any roll that results in complete failure indicates that something broke. Oops. This trait affects everyone and everything in the character's presence, including himself.

Erudite *Char* 1 pt

Esoteric *Char* 1 pt

Essence of the Earth *Dt*

Elves do not feel the effects of earthly cold and heat as do Men; they do not fall ill; they are ageless and will only pass on when the Earth ends. Elves do not have to take Health tests for illness, and they gain +1D to Health and Forte tests for resisting fatigue and poison. Yet, they are not deathless: Elves may be killed by violence or may waste away due to Grief.

Restrictions: Elven common trait

Estimation *Dt* 2 pts

Dwarven Engineers often share with each other their vast knowledge. "How far do y' think that is?" "Hunnert paces?" "Nah, hunnert seven and an eighth, easy." Using this training skill, a Dwarf may add a +1D any skill that requires an estimation of distance, depth or height: building a bridge, carving out a hall or even leaping a chasm. Be warned though, estimating incorrectly can be calamitous. If the test is failed, the results are catastrophic.

Restrictions: Dwarves only.

Etharchal *Dt*

This character is of Elven noble stock. His facial features, bearing, accent and manners are distinct from those born in the wilds or the citadel. His heritage is recognizable at a glance. Grants a 1D affiliation with Elven Etharchs. This compounds with all other appropriate affiliations.

Restrictions: Elven lifepath trait

Eunuch *Char* 1 pt

Evasive *Char* 1 pt

Exasperated *Char* 1 pt

Exhausted *Dt*

Pushed to the brink of his endurance one too many times, this character is simply exhausted. +1 Ob to all Health tests.

Restrictions: Orcish and Mannish lifepath trait

Exile *Dt* 2 pts

This Elf has committed some crime that has nearly earned him the title of enemy among his people. Rather than dishonor him with such a stigma, his people instead sent him into exile. Ultimately, though, it is a death sentence. The Exile cannot journey West. Should his Grief overtake him, he'll have no succor and will simply waste away. This trait adds +1D to starting Grief, and a 1D infamous reputation among all Elves.

Restrictions: Elves only, special trait

Exorcism Ritualist *Dt*

The exorcism ritualist knows how to drive demons from the possessed. He gains a +1D advantage to Faith when using the Purification miracle to exorcise demons.

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Extra Digit *Char* 1 pt

Extremely Bitter *Char* 1 pt

Extremely Respectful of One's Betters *Char* 1 pt

Extrovert *Dt* 3 pts

The character may reduce his aptitude for learning social skills by one.

Eye of the Hunter *Dt* 3 pts
Characters with the Eye of the Hunter count their Perception exponent as Observation for detecting Stealthy, Camouflage or similarly concealed characters.

F

Faded *Char* 1 pt

Fair and Statuesque *Char*
Elves are fair and beautiful to all who look upon them. The Elven form inclines toward tall and slender, rounded by graceful curves.
Restrictions: Elven common trait

Faithful *Dt* 5 pts
This trait is required in order to open the Faith attribute. With Faith, the character is able to perform miracles. The Faith section of this chapter describes how to start the attribute. The Emotional Magic section of the Burning Wheel describes its mechanics.
Restrictions: Men only, special trait

Familiar Face *Dt* 2 pts
Of course he's my friend. I've seen him around here dozens of times! Familiar Face is a call-on for Circles tests.

Family Heirloom *Dt* 5 pts
A Family Heirloom is an item of great value or power that symbolizes the (once great) might of the family. A character may only take this trait if he starts with 20 or fewer resource points. The trait allows the player to take one item from any list that costs 50 rps or less.

Fanatical Devotion *Char* 1 pt

Fanged and Clawed *Dt*
The mouth of an Orc is a violent organ, well suited to tearing flesh and shouting blasphemies. Orcs may use their Fanged Maw as a weapon: The bite is a Power 1, WS 1, VA 1, Add 2, shortest length weapon. Claws like steel shards protrude from their gnarled fingers. They may be used as weapons: Power 1, WS X, VA –, Add 2, shortest length. They act like knives for purposes of positioning and fighting distance.
Restrictions: Orc common trait

Fastidious *Char* 1 pt

Fateful *Char* 1 pt

Fêa *Char*
The Fêa trait denotes that this Elf has been born into a family whose lineage typically holds the rank of prince. This character need not hold the rank of prince himself, but possessing this trait indicates that he is eligible for the rank. This trait is required if the player wishes to take the Prince lifepath for his character.
Restrictions: Elven lifepath trait

Fealty to the Fêa *Char*
Sword Singers trained in the palace of the Etharch are traditionally considered the Prince's own bodyguard. They report directly to him in times of peace and war.
Restrictions: Elven lifepath trait

Fear of Cheese *Char* 1 pt

Fear of Wet Noises *Char* 1 pt

Fearful Respect of the Servants *Char* 1 pt

Fearless *Dt* 3 pts

This character is practically immune to fear. Reduce hesitation for pain, fear and the shock of gore or death by three. Hesitation for wonderment or surprise is not reduced.

Feral *Char* 1 pt

Fervent Believer *Char* 1 pt

Fey Blood *Dt* 4 pts

The blood of the elder folk runs through him. This character may choose one trait from the Elf, Dwarf or Orc traits list. Lifepath and Common Racial traits are free, normal costs apply to Special Traits.

Firm *Char* 1 pt

First Born *Dt*

Elves are made from the very fabric of nature—wind, air, wood and water. Thus, they know its secrets very well: They know how to preserve much of its power—even when it is taken and shaped into something new. It is this intimate knowledge that allows the Elves to weave their songs.

Their unadulterated essence grants them insight into their world unmatched by the races of Men, Dwarves or Orcs. Due to this, Elves' Perception maximum is 9 rather than 8.

Restrictions: Elven common trait

Fixed Smile *Char* 1 pt

Flamboyant *Char* 1 pt

Flatterer *Char* 1 pt

Flea-Bitten *Char* 1 pt

Fleet of Foot *C-O* 2 pts

Fleet of Foot is a call-on for Speed when racing or positioning.

Flights of Murderous Fancy *Dt*

While under the effects of the Brooding trait, the Great One is beset by the winged visions of his horrid and vile fantasies. These tempting little morsels dance in his mind's eye: Tearing the Elven captain limb from limb, turning pesky knights into dinnerware or slaughtering his entire clan in order get them to shut up, for example. After being humiliated in a social skill test or Duel of Wits, such visions become irresistible. While Brooding, the Orc player may design a Flight of Murderous Fancy to focus on. He must name a task and the vivid details of how he'll accomplish said task. He may then FoRK his Hatred into any and all tests—stat, skill, Steel, Health or whatever—while on the job. When he sates his fancy (and accomplishes the goal), the player immediately earns a persona point. Tapping into the Flights of Murderous Fancy trait counts as a routine test for Hatred.

Restrictions: Orc lifepath trait

Flip *Char* 1 pt

Floury *Char* 1 pt

Folksy Wisdom *Char* 1 pt

Following the Beat *Char* 1 pt

Fondness for Elven Blood *Char* 1 pt

Forked Tongue *C-O*

This trait is a call-on for Falsehood.

Restrictions: Orc lifepath trait

Formalist *Char* 1 pt

Fortitude *C-O* 2 pts
When others would quit from exhaustion, this character will heave to and give it one more try. Call-on for Forte.

Foul Smelling *Char* 1 pt

Frail *Dt* 4 pts
Weakness saps vitality. This character is less vigorous than his companions. Perhaps due to an overactive life of the mind? Subtract one from Power or Forte. Also, the maximum for the Frail stat is reduced to exponent 5.

Frippery *Char* 1 pt

Frustrated *Char* 1 pt

G

Galvanizing Presence *C-O*
Galvanizing Presence is a call-on for Command or Conspicuous.
Restrictions: Dwarven lifepath trait

Garrulous *Char* 1 pt

Gelid *Char* 1 pt

Generous *Char* 1 pt

Genial *Char* 1 pt

Gentle but Firm *Char* 1 pt

Geometric *Dt* 3 pts
Geometry is the mother of invention. Forget what that other guy says. This trait gives +1D to any skill that utilizes mathematics or measurements.

Gerbil Brain *Char* 1 pt

Gifted *Dt* 5 pts
This trait is required for the character to be able to cast spells, enchant artifacts, speak with the dead or summon spirits. Without it, Sorcery, Summoning and Enchanting are merely academic pursuits. With the Gifted trait, the character can manipulate magic. See Sorcery in the Burning Wheel for more.
Restrictions: Men only, special trait

Glib *C-O* 2 pts
This character is a believable story-teller. His manner and expressions are earnest and appropriate. This trait is a call-on for Soothing Platitudes, Falsehood and Seduction.

Gloryhound *Dt* 3 pts
A Gloryhound cannot restrain himself when he sees a chance for "glory." He charges into the fray heedless of safety, tactics or plans. Glory includes: maidens fair, enemy sorcerers commanding undead hordes, large monsters, enemy knights, and enemy kings. Gloryhounds may add an additional Steel reaction: *For Glory!* While hesitating from a failed Steel test (and choosing this reaction) the Gloryhound must Close. In Range and Cover he must use Steel. In Fight he must Close and attempt to Charge. He may not do anything else.

Gluttonous *Char* 1 pt

Gnawing Hunger *Char* 1 pt

Good for Nothing *Char* 1 pt

Gossip *Char* 1 pt

Graceful *C-O* 4 pts

This character is fluid and flowing in motion. This trait may be called-on for Speed tests and for social skills requiring grace or presence. This is a special, double effect call-on. The pricing is correct.

Grand *Char* 1 pt

Greasy *Char* 1 pt

Greater Muse *Dt* 6 pts

Under the influence of his muse, this character is a virtuoso. The player must choose an art form and one of his character's skills that it inspires. When the art is being performed or witnessed, the dependent skill shade shifts one step lighter. A character cannot be his own muse.

Greed *Dt*

Deep in the heart of every Dwarf lies a terrible seed, a lust for wealth and beauty. Some Dwarves master it; others succumb. It is a powerful emotion that drives many a Dwarf from his comfortable life and compels him to perform terrible acts or zealously create works of inestimable craft. See the Dwarven Greed section in this chapter for more on this emotional attribute.

Restrictions: Dwarven common trait

Greedy *Char* 1 pt

Grey Mantle *Char* 1 pt

Grief *Dt*

Years of emotion and strife take their toll, and eventually all Elves begin to feel Grief tug at their hearts. See the Elven Grief section for the mechanics of this trait.

Restrictions: Elven common trait

Grim *Char* 1 pt

Grudgekeeper *Dt* 1 pt

This character contains within him the capacity to maintain terrible enmity for perceived slights. He swears grudges like others swear oaths. The Grudgekeeper trait allows the player to replace his Oathsworn Belief with a Grudge. Rather than a promise or an oath, he swears revenge. Grudges follow the same mechanic as oaths. If the character has the Oathswearer trait, it combines with Grudgekeeper. He may only pronounce grudges—rather than oaths—between two characters. They must write them into their Beliefs as if they were oaths.

Restrictions: Dwarves only, special trait

Grumbling *Char* 1 pt

Guarded *Char* 1 pt

H

Hacking Cough *Char* 1 pt

Hairy *Char* 1 pt

Half-Elf *Char* 1 pt

Restrictions: Elves only

Halitosis *Char* 1 pt

Hand-Eye Coordination *Dt* 3 pts
The character may round up when factoring roots for skills with the Perception/Agility root.

Hands of Iron *Dt* 4 pts
The character's fists (and feet) have been so toughened that his hands count as a Power 1 weapon (like a stone, knife or dagger).

Handsome *Char* 1 pt

Happy-Go-Lucky *Char* 1 pt

Hard as Nails *Dt*
The Warden may choose to ignore *one wound once per conflict*. He may do as long as the wounded dice penalty is not greater than his current Will. So if he's only got 1D of Will left, he can't ignore a traumatic wound, but he can ignore a light.
Restrictions: Dwarven lifepath trait

Hard-Hearted *Dt*
They always have excuses, and this character has heard them all. He may add four successes to any body of argument in a Duel of Wits where his opponent is trying to weasel out of an obligation.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Hard Work *Char* 1 pt

Hardened *Dt*
Hard labor has turned this character's back to stone and his muscles to iron. Round up when factoring Health.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Hatred of Forests *Char* 1 pt

Haunted *Char* 1 pt

He's a Jonah, That One. *Char* 1 pt

Healthy *C-O* 2 pts
No matter what the character does or how he lives his life, he still maintains the glow of fitness. Call-on for Health tests.

Hide Before Battle *Char* 1 pt

Hiding *Dt*
Goblins learn very quickly that it's better to hide from their masters than be caught or volunteer. Add +1D to Stealthy.
Restrictions: Orc lifepath trait

Hoarding *Char* 1 pt

Holier *Char* 1 pt

Hollow Bones *Char* 1 pt

Homesick *Char* 1 pt

Honored *Char* 1 pt

Hope *Char* 1 pt

Horsefriend *Char* 1 pt

Humble Before My Master *Char* 1 pt

Humility *Char* 1 pt

Humility in the Face of Your Betters *Char* 1 pt

Hungry *Char* 1 pt

Hurt *Char* 1 pt

Hypochondriac *Char* 1 pt

I

I Know This Ship Like My Own Hands *C-O*

The carpenter is a strange bloke, but he definitely knows the ship. This trait acts as a call-on for any ability used in trying to figure out something about the sailor's ship—be it the location of something lost or the knowledge to repair terrible damage.

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Idealistic *Char* 1 pt

Ideologue *Char* 1 pt

Impecunious *Char* 1 pt

Imperious *Char* 1 pt

Imperious Demeanor *C-O*

Use this trait as a call-on for Circles when dealing with anyone of lower rank or station.

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Impulsive *Char* 1 pt

Incessant Tapping *Char* 1 pt

Incomprehensible Diagnosis *C-O*

Call-on for Falsehood when trying to hide the true facts of a medical diagnosis.

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Inconsiderate *Char* 1 pt

Indecisive *Char* 1 pt

Ineffable Feature *Char* 1 pt

An Ineffable Feature is a facial or bodily feature that cannot be altered or destroyed. Or if it is somehow destroyed or removed, it grows back the same as it was before.

Infallible Religious Logic *Char* 1 pt

Ink-Stained Hands *Char* 1 pt

Inscrutable *Char* 1 pt

Insightful *Char* 1 pt

Insomniac *Char* 1 pt

Inspirational *C-O* 2 pts

This character innervates and motivates other people by his mere presence. Can be used as a call-on for Oratory and Command.

Intense Hatred *Char* 1 pt

Intractable *Char* 1 pt

Inured *Char* 1 pt

Invisible Friend *Char* 1 pt

Involuntary Shudders *Char* 1 pt

Iron Memory *Dt*

Wordbearers are taught tricks of the memory so that they never forget the missives they are commissioned to recite. Players whose characters have this trait, who have forgotten a vital game-important detail, may make an Ob 3 Perception test to recall it.

Restrictions: Dwarven lifepath trait

Iron Nails *Char* 1 pt

Iron Nose *Dt*

This character has smelled the worst of it. He never has to take a Steel, Health or Forte test due to nauseating smells.

Restrictions: Dwarven lifepath trait

Iron Stomach C-O 2 pts
This character can eat nearly anything and not get sick, even while enduring stomach-churning gross-out jokes. Call-on for Forte tests against illness or poison.

Iron Will Dt 3 pts
Characters with Iron Will are resistant to Interrogation and Seduction. Any attempts at bending them are made at a double obstacle penalty. In a Duel of Wits in which the opposing skill is Interrogation or Seduction, the player may double his body of argument.

It Just Might Work! *Char* 1 pt

J

Jaded Dt 4 pts
So many years and so much humanity has this character seen, life seems to be an endless repetition of petty struggles. "I tire of this game...." Reduce hesitation for surprise or shock by three.

Jaunty *Char* 1 pt

Jealous *Char* 1 pt

Joan of Arc *Char* 1 pt

K

Keen Sense of Humor *Char* 1 pt

Keen Sight Dt
Like an eagle, Elves may see a great distance with perfect clarity. Add +1D to all Perception-based (or Observation-based) field maneuvers for Range and Cover or any Perception test involving seeing long distances. Elves also may see in starlight as if it were day. They suffer no obstacle penalties for dim light. Smoke and haze still bar their vision—normal penalties apply. In complete darkness Elves suffer +4 Ob like Men or Dwarves.
Restrictions: Elven common trait

Keen Taste Dt/C-O 5 pts
This trait can be used to determine the ingredients of a substance sampled by taste. The player can combine this trait with any one of his applicable skills. Using his knowledge and this inborn talent, he can decipher the ingredients or components of a material, substance or compound.

If a character had Prospecting and Keen Taste, he could taste earth and determine what components are contained therein.

Such an act requires a successful Perception test at an obstacle equal to what it would normally take to create or spot this substance. This test is open-ended.
Keen Taste can also be used as a call-on for Alchemy, Apothecary, Herbalism, Wine Tasting, Cooking and Baking.

Keys to the Church Dt
At one point, some church official thought it was a good idea to appoint this character a Doorkeeper and grant him keys to the church. It was he who locked the doors and guarded the reliquaries. This grants him a 1D affiliation with the church. If he acquitted his duties well, he gains a 1D reputation (local, no power) within the Church. If he took liberties with his duties, he gains a 1D infamous reputation (and +1 Ob to all Circles tests dealing with the

Church). This compounds with other reputations and affiliations in the church.

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Kicking the Beast *Dt*

It is the Cattle Slaves' responsibility to move any herd animals owned by the clan. Should any animals go missing, the Goblins become the herd. Characters with this trait may use their Power or Agility, or a weapon skill, to motivate any herd animal (in lieu of Animal Husbandry, Riding or Driving). The animals do suffer wounds from any extreme behavior.

Restrictions: Orc lifepath trait

The Killer *Dt* 5 pts

This character is always aware of what is going on around him—always looking one way while acting on something else. In Fight, The Killer trait reduces all shooting and throwing actions by one action. In Range and Cover, The Killer grants a +1D advantage to maneuver tests.

Know It All *Char* 1 pt

L

Laconic *Char* 1 pt

Lame *Dt* 1 pt

One of the character's legs is deformed or permanently injured, causing the character to walk with a pronounced limp. Reduce the character's stride by one. In addition, the character may not benefit from any skill or trait that increases the stride (like Sprinter).

Landlubber *Dt* 1 pt

"I think I'm gonna throw up." "I can't swim!" Look at the landlubber, seasick and staggering around the deck. This character is +1 Ob to all Health tests and attempts at good judgement while at sea.

Lavish Taste *Char* 1 pt

Lazy *Char* 1 pt

Learned *Char* 1 pt

Leprosy *Char* 1 pt

Lesser Muse *Dt* 5 pts

The beauty of art inspires this character to wild heights. The player must choose an art form and a skill it inspires. When under the influence of his Muse, the character gains +2 open-ended dice to all "inspired" skill tests.

A character cannot be his own Muse. He cannot recite poetry to himself while he is madly hacking away at his enemies.

Lesson of One *Dt*

A Second is a Sword Singer in training. One of the rituals of this rigorous regimen is to dissolve the ego entirely. The Second learns to think, act and be his master—his own psyche is stripped bare. This forms an intense bond between the two Elves, one that typically lasts beyond the Second's elevation to Sword Singer himself. If the player purchases an important relationship with his mentor he gains a 1D reputation as his student; if he purchases a powerful relationship, he gains a 2D reputation.

Restrictions: Elven lifepath trait

Life Is Death *Dt*

Reduce hesitation obstacles due to injury and pain by two.

Restrictions: Orc lifepath trait

Lifting Heavy Things *C-O*

Call-on for Power when lifting something that is obviously too heavy, bulky or cumbersome for the character.

Restrictions: Mannish or Dwarven lifepath trait

Light Sleeper *Dt* 2 pts

Light Sleepers are easily roused from slumber. They are always allowed the benefit of a Perception test to wake up when a noise is heard or someone is creeping about their room. Make the test as if they were awake. If the character has Observation, that can be used in place of Perception. If the test is passed, the character is instantly awake and ready to go. Also, Light Sleeper adds +1 Ob to all Health tests for recovering Tax.

Linguist *Dt/C-O* 3 pts

This character is passionate about languages. They are a puzzle to solve, a mystery to unravel, a game he enjoys and is naturally good at. Reduce aptitude for learning the Foreign Languages skill by 1. Acts as a call-on for Foreign Languages skill.

Lithe *C-O* 2 pts

This character has fluid grace inherent to his movements. Lithe characters tend to be thin and muscular. Call-on for Dance or any other athletic-type skill. Choose one before starting the game.

A Little Crazy *Char* 1 pt

A Little Fat *Char* 1 pt

Loathsome and Twisted *Dt*

Orcs are repellent, even to their own kind, and especially to Elves, Men and Dwarves. Their bodies are bent and squat, with ugly, long arms and sickening charred flesh: Orc stat maximums are straight 8s. This trait also unlocks the Hatred emotional attribute for Orcs.

Restrictions: Orc common trait

Loner *Char* 1 pt

Lonesome *Char* 1 pt

Long Fingered *Char* 1 pt

Long of Limb *Dt* 4 pts

Abnormally long arms or legs. Long of Limb increases the character's bare-fisted reach in positioning tests to *long*. If used with a weapon, increase the weapon length by one step.

Lord of Ages *Dt*

This character is the lord and master of an Elven dominion. He governs the Althings, Princes, Captains and Lords. He is ancient and powerful—his life spans the ages. The Lord of Ages trait grants +1D to one reputation or affiliation the player chooses for this character.

Restrictions: Elven lifepath trait

Lord's Favorite *Char* 1 pt

Lost *Dt* 1 pt

This character never knows where he is or in what direction he is going. Explicit directions are required to get him anywhere, and even that rarely works. Double obstacle penalties to all Orienteering or Navigation tests and any Perception test used to find the right direction.

Lost Faith *Dt*

Answer the Faith questions from the standpoint of "before" the character gained this trait, then circle it and write "LOST" next to it. The player has no access to the character's Faith attribute. Then write into the character's Beliefs the reasons why he no longer believes. Should that Belief (or Beliefs) change into one of renewed faith (via an appropriate in-game situation) and the player spent a deeds point during the conflict, he may reopen his attribute. Erase the circle and "LOST." Once restored, the player may perform miracles as per the standard rules.

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Louis Wu *Dt* 2 pts

When surprised or shocked by a revelation (especially when called on to make a Steel test for such instances), this character is prone to fits of laughter. He may replace "Stand and Drool" with "Belly Laugh" in his hesitation options. *If this doesn't infuriate friends and* foes alike, something is wrong in the world.

Love of the Horse *Char* 1 pt

Low Cunning *C-O* 4 pts

This is a call-on for any skill used in betraying a superior.

Restrictions: Orcs only

Low Speech *Dt* 3 pts

The knowledge of the language of animals and beasts is known to you. Choose one type of animalia: birds, horses and beasts of burden, beasts of the wild, reptiles and scaly beasts, fish or insects. This trait may be taken multiple times. Additional Low Speech categories cost +1 trait point.

Loyal *Dt* 3 pts

There is an old saying: "Death is lighter than a feather, but duty is heavier than a mountain." This character lives by these words. The player may add an additional Belief centered around his Loyalty to another character. Should this trait ever be voted off, the character loses the Belief as well; should the Belief be changed, the trait is lost.

Lucky *Dt*

There's always the lucky ones. Always. They make the rest of us look like shlubs while they skate through life. This trait can be used in a number of ways. First, it can be used as a call-on for any ability. This can only be used once per adventure. Second, it can be used to buy off one failed roll to save the character's life once—a failed armor test, a flubbed Speed test, etc. The test is passed and the trait is lost. Lastly, if the player makes a random in-game guess (via roleplay), the guess is always right—*so long as the player* isn't aware the guess is right.

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Lunatic *Char* 1 pt

This character always knows the phase of the moon.

Lustrous *Char* 1 pt

Lynx-Eyed, Like Burning Coals *Dt*

An Orc's eyes glow red with the inner fire of despite and hatred. Orcs can see clearly in darkness and shadows. They never suffer a penalty for such conditions.

Restrictions: Orc common trait

M

Mad *Char* 1 pt

Made Man *Dt*

A good craftsman is always in demand; and good craftsmen always look out for one another. 1D affiliation for being a journeyman craftsman.

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Maggot Connoisseur *Char* 1 pt

Maimed *Dt*

This character has been horribly maimed during his career. Choose the nature of the disfigurement and associate it with one physical stat, all tests against that stat are +2 Ob. If Forte is chosen, the penalty transfers over to Health, or the mortal wound is reduced by one.

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Man of Few Words *Char* 1 pt

Manhunter *Dt* 3 pts

This trait grants the ability to detect strong emotion in others, namely fear, nerves, elation and arousal. The character's Perception acts as the Aura Reading skill (but only for the non-spell detection uses).

Manly *Char* 1 pt

Marching *Dt*

Orcs with this trait actually know how to march in step. Add +1D to Speed for any marching or travel tests, and +1D to Health tests for fatigue, when marching in formation under the lash.

Restrictions: Orc lifepath trait

Mark of Privilege *Dt*

Those born into nobility bear certain features—telltale signs of their lineage. Their nose, their bearing, their skin or even their speech mark them as one of the privileged. This confers a 1D affiliation with nobility but also adds +1 Ob to all Inconspicuous or Falsehood tests when masquerading as someone lower than your station.

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Mark of the Beast *Char* 1 pt

Massive Stature *Dt* 4 pts

This character is the size of a Troll. Due to his imposing bulk, his weapon length categories are increased by one step. If wielding a "longest" weapon, he may count his weapon *longer than longest*!

Maternal *Char* 1 pt

Matriarchal *Char* 1 pt

Maudlin *Char* 1 pt

Mean *Char* 1 pt

Melodramatic Family *Char* 1 pt

Mercenary *Char* 1 pt

Merciful *Char* 1 pt

Merciless *Char* 1 pt

Metal Plate in the Skull *Char* 1 pt

Meticulous *C-O* 2 pts

The Meticulous character is neat and organized to the point of obsessiveness. All non-physical/martial arts skill tests take the maximum time required. The

trait may be used as a call-on for one academic, craftsman, artisan or military skill of the player's choosing. For Dwarven characters, the skill must relate to the character's Greed idiom.

Mind for Small Details *Char* 1 pt

Mind-Numbing Work *C-O*

Call-on for Will when performing mind-numbing, repetitive work.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Mind over Matter *Dt* 3 pts

With this trait, a player may add one point from his physical pool to his mental pool. This trait has no effect after character burning.

Misanthropic *Char* 1 pt

Misplaced Aura *Dt* 3 pts

Character has the aura of another type of person or creature. The player and the GM must design this aura—complete with character stock, Beliefs, Instincts and traits—before play begins. Any Aura Reading tests made against this character see the Misplaced Aura instead of the real one. However, the Aura Reader can see the Misplaced Aura trait if he gets at least four successes on his test.

Missing Digit *Char* 1 pt

Missing Eye *Dt* 3 pts

This trait increases most sight-based Perception obstacles by +1 to +2 Ob depending on the situation.

Missing Limb *Dt* 1 pt

Missing limbs have a serious effect on how the character is played. A missing arm sets the Agility cap at 5, and obviously prevents the character from performing any action with two hands. A missing leg sets the Speed cap at 4 and reduces the stride by two.

Monastic *Dt*

The diligent daily rituals of monastic life are detailed and difficult. This trait grants +1D to Faith for Consecration, Guidance or Revelation miracles while praying in a monastery.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Mourner *Dt* 3 pts

The Mourner is obsessed with his Grief. He is morose. The player may add any amount to his starting Grief that he sees fit, up to a maximum of exponent 9. In addition, all Laments are made at +2 Ob, and any time the character's Grief is one test from advancing, the next test—regardless of its difficulty—advances him. Grief clings to this character's spirit and cannot be shaken.
Restrictions: Elves only, special trait

Murderous *Char* 1 pt

Mute *Char* 1 pt

Muttering *Char* 1 pt

Myopic *Dt*

This character has terrible vision. He can barely see what is in front of his face. +2 Ob to all visual-based Perception tests.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

N

Naked Hatred *Char* 1 pt

Narcoleptic *Char* 1 pt

Near-Sighted *Dt*

Too much time spent reading in candlelight has strained this character's vision. +1 Ob to all tests requiring long-distance vision including: Bow, Crossbow, Throwing, and Range and Cover Field Maneuvers.

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Never Cry Wolf *Char* 1 pt

Nihilistic *Char* 1 pt

Night Owl *Char* 1 pt

Nimble *C-O* 2 pts

Nimble characters are capable of great acts of dexterity with their hands. Nimble may be called-on for Agility tests or one skill with Agility in its root. Choose the skill during character burning.

No Nonsense *Char* 1 pt

Noblesse Oblige *Dt*

This character was born into nobility. He has been raised with the idea that not only is he privileged, but he is obligated to perform his duty to society. The player may add a fourth Belief to his character. It must be one of the following: It is my duty to guard society and uphold its interests; I govern from duty, heritage and right; rulership is my natural and ordained task; the opinions of commoners are uneducated, therefore worthless; I am responsible for the people; my reverence is to the crown; rule of the many strips society of its strength and divides it into unfriendly fragments; rulership by minds unaccustomed to privilege is impossible; wealth, birth and intellect mark an individual to undertake governance.*

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Nose for Trouble *Char* 1 pt

Nose of the Bloodhound *Dt* 4 pts

A character with the Nose of the Bloodhound trait can tell a person's or animal's identity via scent and an Ob 1 Perception test. Nose of the Bloodhound also counts as a call-on for Tracking.

Numb *Dt*

This character has lived life under the whip. The Numb trait gives the character pronounced scars along his back, shoulders and legs. Also, the character does not feel the +1 Ob effects of superficial wounds. Three superficials still equal -1D.

Restrictions: Orcish and Mannish lifepath trait

O

Oathbreaker *Dt*

A character who breaks an oath, lies while under oath or fails to fulfill an oath is forever marked as an Oathbreaker. While Oathbreakers are tolerated in Dwarven society, they are also mistrusted. No oaths may be sworn with an Oathbreaker until he has somehow resolved his initial betrayal. Also, the player must choose a relationship at the start of play that encompasses his broken oath. Lastly, Oathbreaker grants a 1D infamous reputation among the Nobles, Host, Artificers, Guilders or Clans. Player's choice.

Restrictions: Dwarven lifepath trait

Oathswearer *Dt*

Long has it been the tradition of the great Dwarven Princes to go before the Longbeards of the clans to receive their blessing and swear an oath to protect them and uphold the traditions of their forefathers. Oathswearer is perhaps the most vital trait in Dwarven culture. Though all Dwarves are Oathsworn, only those with the Oathswearer trait may pronounce a binding pact. Any oath taken while not under the guidance of an Oathswearer is not binding. Any oath pronounced before an Oathswearer must be written into the character's Beliefs. It usually replaces one of the character's existing three Beliefs. It can be used to replace the fourth, Oathsworn trait belief only if that oath has been satisfied.

If an Oathswearer demands a character's word, and the character refuses, the Oathswearer can, at his discretion, brand him a coward. It is a stain that all Dwarves recognize, and no oaths or agreements are made with cowards. The character is given the Branded a Coward trait.

Restrictions: Dwarven lifepath trait

Oathsworn *Dt*

All Dwarves have stern values hammered into their skulls from a very early age. In fact, Dwarven society is a complex and interlocking network of promises and traditions. The most prime among them is: "Honor the oath." To break an oath is to break tradition that has seen Dwarves through many dark ages. It is a terrible crime and one not easily forgiven or forgotten.

Due to this trait, all Dwarf characters start the game with an additional (fourth) Belief. This Belief must come in the form of an oath, and represents a pre-game bond between the Dwarf and one of his relationships. Oaths that pertain to the situation in play fill one of the standard three Belief slots. Acceptable oaths are: the soldier's oath: "I owe Burri a debt of honor;" the uncle's: "I swore to recover the crown for my brother;" the prince's vow: "My father's last words were to rule wisely; this I swore;" and the drunk promises his wife: "I vow never to go near the beer again." Yes, the requirements of an oath mean a Dwarf character must start with a relationship.

Restrictions: Dwarven common trait

Obscure Aura *Dt* 3 pts

Tests to read this character's Aura are made at a double obstacle penalty. This penalty does not apply to detecting spells cast by or on the character.

Obedient *Char* 1 pt

Obliging *Char* 1 pt

Obsessed *Char* 1 pt

Obsessive *Dt*

This Dwarf spends a little too much time talking about certain things. Obsessive must relate to the character's Greed idiom and adds +1D to starting Greed.

Restrictions: Dwarven lifepath trait

Obstinate *Char* 1 pt

Odd *Char* 1 pt

Oddly Likeable *Char*

No matter how outrageous his deeds or words, there's just something about this Dwarf that's charming and likeable.

Restrictions: Dwarven lifepath trait

Odious *Char* 1 pt

Off-Kilter *Char* 1 pt

Oikofugic *Char* 1 pt

Organized *C-O*

Call-on for Administration, Estate Management or Accounting.

Restrictions: Elven lifepath trait

Ornery *Char* 1 pt

Other Life *Char* 1 pt

Outlaw *Dt* 3 pts

The Outlaw is a very particular person in medieval society. A player who chooses the Outlaw trait for his character must consent to a few conditions: First, his character has either committed a grievous crime or is perceived as an enemy of the established order. Second, no law applies to this character—he has no rights whatsoever. He cannot appeal to the courts or the mercy of a judge for anything. Any man or beast may kill the outlaw and suffer no legal penalty for it.

When the Outlaw trait is taken, the player must divide his resource points into two pools. Any resource points from City, Noble or Religious lifepaths go into one pool: The player may spend them as per the normal rules. However, he does not get access to the City/Noble/Religious resources until the Outlaw trait is voted off. The character's remaining resource points may be spent as normal on gear, affiliations, relationships, etc.

Outlaws gain a 1D infamous reputation among town and city folk and the nobility.

Restrictions: Men only, special trait

Overbite *Char* 1 pt

Overworked *Char* 1 pt

P

Pack Hunter *Dt*

Ravagers hunt with one another in an instinctual fashion. This trait adds +1D to all Steel tests so long as the Orcs equal their enemy's numbers. It also adds +1D to all engagement and positioning tests (in Fight), and field maneuvers (in Range and Cover) when attacking in a group (as small as two Orcs).

Restrictions: Orc lifepath trait

Pain Life *Dt*

Pain Life reduces hesitation due to pain by one.

Restrictions: Orc lifepath trait

Palsy *Dt* 2 pts

The shakes. Manifestations of this can be minor or only arise under certain conditions. But whenever it does arise, the character has serious difficulty performing delicate work with the hands. +1 Ob to any delicate work on Agility- or Perception/Agility-rooted skills.

Paranoid *Char* 1 pt

Paranoid About the Ship *Char* 1 pt

Paranoid Ear *Dt* 3 pts

A character with Paranoid Ear uses his Perception exponent as Observation for detecting Stealthy (or Chameleoned) characters.

Pardoner *Dt*

A pardoner has an interesting reputation in society—he is publicly reviled and secretly loved. A character with this trait has been given a special dispensation from the church to pardon the sins of the faithful and devout. With the Pardoner trait, a player can provide the opportunity for any character with the Gullible, Superstitious or Believer traits to change one of their Beliefs. The change can happen any time, so long as the Pardoner has a say in it and the new Belief relates to the church, god, absolution or sin. In addition, this trait gives a 1D reputation among the lay folk; which also counts as an infamous reputation in the church (+1 Ob to Circles tests in ecclesiastical or church settings). This compounds with other reputations and affiliations in the church.

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Pariah *Char* 1 pt

Passionate *Char* 1 pt

Patient *Char* 1 pt

Patriarchal *Char* 1 pt

Pegboy *Char* 1 pt

Penetrating Gaze *Dt* 4 pts

Penetrating Gaze reduces obstacle penalties for visibility and darkness by two.

Penny-Wise *C-O*

Call-on for Resources. This character keeps track of all his expenses, all the way down to the penny!

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Perfect Pitch *C-O* 2 pts

Perfect Pitch bestows the heavenly ability to identify or to reproduce any pitch heard. Obviously this can be greatly useful in music. Call-on for singing and musical instrument skills.

Perfectionist *Char* 1 pt

Peripatetic *Char* 1 pt

Perspective *C-O*

This artist possesses the incredible ability to represent three-dimensional objects and depth relationships on a two-dimensional surface. This trait acts as a call-on for any situation in which such an ability would prove useful.

Phobia *Dt* 3 pts

Choose any one of the numerous phobias floating around out in the world. If faced with the object of his phobia, a character must make a Steel Test at +2 Ob hesitation.

Pickled *Dt* 3 pts

This character may ignore all starting Health penalties for having an unhealthy lifestyle and whatnot. The character must pursue the unhealthy lifestyle in game.

Pigpen *Char* 1 pt

Plain Faced *C-O* 2 pts

The character just looks like anyone else (of his race and class) and is quite difficult to identify in a crowd. Call-on for Inconspicuous.

Poised C-O 3 pts
Despite being caught in extremely compromising circumstances, this character remains unflustered. Poised counts as a call-on for resisting the effects of Obfuscate and Incite actions. It also counts as a call-on for Etiquette.

Pointed Ears *Char* 1 pt

Poisonous Ambition *Char* 1 pt

Poker Face C-O 2 pts
More than just an inscrutable stone face, Poker Face is all about giving the face you need to mislead your opponent. This trait can be used as a call-on for Falsehood and Gambling/Games of Chance.

Pompous *Char* 1 pt

Possessed *Dt*
This special trait may only be chosen after consultation with the GM and/or other players. If it is taken, the character is possessed by a dæmon, spirit or seraph. Choose one appropriate trait to be made manifest through the human vessel from the dæmon/seraph list in the Monster Burner. I recommend that Lawbreaker come along with any and all choices, but it's not required. Once the nature of the possession is determined, the player and the GM need to devise a separate set of Beliefs and Instincts for the possessing spirit. When these come into conflict with the character's own BITs, a versus Will test must be made—the spirit against the character. Use the appropriate Will from the stat blocks in the Monster Burner. Whoever wins the test can enact his Belief or Instinct.
A Possessed person can be exorcised as per the Faith mechanics in the Burning Wheel. Whether or not he wants to be exorcised is another matter. Also, the Possessed character's aura (for Aura Reading) will show the additional trait and the additional set of Beliefs and Instincts.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Power Behind the Throne *Dt* 5 pts
A character with this trait has extended his tendrils of power from his traditional Circles into a new setting. You may add one of the following settings to your Circles—Religious, Noble Court or Noble (or equivalent).

Practical *Char* 1 pt

Practiced Precision *Dt* 2 pts
The match appeared in his hand, and in a tiny blur of motion, his pipe was lit. This character has a trademark act that he has repeated so frequently that it has become a single action—like lighting a pipe with a match. Normally this would cost at least three "actions" in game, but the Practiced Precision trait reduces that cost to one action. Players must decide what "trademark act" their character will practice before the character enters into the game.
Combat-related actions may be Practiced Precision trademarks. They are only reduced by one action, rather than reduced to one action.

Pragmatic Outlook *Char* 1 pt

Predatory *Char* 1 pt

Prince of the Blood *Dt*

Among the Fêa, this Elf is a ruling prince and destined to one day be Etharch. By taking the Prince lifepath, the player is creating a character who is directly related to either the ruling Etharch or his forebears. A Prince of the Blood, though not an Etharch himself, is in line for the Elven crown. This trait adds +1D to the Elf's starting base Circles rating. Prince of the Blood requires the Fêa trait as well.

Restrictions: Elven lifepath trait

Problems *Dt*

If anyone has problems, it's the village idiot. This trait can manifest in two ways. The character can either be maladjusted and unable to perform socially, or he can be mentally handicapped in some way. If social problems are chosen, the character has double aptitude requirements for social skills and +2 Ob to all Will and social skill tests. If mental problems are chosen, the character has double aptitude requirements for all Perception-rooted skills and +2 Ob for all academic, craftsman and artisan skills.

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Profuse Sweat	*Char*	1 pt
Prominent Scar	*Char*	1 pt
Prone to Exaggeration	*Char*	1 pt
Proud	*Char*	1 pt
Psychotic	*Char*	1 pt

Q

Querulous	*Char*	1 pt

Quick-Step *C-O*

Wordbearers must hustle from the Miller to the Brewer, from the Quartermaster to the Khirurgeon, and from the Trader to the Longbeard. This trait acts as a call-on for any Speed test where the Dwarf is hurrying or hustling (including running to escape or maneuvering for a positioning test).

Restrictions: Dwarven lifepath trait

Quick Study *Dt* 3 pts

A character with this trait reduces his Perception aptitude by one.

Quick-Witted *Dt* 4 pts

Quick-Witted reduces hesitation by one action and grants the character +1D to any Rebuttal action in the Duel of Wits.

Quickened Pulse *Dt* 3 pts

There was a moment of electric hesitation between them; their eyes flashed and fenced. But when the assassin lunged it was too late. The thin man was already at his throat. This trait allows the character to round up when factoring Reflexes.

Quiescent *Dt* 2 pts

Buying this trait allows the player to neutralize and remove one required lifepath trait.

Quiet *C-O* 2 pts

Quiet characters walk quietly, talk quietly, eat quietly and often startle their friends with unheralded appearances. This trait can be used as a call-on for Stealthy.

Quirky	*Char*	1 pt

R

Rabble-Rouser *Char* 1 pt

Rainman *Dt* 2 pts
If the character can see it, he can count it. The tallying happens instantaneously and is utterly involuntary. This inevitably leads to the character constantly muttering numbers and figures and driving his companions crazy.

Rapier Wit *Dt*
This character has a lightning-quick mind and a sharp tongue; he never hesitates to offer a cutting remark. In a Duel of Wits, if the player can interject a searing *bon mot* while his opponent is speaking, he gains +2D to his next verbal action. If the action is a versus test—Rebuttal, Obfuscate, or Incite—and the character with the Rapier Wit does not win the test, or if the action is a failed Dismiss, Rapier Wit may not be used again in the duel.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Rare Talent *C-O*
Amazingly, and against all expectations, this Orc is actually talented with his hands and mind. The player may choose one *craftsman or artisan-type skill* for which this trait acts as a call-on. No wonder he was promoted to Gate Forger.
Restrictions: Orc lifepath trait

Rarified *Char* 1 pt

Rash *Char* 1 pt

Rat-Speak *Dt*
Squeak. Squeak, I say! This character has Low Speech for rats and vermin.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Reckless *Char* 1 pt

Recondite *Char* 1 pt

Red Cheeks *Char* 1 pt

Red-Blooded *Char* 1 pt

Reeks of Alcohol *Char* 1 pt

Regal Bearing *Char* 1 pt

Reincarnated *Char* 1 pt

Remarkable Flatulence *Char* 1 pt

Remote *Char* 1 pt

Resigned (to Death) *C-O* 2 pts
This character realizes that he is going to die and has accepted that fact. This trait acts as a call-on for Steel tests in which the character rightly assumes he is going to die—when the cause is hopeless, he's badly wounded, everyone else is dead, etc.

Resigned to Fate *Char* 1 pt

Resolute *Char* 1 pt

Restless *Char* 1 pt

Reviled *Char* 1 pt

Rhetorical *Char* 1 pt

Righteous *Char* 1 pt

Road Weary *Char* 1 pt

Robust *Dt* 3 pts
The player may add one point from his mental pool to his physical pool in character burning. Thereafter Robust acts as a character trait.

Romantic *Char* 1 pt

Rough Hands *Char* 1 pt

Rower *Dt* 2 pts
+1D to Power to motivate an oar-driven seagoing vessel.

Royal Favorite *Char* 1 pt

Ruddy Complexion *Char* 1 pt

Running (Away) *Dt*
Increase the character's stride by one when he's running in fear, surprise or terror—and not necessarily just from a failed Steel test.
Restrictions: Orc lifepath trait

S

Sadistic *Char* 1 pt

Sailor's Oath *Char* 1 pt

Salt of the Earth *Char* 1 pt

Sane *Char* 1 pt

Savage Consequences *Char*
The Named pays back any slight or injury two-fold. You wound him, he cripples you. You best half his clan, he slaughters two of your cities.
Restrictions: Orc lifepath trait

Savvy C-O
Captains are self-reliant and clever men—when they want something, they know how to ask so people listen. This is a call-on for Circles.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Scapegoat *Char* 1 pt

Scarred *Char* 1 pt

Scavenger C-O 2 pts
This is a call-on for the Scavenging skill.

Scheming *Dt* 2 pts
Scheming characters are always plotting and planning. It doesn't even have to be for their benefit or gain—sometimes they just plot and plan to see their cleverness at work. Combined with Murderous or Ambitious, this can be a very problematic trait. Scheming also allows the player to add +1D to his body of argument in a Duel of Wits.

Screaming *Char* 1 pt

Sea Legs C-O 2 pts
Call-on for Speed when aboard a ship. Also, this character doesn't get seasick.

Seasoned *Char* 1 pt

Second Sight *Dt* 4 pts
With Second Sight, the character can peer vaguely into the shifting shadows of the spirit world. It is a powerful, multifaceted ability. Through an act of concentration, he can push through the veil of reality to see the other side. This costs one action in Fight but otherwise can be done at will. The Second Sight grants the ability to discern if something is magical or not. Test Perception: high power magic (major miracles, Mjölnir, the Burning Wheel, Ob 10 spells, Strength 10 spirits, etc.), Ob 1; moderately-powered magic (minor miracles, Ob 5 spells, a *risen* corpse, the Belt of Flying, Dragon Slaying

Sword, Spirit Weapons, Strength 5 spirits), Ob 5; low power magic (Red Spectacles, Bless/Curse, Ob 2 spells, Strength 2 spirits etc.), Ob 8. If successful, the character knows the item, person or effect is magical. He doesn't know exactly what the magic does. Second Sight is one of the abilities that allows a character to use the Aura Reading skill. See the Aura Reading skill in this book for obstacles. Second Sight allows the mage to FoRK Aura Reading into Sorcery or Summoning (so long as he is using his sight). Second Sight turns Perception into Observation for detecting Stealthy or Inconspicuous characters. Any physical actions taken (running, jumping, fighting, etc.) while using Second Sight suffer a +1 Ob penalty.

Secretive *Char* 1 pt

Secretly Worships the Black Sea God *Char* 1 pt

Seemingly Concerned *Char* 1 pt

Seen It All *Char* 1 pt

Seen Not Heard *Char* 1 pt

Self-Confident *Char* 1 pt

Self-Satisfied *Char* 1 pt

Sense of Direction *C-O* 2 pts

Characters with this trait have a harder time getting lost because they always have a general idea which direction they came from. Sense of Direction can be called on to aid Orienteering and Navigation. This trait is not universal: a farmer has no Sense of Direction at sea; a ranger has no Sense of Direction underground; a sailor doesn't do so well in the mountains.

Sense of Distance *Dt*

With an Ob 2 Perception test (plus disadvantages for weather and light), this character can correctly guess any distance.

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Sense of Entitlement *Char* 1 pt

Servant of the Citadel *Dt*

The Althing is the most powerful Elven citizen barring the Lord Protector. He is the ruler of a vast and ancient Citadel—heir to a tradition stretching back nearly to the dawn of time. Such as it is, the Althing tends to take his job pretty seriously. If the player takes it seriously and adds both a Belief and an Instinct relating to the welfare of his city—and these are relevant to the game at hand—the character gets a 2D reputation and 2D major affiliation in and around the citadel. These may be improved with additional resource point allocations.

Restrictions: Elven lifepath trait

Shaped from Earth and Stone *Dt*

In the first age, when the earth was barren, Dwarves were created by the One Who Most Dearly Loves to Shape with His Hands. Dwarves were born beneath the earth and it was long before they came forth into the light of the sun. In these dark ages, they grew familiar with the ores, veins, rocks and sediments that were their sky, ocean and earth. Attendant with their appreciation of raw materials is a love of building and shaping. Due to their heritage, above all else it is craftsmanship and

the beauty of that which is wrought by skill that Dwarves love most. And since they were Born Under Earth, metals, stones and gems are their first love—far beyond cloth, wood or leather. This trait also gives the Dwarves access to natural magic abilities—open-ended/special skills for most of their crafts and arts.
Restrictions: Dwarven common trait

Sharp Dresser *Char* 1 pt

Shouting *Char* 1 pt

Show No Fear *C-O* 4 pts
This is a call-on for Steel when confronted or against impossible odds.

Shrewd *Char* 1 pt

Sick *Char* 1 pt

Sickly *Dt* 2 pts
This character is prone to illness. Permanently subtract -1D of Health. Cap Health at B5.

Sight of the Bat *Dt* 6 pts
This is a scary supernatural trait. It negates all penalties for darkness or dim light.

Silent Hatred *Char* 1 pt

Singed *Char* 1 pt

Sixth Sense *Dt* 3 pts
This character gets a twinge in his brain (or eye, or heart, or stomach) when a life-threatening event or phenomenon is near. This trait counts as a very special Instinct: *Always get a twinge in the head from impending danger.* It's broad and breaks all the rules for Instincts, but that's why it's a trait.

At any point where the player is about to send his character into a life-threatening situation, the GM is obligated to warn him, "You've got a bad feeling about this." The precise nature of the danger is not revealed. Also, it is the player's responsibility to remind the GM that he has Sixth Sense. If ever there is a dispute surrounding its use, apply the guidelines for using Instincts to the trait.

Skeptical *Char* 1 pt

Skin of an Apple *Char* 1 pt

Skinny *Char* 1 pt

Slave to Fate *Char*
The Rune Caster is plagued with fleeting visions of what could be and what might have been. He sees his own fate intertwined with all the other doomed strands; there is no other path to walk but the one he is on.
Restrictions: Dwarven lifepath trait

Slayer *Dt* 4 pts
This Elf has been marked as a slayer of his kin. In his past, his rage overcame his Grief and compassion, and he slew one of his own. Now he is marked as enemy and hunted by his own people. +1D to starting Grief, a 2D infamous reputation (all Elven people) as a Slayer, and +1D to Intimidate/Silent Fury any Elf.
Restrictions: Elves only, special trait

Sleek *Char* 1 pt

Sleep-Talker *Char* 1 pt

Slippery *Dt* 3 pts
This character is hard to get a hold of—he wriggles and squirms his way out of nearly any grip. This character may use his Speed or Agility rather than Power to escape from and avoid Locks.

Slow *Dt* 2 pts
Slow to react and slow on the uptake, he's not the sharpest knife in the drawer. +1 Ob to all Perception tests and increase base hesitation by one.

Smells Like a Horse *Char* 1 pt

Solipsistic *Char* 1 pt

Somnambulist *Char* 1 pt

Sonorous Voice *C-O* 2 pts
This character's voice sounds sweet and melodious to the ear. So delightful is the sound that it can be used as a call-on for Seduction, Persuasion and Suasion tests.

Spartacus *Dt* 3 pts
This character is a hero among the slaves, outcasts and soldiery. You may add one of the following settings to your Circles: Servitude, Outcast or Professional Soldier.

Spectacular *Char* 1 pt

Spitting *Char* 1 pt

Sprinter *Dt* 4 pts
This trait increases the stride of the character by one. For Orcs and Men, that'd be from 7 to 8. This can grant a substantial bonus to positioning tests, as the character will very likely have the highest stride and gain a bonus die for it.

Squinty *Char* 1 pt

Stalker *Char* 1 pt

Stark Madness *Char*
Drinkers of the Dark are driven to the brink of madness and then shoved over the edge. Embracing the absence of reason and the totality of fear is essential to mastering Hatred and becoming a true Servant.
Restrictions: Orc lifepath trait

Starved *Char* 1 pt

Stealing *C-O/Dt*
Should a player whose character has this trait take a kleptomaniacal Instinct, he may use Stealing as a call-on for Sleight of Hand. If no such Instinct is taken, this character is the first one accused when anything is stolen in the clan.
Restrictions: Orc lifepath trait

Stentorious Voice *C-O/Dt*
Call-on for Conspicuous, Stentorious Debate and Oratory. Characters who have this trait are at a double obstacle penalty for all Singing skill tests.
Restrictions: Dwarven lifepath trait

Stern Demeanor *Char* 1 pt

Stinky *Char* 1 pt

Stoic *Dt* 3 pts
The Stoic character simply does not flinch in the face of danger. Reduce overall hesitation by one.

Stolid *Char* 1 pt

Stone-Faced *Dt*
This trait cancels the effects of the Discerner song and any other trait or special ability that allows the character to be "read." However, it doesn't count against Aura Reading

with the Magesense or Second Sight. It also adds +2D to Falsehood and Gambling.
Restrictions: Dwarven lifepath trait

Strong-Willed *Char* 1 pt

The Story *C-O*
This character is adept at playing to his audience—he's always got the right story on hand to impress them and win them to his side. Call-on for Falsehood.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Stout *Dt*
Dwarves are smaller than Men in stature, but they tend to be a bit thicker around the middle, with attendant broader hands, feet and arms.
Though tough and doughty, Dwarves' stout frame also hinders them slightly. Speed must always be lower than their Power or Forte (whichever is higher), even if this limits advancement. Their stride is 6.
Dwarven nature allows for a Forte maximum of 9 rather than 8 and a Speed maximum of 6 rather than 8.
Restrictions: Dwarven common trait

Strange *Char* 1 pt

Strapping *Char* 1 pt

Street Smart *C-O* 4 pts
This character understands the dangers and customs of city living. This trait may be used as a call-on for Streetwise, City-wise and Circles in the City Dweller Setting. (The pricing is correct for this trait.)

Stubborn *Dt* 3 pts
This trait adds +2D to the character's body of argument in a Duel of Wits that contravenes one of his Beliefs.

Stung Once (Once) *Char* 1 pt

Stupid *Dt* 3 pts
+1 Ob to all social skills and spells affecting and used by this character.

Stutter *Char* 1 pt

Superstitious *Char* 1 pt

Suspicious *Char* 1 pt

Swaggering *Char* 1 pt

Sword of the White Towers *Dt*
Sword Singers are revered among the Elven hosts. Take a 1D affiliation with the Swords of the White Towers—Elven sword singers who have sworn to protect their lands and citadels.
Restrictions: Elven lifepath trait

Sworn Homage *Dt*
The knight must swear homage to his lord, the king. He promises fealty to his lord; to guard his land and fight in wars with armor, horse and sword; to manage his land in good stead, to collect and pay taxes; and generally to obey the law and uphold the peace. The player doesn't have to write in a Belief for this, though it is encouraged. The Sworn

Homage trait indicates the belief is internalized. This trait grants a 1D affiliation in the nobility. Should the character fail to perform his duties, then he may be stripped of rank. This compounds with other noble affiliations like Mark of Privilege.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Sworn to Protect *Dt*
If the Lord Protector's player uses one of his Beliefs to describe his vow to defend the citadel/wilderlands/ royalty, and such a vow is relevant to the current game, the Lord Protector receives a 2D reputation (he's the boss) and a 2D major affiliation within the Protectors. These may be further improved upon with resource points.
Restrictions: Elven lifepath trait

Sworn to the Lord Protector *Dt*
The Captain has sworn a vow to loyally serve his lord. This trait grants a free relationship with the Lord Protector provided the player writes a Belief about him. If the player decides not to write a Belief or the Belief changes, the trait becomes a character trait. If he later writes a Belief about the Lord Protector, the trait is reactivated.
Restrictions: Elven lifepath trait

Sworn to the Order *Dt*
A knight of a holy military order may add an additional (fourth) Belief dictated by his particular Order (poverty, chastity, protection of pilgrims, etc.). Sworn to the Order replaces the Noblesse Oblige trait and Belief.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

T

Taciturn *Char* 1 pt

Tainted Legacy *Dt* 5 pts
This character's ancestors have mated with something unholy and have tainted the bloodline forever: a curse that will never be lifted, a twisted yoke to bear. the player may choose one trait from a dæmon, vampyr, satyr, red cap, raksha, ophidia, koscista-noga, giant or dragon (which are found in the Monster Burner). Tainted Legacy also incurs an Inconspicuous penalty. The character always counts as having the "different race" penalty (+2 Ob)—his taint has certain odd outward signs.

Tall Tale Teller *Dt*
This character has seen it all. At least he says he has. His yarn is always wilder, larger and more incredible than his companions' stories. The player may add +1D to Persuasion, Seduction, Interrogation or Falsehood tests so long as he can come up with an appropriate tall tale.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Taste for Man-Flesh *Char* 1 pt

Tasting the Lash *Dt*
When another character cracks a whip across his back and gives an order, the player must obey the orders (so long as the orders aren't to "stick that knife in your throat" or something similar). He can be driven to attack, to flee, to drop his weapon, fall to his knees or just plain row the boat.

This trait does not allow a reroll, it merely forces an action. Thus it can be used to cow opponents or send your reluctant underlings into the fray.

Restrictions: Orcish and Mannish lifepath trait

Temperamental *Char* 1 pt

Tenacious *Dt* 4 pts

A Tenacious character has a one-track mind. Once he is fixed on something he keeps after it. If a Tenacious character's body of argument in a Duel of Wits is reduced to zero or below, this trait puts it back up to one die. This allows the character to play out the next volley (or more if the die isn't lost). Once that one die is reduced, however, the argument is over.

Tenuous *Char* 1 pt

Thick Skin *Dt* 1 pt

The character is unaffected by insults, nettling and nagging. Incite actions in the Duel of Wits are +2 Ob against this character.

Thousand-Yard Stare *Dt* 2 pts

This character has seen so much death, shock, inhumanity and horror that nothing phases him anymore. This trait reduces hesitation by three against pain, violence and intimidation but increases hesitation by two against surprise and Wonderment-type spell effects. This character may not Run and Scream. Characters with this trait tend to be quiet, remote and cold. They also never seem to look into your eyes. Rather, their gaze is always fixed a thousand yards behind you.

Thug *Char* 1 pt

Thunderous Snoring *Char* 1 pt

Tidy Aspect *Char* 1 pt

Even under the most adverse conditions, the character's clothes and appearance are neat and clean.

Timid *Char* 1 pt

Tinkerer *C-O*

This trait acts as a call-on for Mending or Black-Metal Artifice when trying to cobble together something new or weird.

Restrictions: Dwarven lifepath trait

Tolerant *Char* 1 pt

Tongueless *Dt* 2 pts

This character's tongue has been cut out, either as an act of criminal malice, as cruel punishment or as religious service. The character may not properly speak. This is a pretty big handicap in a game where all communication is done via speech.

Tonsured *Dt*

This character has symbolically shaved his head as part of the ritual of initiation into his religious order. The Tonsured trait grants a 1D *affiliation with a monastic or* religious order. Also, the character is authorized to officiate the rituals of his order, whatever the players and GM decide they are. This compounds with other reputations and affiliations in the church.

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Touch of Ages *Dt* 7 pts

This trait allows the character to "read" objects through her touch. A successful Perception test will give impressions present in the object: strong emotion, arcana and even age. Type/name of object, Ob 1. Age of object, Ob 2. Length

of time the object has been in its current location, Ob 3. Recent events surrounding the object that left physical evidence, Ob 4. Recent events that left no physical mark, Ob 5. Past events that left their mark, Ob 6. Past events that left no mark, Ob 7.

Touch of the Devil *Dt/C-O* 7 pts

This is an odd but powerful trait. With the Touch of the Devil, a character's hands become sensitive and finely tuned instruments. If, when making a Perception test, the player can describe how his character is using his hands to sense the disturbance/noise, Perception counts as Gray shade. Detecting soft foot steps on a stone floor, impressions on a piece of paper, cracks in a vial or the breeze through a keyhole, for example. If used in a versus test against Stealthy, Touch of the Devil counts as Observation. Surgery, Pottery, Carpentry, Sewing, Whitesmithing, Etching, Engraving, Carving, Lapidary and Jewelcraft may root from Gray Perception. Whenever a character with this trait is wounded, he suffers an additional automatic superficial wound. These count toward the "three superficial wounds" limit and toward incapacitation.

Touch of Madness *Char* 1 pt

Tough *Dt* 2 pts

A tough character may round up when determining his mortal wound.

Tough as Nails *Dt* 6 pts

Pain and suffering are a picnic. This character is not required to make Steel tests for pain, exhaustion or deprivation. He just clambers to his feet and keeps going. If kicked back to the ground, he crawls.

Troll Speak *Dt*

Orc Troll Lords learn to communicate with Trolls, not only in the Vile Language, but in the brute's own language as well. This character may understand spoken Trollish and speak it himself.

Restrictions: Orc lifepath trait

Trusting *Char* 1 pt

Trustworthy *Char* 1 pt

Turgid *Char* 1 pt

U

Ugly *Char* 1 pt

Ugly Reputation *Dt*

The Ship's Doctor has something of an unpleasant reputation with the sailors. This trait grants a 1D infamous reputation among sailors and seafarers. "Oh, you were a 'doctor.'"

Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Unbeliever *Char* 1 pt

Unbreakable *Dt* 5 pts

This Elf is possessed of an unbreakable spirit. Grief seems to have no effect on him whatsoever. Subtract -2D from starting Grief. In addition, all Grief tests are taken at -1 Ob.

Restrictions: Elves only, special trait

Unctuous *Dt* 3 pts
The personality of this character is so caustic that he is distasteful and difficult to be around. +2 Ob to the character's Persuasion, Seduction, Haggling and Oratory tests. It does not affect Command or even Intimidation.

Underbite *Char* 1 pt

Underpaid *Char* 1 pt

Uneasy *Char* 1 pt

Unheeded *C-O*
No one notices this character. Call-on for Inconspicuous.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Unlucky *Dt* 1 pts
The Unlucky character has a hard life. Whenever the player makes an arbitrary decision about something in game, it's always wrong. If, for example, the character comes to a fork in the road, and the player just shrugs, "I dunno. I go left." It's the wrong direction—doesn't matter what the "truth" is, that's his luck. Unlucky may be bought off in game. If the player utterly succeeds at a test at a crucial moment—all successes, glowing results, victory, etc.—the player may opt to turn the success into a dismal, catastrophic and hopefully hilarious failure. Doing so immediately earns the player a fate point and persona point. Unlucky is then removed from his trait list.

Unrelenting Hatred *Char* 1 pt

Unrelenting Savagery *Dt*
Head-Takers earn their position through their ability to master their blood lust. When in battle, or when committing murder, this character may FoRK his Hatred into any weapon skill or Power test. However, the player who controls this character must take his actions too far. When he uses this trait he must describe an act so horrid and vile it causes the other players to flinch and grimace. Failure to evoke the savage nature of the Head-Taker is cause for loss of the trait in the Trait Vote. Invoking this trait also counts as a routine test for Hatred.

Unsavory Madman *Char* 1 pt

Urbane *Char* 1 pt

V

Venal *Char* 1 pt

Veneer of Obedience *Char* 1 pt

Vested *Dt*
Priests become vested in their Order. In Western/Christian canon, the vestment is called a surplice. It is the choir dress, the vestment for processions, the official priestly dress of the lower clergy, the vestment worn by the priest in administering sacraments and when giving blessings. The right to wear a surplice shows that the character is at the very least a member of the lower clergy. This trait grants a 1D affiliation with the church and its faithful parishioners. This compounds with other reputations and affiliations in the church.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Vigor of Youth *Dt* 5 pts

Though old, this character possesses the strength and vitality of his youth. If starting the game older than 40 years, a character with this trait uses these stat pools: 7 mental and 14 physical.

Restrictions: Men only, special trait

Vile Language *Char*

Orcs speak a special language of shadow, chill and blight. They share this tongue with corrupt vermin, shades, Great Wolves, Trolls, and certain Great Spiders.

Restrictions: Orc common trait

Virtuous *Dt* 3 pts

This Dwarf is virtuous, honorable and restrained. He may add +2D to his Steel when making tests against Greed. He also may reduce his starting Greed by -1D.

Restrictions: Dwarves only, special trait

Vitriolic *Char* 1 pt

Vocal *Char* 1 pt

Voice in the Crowd *Char* 1 pt

Void Embrace *Dt* 4 pts

Drinkers of the Dark are immersed in shivering pools of arcane energies. They are taught to imbibe, inhale and exhale the Dark Blood and survive. This trait transforms the Orc's Hatred into a vehicle for enormous power. However, Orcs are unable to tap their innate power without Rituals. Void Embrace is an emotional attribute with its own shade and exponent.

It is used to resist tax, sustain spells (rather than Will), and is used to maintain a spell after a distraction. Any Orc may be taught the Rituals, but without Void Embrace, he cannot resist the tax and thus will be permanently crippled or worse. Void Embrace can also be used to enhance certain rolls by spending a persona point to tap the Void. See the Void Embrace section of the Orc chapter for more details. If Void Embrace is advanced to exponent 10, the Orc goes mad or commits suicide. Either way, he's removed from play.

Restrictions: Orc characters only

W

Wary *Char* 1 pt

Watchful *Char* 1 pt

Weak-Willed *Dt* 2 pts

This character is pliable like tapioca. In a Duel of Wits, this character can only ever use the Not a Big Deal rules for his body of argument.

Weather Sense *Dt* 2 pts

"My joints ache; storm's coming." With a twinge in the knee, a stiffening of the joints, back pain or headaches, Weather Sense clues a character into impending weather. Unless the GM plays with strict house weather rules—I don't—the Weather Sense in essence gives the player the ability to dictate the weather. Why else would a player pick this trait unless he were concerned about having the right weather for something or other? Anyway, I say let him predict it based on the Perception obstacles below—and let his predictions come true.

Useless vague predictions ("Rain soon"), Ob 1. Accurate weather, Ob 2. Approximate location, Ob 3. Approximate time, Ob 4. Accurate location, Ob 4. Accurate time, Ob 5. Each obstacle tier includes all the other effects under it.

Weight of the World *Char* 1 pt

Weird *Char* 1 pt

Well Appointed *Char* 1 pt

Well Dressed *Char* 1 pt

Where There's a Whip, There's a Way *Dt/C-O*

Orcs live by the rule of the lash. With a whip in hand and lads to lash, an Orc taskmaster feels that nothing can stop him! An Orc with this trait and a whip can force another—any character—to reroll a failed test once per session as if he had a call-on for this particular test. This effect is automatic so long as the player is bellowing and flailing around like he has a whip in his hand (and his character actually has a whip). This is how Orcs make slaves of their captives. A few sessions of accepting the whip will no doubt earn you the Tasting the Lash trait in the vote.

Restrictions: Orc lifepath trait

White-Gold Wielder *Char* 1 pt

Wise Aphorisms *C-O*

Elves are full of pertinent old sayings. Use this a call-on for Persuasion, Oratory, Interrogation or Seduction if the player can come up with some appropriately sagacious dialogue to throw into play at the right moment.

Restrictions: Elven lifepath trait

Wolf's Snout *Dt* 5 pts

The character's sense of smell and space are so intertwined that he gets +1D to Perception. The trait also lets the player use his Perception as an Observation skill (without the bonus die).

Wolverine *Dt/C-O* 5 pts

Characters with the Wolverine trait recover faster than others from wounds and illness. May be used as a call-on for Health for recovery from a wound or illness.

Wolverine can also be used to buy off a botched recovery test. If used in this way, the test is considered passed, but the trait is lost in the bargain.

World Weary *Dt* 1 pt

Certain Elves feel a weariness creep into their bones. The constant trial and tribulation that marks the passing of years begins to drag them down. Reduce hesitation by one but increase Grief by one.

Restrictions: Elves only, special trait

Worldly *Char* 1 pt

X, Y, Z

Xenophobic *Char* 1 pt

You Should Know Better than That! *Char* 1 pt

Your Eminence *Char*

Viscounts and Counts are referred to as "Your Eminence." This trait indicates that the character was born into this rank. He need not have ever been a count himself, but it is his birthright to be addressed as one.

A character must have this trait in order to take the Count or Viscount lifepaths.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Your Grace *Char*

Dukes and Bishops bear the appellation of Your Grace. To fail to refer to them by title is to lose one's head or the sanctity of one's mortal soul. The character need not have experienced the actual duties of a Duke or Bishop, but the rank is his to flaunt. This trait is required for the Duke or Bishop lifepaths.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Your Lordship *Char*

This trait simply indicates that the character was born into lower nobility. He need not ever have led the life of a lord. Indeed, to do so would require the Lord lifepath. However, his birthright is that of a lord, and he is accustomed to being addressed as "Your Lordship." Failure to do so is an insult. A character must have the Your Lordship trait in order to take the Lord lifepath.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

Yowling *Char* 1 pt

Zealot *Dt*

The Zealot is a fervent believer. He has taken hold of a doctrine and made it his own. The Zealot trait allows the player to add an additional (fourth) Belief to his character. The Belief must relate to the doctrine of his cult or sect.
Restrictions: Mannish lifepath trait

the Rim of the Wheel

Therefore he willed that the hearts of Man should seek beyond the world and have no rest therein; but they should have a virtue to shape their life, amid the powers and chances of the world...

—JRR Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*

Wheel Meets Road

The preceding two sections of the book outlined the core die rolling mechanics and game playing philosophies. These concepts are necessary to playing Burning Wheel.

What follows are a set of tighter, more focused and more detailed systems. These flesh out the broad mechanics described previously—specific systems that demonstrate how to manipulate the dice pools to represent a variety of situations that will likely arise in your games. They aren't 100% necessary to game play, but they will make the experience of playing this game more rich, fluid and dramatic.

The Rim of the Wheel

Attached to the hub via the spokes, the rim rotates 'round and moves the entire apparatus forward:

Steel

This section discusses how to use the Steel attribute to simulate fear, surprise and hesitation in a character.

Resources

This is an abstract wealth mechanic for Burning Wheel. This section details lifestyle, income, purchasing power, depleted finances, monetary rewards, financial boons and haggling.

Relationships and Circles

These mechanics describe how to use Relationships, Circles, affiliations and reputations in play. They kick the door wide open for running intense and deep social games.

The Duel of Wits

The Duel of Wits mechanic provides players with a structure to build a strategy for arguments and win debates via cleverness, tactics and luck.

Range and Cover

Using mechanics similar to the Duel of Wits, Range and Cover describes how to run a conflict between two knife-throwing assassins or a gang of murderous hunters stalking stragglers of a defeated army.

Fight

Expanding on the maneuvers of Range and Cover, martial conflict is broken down into a blow-by-blow scene where players must choose the best strategy for their characters. It's intense, chaotic and brutal!

Weapons

I've got the knife in him, now what? This section details how one character hits another character and how weapons do damage.

Armor and Shields

From leather jerkins and arming jacks to full plate mail, this section describes how armor protects a character from those horrible weapons described above.

Injury and Recovery

Should a character become injured, this section describes how that injury affects his abilities and how he can recover from it.

Sorcery

This section describes the basic die mechanics for the Sorcery skill. These are the main spoken and written schools of magic in Burning Wheel. Sorcery is discussed as the prime example of spell casting. Summoning and Enchanting are detailed in the Magic Burner.

Natural Magic

Dwarves, Elves, Orcs and a few other character stocks have access to a special form of magic known as natural magic. This section briefly discusses the basic mechanics for such magic. Full details on the various natural magics are described in the appropriate sections in the Character Burner.

Emotional Magic

Emotional magic grants characters access to great power, but at a price. Men possess the most powerful emotional magic in the form of Faith, but other cultures have their own manifestations: Grief, Greed and Hatred, to name a few.

Movement and Pursuit

How far do I go when I run and scream? A basic discussion on how characters walk, jog and sprint in Burning Wheel—for the detail-monger in all of us.

Riding and Mounted Combat

No fantasy medieval roleplaying game would be complete without mechanics for riding horses, mounted combat and pursuing your enemies in breathtaking chases!

Materials

Should you ever need to knock down a door or shoot through a wall, the Materials section has what you need.

Heroic and Supernatural

The Heroic and Supernatural chapter shows that not only do characters with these shades get lower difficulty numbers, they get a host of other cool perks too.

Pick and Choose

I strongly recommend *not* reading the next section straight through. These sections are not the same kind of instructional texts as the first two sections. In The Rim of the Wheel, I discuss detailed mechanics for resolution of particular situations in play.

What's best, I think, is to start playing the game slowly. Use the basic resolution mechanics discussed previously to get the game going. Then, as you approach each session, set up conflicts to introduce one or two of the following mechanics. For example, the first session might involve gathering men and materials using Resources and Circles. The next might involve a confrontation with the corrupt ministers on the marble steps of the courthouse—a Duel of Wits! The following session then blooms into full-blown rioting resolved with the Range and Cover mechanics. The climax is a brawl between the surviving royal guard and the players using Fight.

Steel

Steel is an attribute that represents the character's nerves. It is tested when the character is startled or shocked. The results of the test then tell us whether the character flinches, or whether he steels his nerves and carries on.

When a Steel test is failed, the player loses control of the character momentarily—just as the character loses control of his faculties. The player chooses how the character loses it, but after that the character is out of action for a few in-game seconds as he freaks out.

A GM can call for a Steel test under four conditions: When the character is confronted with surprise, fear, pain or wonderment.

Surprise, Fear and Pain

Surprise

Whenever a character is surprised or startled—by an ambush, an unexpected loud noise, or even a shocking secret laid bare—he must make a Steel test. Surprise Steel tests are used when the situation demands that the character react instantly and without hesitation. If this isn't the case, let the players react as they will, and don't worry about a Steel test until it really counts. Surprise also factors heavily into the Fight rules and is discussed a bit more there.

Fear

Fear is similar to surprise. Whenever the GM deems the characters encounter something terrifying or utterly disconcerting, a Steel test is called for to determine how the character reacts.

Pain

When a character is badly injured, he must make a Steel test to see if he flinches from the pain and momentarily hesitates, or if he just sucks it up and carries on. When to take a Steel test from pain is discussed in the Injury and Recovery section.

Wonderment

When a character is awed by a magical effect, the GM can call for a Steel test.

10 Minus Will = Hesitation

The base obstacle for a Steel test is 10 minus the character's Will exponent. This tells us, roughly, how long this particular character will hesitate when surprised, shocked or in pain. Each point of hesitation is a heartbeat of real time.

With a Will of B4, a character has a hesitation of 6.

Steel is tested to overcome that hesitation.

Steel Tests

GMs call for Steel tests. When testing Steel, the attribute acts like any other ability in the game. Steel tests are open-ended. There are no FoRKs for Steel, and *very* rarely any help.

Being at the business end of a loaded gun, spooky sounds at night, seeing subtle evidence of magic at work, witnessing childbirth, witnessing technology beyond your ken, witnessing gore, and your first life and death struggle.

Steel Successes Reduce Hesitation

Every success generated on a Steel test reduces the character's hesitation by one—reducing the actual time spent hesitating. If the player rolls successes equal to his character's hesitation, then the character doesn't even blink. He steels his nerves and soldiers on.

If Aaron's character has a 6 hesitation and a B5 Steel, he rolls five dice. Each success knocks off one point of hesitation. If he gets four successes, he reduces his hesitation from six to two.

Failed Steel Tests

When a player fails to get a number of successes equal to his hesitation, he's failed the Steel test. When this happens, the character stops what he is doing and loses it for a moment—for as many heartbeats as the margin of failure. During those achingly long heartbeats he may do one of four things:

Stand and Drool

The character may gasp and stand his ground, his mouth hanging open. If he was wounded, he clutches himself in pain. If surprised, he blinks and tries to register what's happened. If afraid, his mind shuts down momentarily, overwhelmed.

Characters standing and drooling may not defend themselves in any way, nor may they yell or call for help. They are utterly (if momentarily) stunned.

Fall Prone and Beg for Mercy
A character may immediately drop to the ground and prostrate himself or curl into a ball. This reaction is particularly useful when caught unawares by bow shots or explosions—the character can drop behind cover.

If a character falls prone in a fight, it is assumed that he is begging for mercy from his opponent. He drops his weapon and pleads for his life. Of course, his opponent's reaction is his own decision.

Run Screaming
If you opt to run screaming the character must flee at top speed away from the source of terror. If he does so, he must scream. (Whatever his idiom, he must vocalize his dismay.)

Run Screaming is not a tactical retreat. The character cares about one thing only—getting away as fast as possible. Caution and wisdom are left behind. They drop what they're holding. Putting distance between himself and his adversary might just save his life—dignity be damned!

Characters who run and scream move directly away from the object of their terror, heedless of pitfalls or obstacles. They are solely focused on getting away from that, whatever it is.

Swoon
A player may have his character pitch backwards in a swoon. The character is dazed and utterly unaware of his surroundings while in a swoon. Players who opt to have their character swoon may choose how and when their character is roused. The character hesitates for at least as many heartbeats as the margin of failure, and for as long as the player wants after that.

Steel-Test Causing Effects

Effects that cause Steel tests—Intimidation, Aura of Fear, The Fear spell, Forge Masks, etc.—can only be used on a character once per scene at the most. Thus, you can't blast a poor beastie with The Fear over and over again to keep him immobile. Once you cause the test, you have to abide by the results of the test. Steel tests from pain and wounds are the exception. You test every time you lose a die from a wound.

Steel Test Advantages and Disadvantages

Conditions for Steel Advantages

Being startled by something mundane	+2D
Feeling safe in a group of friends/allies	+1D

Conditions for Steel Disadvantages

Being shot at	+1 Ob
Being directly affected by magic	+1 Ob
Witnessing a person killed	+1 Ob
Small explosions	+2 Ob
Committing murder	+2 Ob
Explosions	+3 Ob
Witnessing pronounced sorcery at play	+3 Ob
Seeing a ghost	+3 Ob
Seeing the living dead	+4 Ob
Volcanic eruptions, cataclysm	+4 Ob
Seeing horrible magic at work	+4 Ob
Being in the presence of the supernatural	+5 Ob

The increased obstacle increases the character's hesitation. The more scary and frightening, the longer a character is likely to hesitate.

Steel Outside of Conflict

If a Steel test is failed outside of combat, the number of actions missed doesn't always matter. In general, a hesitating character should miss the next test while his enemies (and hopefully friends) can make a test without him interfering.

Steel and Advancement

Steel functions like a skill for the purposes of advancement.

Situational Conditions for Steel Tests for Advancement Only

In addition to advancement via tests, GMs can award tests for advancement based on conditions that arose in play. Players compare the situational obstacle to their current exponent and record the level of difficulty for purposes of advancement. No rolls are made in this case.

If an actual Steel test is made—dice are rolled, hesitation is overcome—these conditions should not be used. They are only used to represent the overall nerves of a larger situation.

Some possible situations and their equivalent obstacles for advancement:

Obstacle 1 Steel Tests

News of a relative dying. Weird, low-grade supernatural phenomena.

Obstacle 2 Steel Tests

Witnessing violence (a fight, a beating, a stabbing, a hit and run accident). Being in the presence of a character with the Dreaded trait. Heated sports competition. Witnessing childbirth.

Obstacle 3 Steel Tests

Witnessing real bloodshed and gore (a murder, a bloody accident). Being badly beaten up. Being in a brawl or fist fight or riot. Bearing a child.

Obstacle 4 Steel Tests

Fighting a duel to the death. Participating in a knightly tourney. Being stabbed. Shooting another character. Witnessing a friend or relative killed. Surviving a natural disaster. Encountering anthropomorphic monsters.

Obstacle 5 Steel Tests

Participating in a mass battle. Being shot with a bow, crossbow or gun. Stabbing someone to death. Murder in cold blood. Witnessing or being a party to spirit activity.

Obstacle 6 Steel Tests

Being mortally wounded (and surviving). Living under starvation conditions.

Obstacle 7 Steel Tests
Encountering intelligent, sentient, non-humanoid monstrous creatures.

Obstacle 8 Steel Tests
Sustained artillery barrages. Encountering the living dead.

Obstacle 9 Steel Tests
The presence of demons and angels. Witnessing or suffering under sorcerous, cataclysmic destruction.

Obstacle 10 Steel Tests
Being in the presence of the divine.

Steel in Brief

- Hesitation is 10 minus Will.
- Test Steel against hesitation (which is the obstacle of the test) when confronted with surprise, fear or pain.
- Steel test successes are subtracted from hesitation. If hesitation is not reduced to zero, the character must choose one reaction: Stand and Drool, Fall Prone and Beg for Mercy, Swoon or Run Screaming. If hesitation is reduced to zero, the character does not hesitate and may continue what he was doing.

Resources

Every character possesses a measure of material wealth, influence and status within their society. This has nothing to do with intelligence or physical ability—wealth can be inherited, earned daily, striven for abjectly or be absent. It depends on the background of the character and how resource points were allocated in character burning.

Counting Pennies

This system is not designed to simulate the simple exchange of money for goods. The Resources ability represents the character's overall material wealth and potential influence, and also his ability to borrow, barter, trade and lend. It is very much an abstraction of all of the factors involved. Interpreting the process by counting pennies is actively working against the mechanic.

Resources Basics

Resources is tested whenever a player wishes to make a purchase or acquisition. Such an acquisition can be something to eat, a dueling sword, land, investing in a company or purchasing a rank in the nobility.

When the Resources ability is tested, it represents the character spending a little cash, but also calling on his friends and family for loans or references, checking his accounts and plying his reputation into the bargain.

Sample Resources Obstacles

A list of sample obstacles for Resources tests follows. The examples are taken from items in the various Resources lists and are not all available for purchase. It's not a store, it's reference.

Ob 1— Food for the day. Lodging for the night. Clothing, shoes, and other simple, mundane material goods. Day laborer's wages.

Ob 2— Rent for a small flat or farmer's cabin. A sumptuous meal. A fancy pair of shoes. A mule. Gambeson. Poor quality arms. Poor quality reinforced leather. Pot helm. Poor quality spangenhelm. Passage on a ship. Traveling gear. Servant's wages. Tools for peasant, seafaring and musical skills.

Ob 3— Rent for a townhouse or a country villa. Run of the mill arms. Run of the mill bow. A letter of marque. Pay for household staff or a single professional assistant. Popular books. Riding or draft horse. A small cart. Exotic spices. Quilted or leather barding. A knight's wages. Tools for academic and craftsman skills. Run of the mill light mail. Spangenhelm. Poor quality bascinet.

Ob 4— Jewelry, exotic fabrics, rare antiques and books. A palfrey or rouncy. Run of the mill heavy mail. Sallet. A run of the mill long or great bow. A crossbow. A large baggage wagon, small barge or sturdy 18-man longboat. Rare herbs and minerals. A trained falcon. Plated leather or lamellar barding. Pay and support for a bodyguard or trainer. Tools for medicinal and artist skills.

Ob 5— Turcoman warhorse. Run of the mill plated mail. Superior quality arms. Elven Tome of Lore. Chainmail barding. A lord's or captain's wages. Tools for special skills. Great helm.

Ob 6— Destrier. Run of the mill full plate. Dwarven arms. Elven bow. Plated mail barding. A donation to the court for consideration of baronial rank. Tools for sorcerous skills.

Ob 7— Warhorse of renown. Donation to the royal court to be considered for a viscountyship. Full plate barding. Dwarven shield.

Ob 8— Industrial equipment: a printing press, a forge, a small cargo ship. Dwarven forge mask.

Ob 9— A large cargo ship. A legendary warhorse. Elven plated mail.

Ob 10— A warship. Building a castle. Dwarven mail.

Gee, Those Resource Obstacles are Mighty High

Yes, they are. In order to make most high end purchases, even the wealthy will need to secure loans or procure gifts from their dependents. See the cash, loans and funds rules for more on how to do that.

Testing Resources

Acquiring material goods, hiring bodyguards, pages, scribes and couriers or booking passage on a ship or caravan all call for a Resources test.

Resources vs Obstacle

Test Resources against the obstacle as if it were any other skill or stat. Helping, artha and advancement rules apply. Wounds don't reduce Resources dice.

If the player meets or exceeds the obstacle, he has acquired what he stated he was after. If he fails the test, his Resources are taxed and he either can't find or can't afford what he was looking for.

FoRKs

Players may not FoRK their skills into Resources.

Linked Tests and Resources

Players may make linked tests using appropriate skills like Wises or Accounting in order to get a bonus die to a Resources test. See the Scoring a Deal section of this chapter.

Helping

Characters may help one another with Resources. If the testing player is taxed, then everyone involved on the test is taxed.

By the way, both characters do not have to be part of the scene when Resources helping dice are used.

A merchant could give his friend a bank note to aid in his purchase of rare books. The friend tests his Resources when ready, with the aid of the Merchant's helping die. Meanwhile, the merchant has gone about his business.

Home and Away

Resources are not universal. They reflect the power of the character on his home turf. Trading in foreign markets, with foreign currency or just being without your books and materials, can put characters at a serious disadvantage.

Being away from the wellspring of a character's Resources incurs a +1 Ob disadvantage. Higher obstacles can be applied if your character is really on the other side of the world.

Before play begins each player should discuss the "home turf" of his Resources with the GM. This is very much up to

the parameters of your campaign, but generally the higher the exponent, the broader the reach. A peasant's Resources might extend into the town and countryside, while a Count's Resources likely extend across many provinces. Still, use common sense. Exponent 1 and 2 Resources are fairly portable—you carry what you own—while Resources tied into a factory or a local temple are not.

Buying in Bulk

If characters want to buy in bulk, raise the obstacle by one or two and multiply the material numbers by x10 or even x100. It's an abstract system, after all.

Finding the Right People

Use Circles to find people to hire. Use Resources to pay them. Circles is described in the next chapter, Relationships, Circles, reputations and affiliations.

Saying Yes to Resources

Say Yes to Resources tests if a purchase is clearly within the character's means and there is nothing at stake—failure is an annoyance or inconvenience rather than a dramatic twist.

Failed Resources Tests: Tax

A failed Resources test is an interesting animal. In general, the player does not achieve his intent (just like a normal failed test) but his Resources is temporarily reduced due to the expenditure. We call this *tax*. Tax represents a loss of fluidity in the character's assets. Perhaps some cash was expended, but more likely favors were called or resources tapped that simply can't be called on again for a while.

Taxed Dice

On a routine test, the character loses one die. If it was a difficult test, he loses two dice. If it was a challenging test, the character's Resources is reduced by the margin of failure.

The Gift of Kindness

On a failed roll, the GM may choose to grant the player whatever it was he was after on his Resources test. If this option is chosen, the character's Resources is still Taxed, but the player achieves the intent of his roll. The Gift of Kindness may be considered by the GM on a case-by-case basis.

> ***Cutting Your Losses***
> If a player fails a Resources test and the GM offers him the Gift of Kindness option, the player can decline the offer and opt to cut his losses. If he does so, he does *not* find what he was looking for, and his character's Resources are Taxed by only 1D.

Depleting Resources

If a character's effective Resources ever drop to exponent 0 due to tax, his Resources exponent is depleted by 1D. Unlike regular *taxed* dice, depleted Resources may only be recouped through advancement. You cannot get a job to recover depleted Resources.

If your Resources exponent is 0 you may not test it unless you use cash, loan or fund dice. If your Resources exponent is 0 you may not help. You may give your friends cash or funds if you have it already.

Scoring a Deal

Appropriate wises can be used to aid Resources in the game. When a player wishes to track down an item or service not commonly available, test an appropriate wise to see if the character finds it in a timely manner or finds a good deal.

Set the obstacle for the test: Ob 1 tests are for commonly known information in the Wise's area; Ob 3 for uncommon or hard to find details; Ob 5 for something only an insider would know; Ob 6 plus for obscure stuff.

This test abides by the standard mechanics for Linked tests: failing incurs an obstacle penalty, meeting is no penalty or bonus, exceeding grants +1D.

Haggling

Haggling is the norm in most medieval cultures. Players are free to haggle over Resources obstacles. To do so, test Haggling vs Haggling. FoRK as appropriate. If the buyer wins, he may reduce the price of the item in question by one obstacle.

Moqtada greets the shipwright in a friendly manner and eases his way into the bargaining process. His player rolls his G5 Haggling skill and turns up three successes. The GM rolls the merchant's B5 Haggling and comes up with only one success. The price of the ship is reduced from Ob 9 to Ob 8.

Haggling as Duel of Wits

In place of the simplified Haggling rules described above, the players can also use the Duel of Wits mechanics. The statement of purpose should resolve around the quality of the item or its apparent value. Compromises should involve a haggled price or perhaps extra fees thrown into the bargain. Use the Haggling skill for Point and Rebuttal in this Duel of Wits. Other actions use the skills listed. See the Duel of Wits chapter for more information.

Bidding

Another method of setting a price (or a Resources obstacle) is via an auction or open bidding. In this case, interested buyers make offers (in the form of a Resources obstacle) to the seller. No skill test is necessary here, but players should consider carefully. They are setting their own obstacles!

Each bid may only raise the price by one obstacle point. Remember, an obstacle point does represent a substantial amount of money and influence in this game.

Lifestyles

Resources are about more than just making a single purchase once in a while. They also represent the lifestyle of the character. You must pay for your lifestyle, however. The piper comes calling in what we call a Maintenance Cycle.

Maintenance Cycle and Lifestyle

The duration of a Resources cycle is determined by the players and GM at the outset of the game. It reflects the interval of time between all your hard work and when you get paid for it.

At the outset of your game, determine what the general Resources cycle will be. The length of most medieval resources cycles would be half a year or a year. Monthly cycles are more amenable to the modern mind, and might reflect urban life better. Or you could set the cycle on the same schedule as the royal tax collectors. If they come once a month, test against this obstacle once a month. If they come twice a year, then

twice a year it is. This choice is going to affect the pace and feel of play—the shorter intervals lend a more frenetic and "modern" feel; longer cycles lend the game a seasonal, languid and desperate mood.

Lifestyle Maintenance Obstacles

Listed below are the obstacles for maintaining various medieval lifestyles—the appropriate living quarters, the clothes, the food, etc. Once every cycle, each player must test his Resources against his lifestyle obstacle. Determine his obstacle based on how he has been living the assets that he maintains.

Ob 1— Peasant day laborer; no home, property or possessions to speak of.

Ob 2— Working poor; small family, a rented cottage. Poor knight or adventurer; you and your horse on the road.

Ob 3— Maintaining a family in the city. Maintaining a small business; a cobbler's shop. Maintaining oneself as a knight; horse, armor, weapons and one squire or second.

Ob 4— Lord's manor. Wealthy peasant or modest merchant. Medium-sized business; a small blacksmith.

Ob 5— Maintenance of a fortress and surrounds. Wealthy merchant. Large business: a brewer or tanner. A specialty business like an engraver, gunsmith or silversmith. A poor court.

Ob 6— Maintenance for a wealthy baronial court.

Ob 7— Viscount's court. Industry like a shipping concern, vineyards or a foundry.

Ob 8— Count's court. A small castle. Big industry like a mining operation.

Ob 9— Ducal court. A large castle, estate or plantation.

Ob 10— Opulent royal court. A palace.

Ob 11— *Fantastic Wealth!*

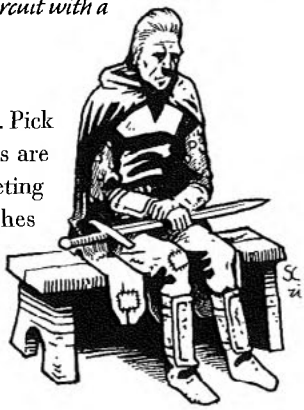
Recovering Resources

Unlike the body, Resources don't recover on their own. They must be actively replenished.

To rejuvenate his depleted reserves, the character has got to do some work. The player describes how he is going about earning cash, closing

deals and refunding his accounts. Such behavior is typically related to the character's lifestyle and maintenance obligations, and must be tied into one (or more) of the character's skills.

In order to replenish his reserves, a poor knight has got to ride circuit with a few caravans. Pay's good, but the work is boring.



Get a Job!

Establish what job/occupation the character is undertaking. Pick a skill to represent this. Test the skill; appropriate FoRKs are allowed. The obstacle is 1 plus the number of dice lost. Meeting this obstacle recovers 1D. Margin of success replenishes an additional die per success. The time for the test is equal to the current Resources cycle (agreed upon in the Lifestyle section). Time for the test can be reduced by 10% per extra success spent on working quickly and not on reducing tax. This test counts toward the advancement of the job skill.

Our poor knight could test a number of skills to represent his job—wises of the local area (or bandits), Riding (if it was a real sleeper) or even Sword if it was a hazardous tour. If the character is -1D to Resources, the obstacle of the test is 2. If the Resources cycle is one month, the knight is busy for about a month. If the player passes the test, then the die is recovered and the Resources are back up to their starting level.

Advancing Resources

As the cliché goes: You must spend money to make money. Resources advance like a skill—the more you push yourself and test your Resources, the more you stand to gain. However (there's always a however, isn't there?), like Perception and Faith, only successful Resources tests count toward advancement. Therefore, one successful Resources test will push a character from B0 to B1 Resources.

Tax only temporarily reduces the Resources exponent. Make sure to note the current actual Resources exponent and use that for advancement purposes. If you're taxed and you advance, increase your maximum exponent and taxed exponent by one.

Cash, Goods, Titles and Loans

There are four ways to gain advantage dice for your Resources.

Cash on Hand

Cash is the most liquid of Resources, but dries up as quickly as water. If ever a player's character is given a substantial amount of cash—either as a reward or payment—then he gains bonus dice to his Resources.

Dice from cash on hand may only be used for one test. After the test, the cash is considered spent and the advantage dice are lost. Multi-dice bonuses may be spent, one or two at a time, across multiple rolls.

Generating Cash

You can produce cash from your Resources. An Ob 2 test generates 1D of cash, Ob 4 for 2D, Ob 6 for 3D, Ob 8 for 4D and Ob 10 for 5D. You can use the cash for your own tests, you can give it to your friends and enemies.

Funds: Property, Accounts, Goods and Caches

Occasionally, a character will come into a substantial infusion of wealth: a *large* sum of cash, property, valuable antiques or even bulk quantities of salable goods. These durable boons provide a bonus to Resources—from one to ten dice. They are not depleted like cash. However, if a character is Taxed due to a failed Resources test, the dice must be removed from the fund first and are lost permanently. They cannot be regained via the *Get a Job!* process described above.

Creating Funds

You can create a fund using your Resources. Describe the form of this durable wealth—income from property, interest on accounts, a dragon's hoard, etc. Test Resources at an obstacle double the amount of the fund's dice plus 1.

Using Funds

You may only use one fund per Resources test.

Title

Certain conditions that arise in game might benefit a character's Resources: a promotion in rank, popularity or status, for example. An improvement in station can increase Resources by 1D. The GM is the sole arbiter of this increase and it should be given with the utmost care. If a character is already wealthy, the rise in station might mean little or nothing at all. But for a character who starts poor, the same rise can be quite beneficial. More often than not, a rise in station just means more bills! His lifestyle maintenance obstacle also goes up.

Thormund begins the game as an adventuring squire. Due to a particularly heroic feat, he is elevated to the rank of lord (skipping past knight altogether!).

The GM jumps his Resources exponent from B3 to B4. So long as he retains his rank, he keeps the bonus.

Loans

You can give cash and funds to other players or NPCs in the form of loans. The loaned dice behave as their source would—cash or funds.

Debt

A loaning player can opt to grant a debt-free loan, or one that must be paid back (with interest). The size of the debt is equal to the *obstacle of the loaning test.* If it must be paid back, raise the obstacle of the indebted character's next lifestyle test by one. A successful test reduces the debt by one. Test once each cycle until the debt is reduced to zero. If a player should fail a lifestyle Resources test and be taxed, the debt is extended another cycle.

If the lifestyle maintenance test is passed, it counts as a linked test for the *loaning character's* Resources—no bonus if the obstacle is merely met, but add +1D to the next Resources test if the debtor repaid with extra successes.

Currency

In order to facilitate immersion into the setting, it is important for the players and GM to develop and maintain a monetary language. Haggling for "resource points" is boring and dull. Fighting over talents, sous, funds, florins and pounds is cool!

It's best to set your currencies at the start of the game. Here's an example to help get you started:

Item	Rps	Res Ob	Laborer Wages	Knight Wages	RW Cost
Mule	4	Ob 2	~1 month	~less than a day	2-6 sous
Arms	5	Ob 3	~2 months	~1 day	7 sous
Horse	5	Ob 3	~3 months	~2 days	6-12 sous
Spices	5	Ob 3	~8 months	~5 days	20-40 sous
Books	5	Ob 3	~3 months	~2 days	6-12 sous
Tools	9	Ob 4	~6 months	~5 days	20-30 *sous*
Poison	6	Ob 4	~7 months	~1-3 months	5-34 livres
Plated Mail	20	Ob 5	~20 years	~1-6 months	10-60 livres
SQ Arms	20	Ob 5	~20 years	~3-8 months	30-80 livres
Destrier	20	Ob 6	~22 years	~3-10 months	30-100 livres

In order to create a scale, I've provided the currency from 13-14th century England and France, compiled and extrapolated from *Fief* by Lisa J. Steele published by Cumberland Games and *A Distant Mirror* by

Barbara Tuchman published by Ballantine Books. Following that are the average wages for various occupations from the period. Monetary units from 13-14th century England and France: 1 livre = 20 sous = 240 denier (a denier is a penny).

Wages per month: laborer, carter, reaper, groom, guard: 60 denier/month. Carpenter: 90 denier/month. Shepherd, swineherd: 100 denier/month. Stonecutter, mason: 615 denier/month or 2 sous per month. Foot soldier: 60 denier/month. Archer: 90 denier/month. Sergeant: 15 sous/month. Squire: 30 sous/month. Knight: 210 sous/month. Duke: 360 sous/month.

Resources in Brief

- You can use Wises to track down material goods, Circles to track down services.
- The GM sets the price (Resources obstacle) based on the listed examples.
- If applicable, players may haggle over the price or use a Duel of Wits to set a price.
- Test Resources. No FoRKs, but linked tests and helping dice are okay.
- Success means you got what you were after. Failure indicates you were taxed and lose Resources dice.
- If taxed, you must Get a Job! to recover Resources. Test skill for agreed upon time—Ob 1 + number of dice lost. Success means one die is recovered, extra successes recover additional dice. Failure means the remaining Taxed dice carry over into and through the next maintenance cycle.
- Only successful Resources tests count toward advancement.
- Loans: Test Resources to give dice to other players. Obstacle is double the number of dice being loaned. Add +1 Ob for each test beyond the first which the dice are viable for. Loaned dice are not helping dice and therefore the loaning character is not taxed every time his deadbeat friend fails a Resources test.
- At the end of a Resources cycle, the GM may call upon players to test Resources in order to maintain their lifestyles. Obstacles are listed. Remember to add any debt as an obstacle penalty to the lifestyle roll.

Relationships, Circles, Affiliations and Reputations

Relationships

When burning a character, a player in Burning Wheel designs relationships for his character that are important to him. Relationships exist in order to define important personae not controlled by the players. Traditionally, they're called NPCs by the GM and players. During play, they are used by the players and GM to get into and out of trouble, provide detail and depth to the background, and create conflicts.

If one of your relationships is your wife in the village, the GM is supposed to use this to create trouble in play. If you're hunting a vampyr, of course it's your wife who is his victim! Suddenly, you're swept up in a plot of terror and intrigue.

Meeting and consulting with a relationship character doesn't require a test. By spending resources points on establishing relationships with these characters, it is assumed that all the details of contact and communication are worked out ahead of time. So long as it is reasonably feasible in the game context, a player can have his character visit his relationship contacts freely and often.

Usually, tests are unnecessary with relationships. Information flows between the two characters via roleplay. However, social skill tests may be used to extract information from these characters when they have something they are trying to hide or withhold from the player character.

If the tradesman is reluctant to help because it might get him into trouble with his peers, a Persuasion test is in order.

A Duel of Wits may be used when player characters find themselves seriously at odds with their contacts.

Player Characters Are Not Relationships

Other player characters are never considered relationships. Player characters are assumed to know and, in some way, be tied to each other at the outset of the game.

Circles

Circles is an ability and mechanic that allows players to abstract the process of discovering who their characters know in the game world.

The Circles ability is rolled when a player wants his character to find another non-player character from whom he can get information or favors. This character need not exist at all before a player asks for a roll to find him. No endless list of minor NPCs is needed. Just roll the dice to see who you can track down: Reveal spies in your ranks, tap informers, discover traitors in your enemies' household, uncover officials who harbor hidden secrets, find the character who knows what you need to know!

The information in question still needs to be extracted from these NPCs via roleplay, social skill tests and possibly even a Duel of Wits, but the character's existence and the player's knowledge of him is determined by a Circles test.

Pete: "We've got to get into the temple somehow!"

Thor: "We do? My mother's sister was an Abbess. Let me write a letter."

GM-Luke: "She was?"

Thor: "I dunno, can I roll my Circles? I was Born Noble."

GM-Luke: "Sure, but that's pretty obscure...."

Circles Exponent

Each character has a Circles attribute. It represents their professional, casual, familial and informal spheres of influence. The Circles ability begins the game rooted from Will. Affiliations and reputation add bonus dice. See the Character Burner for more on starting your Circles rating.

Scope of the Circles

A character's lifepaths define the framework of his Circles. Knights know other knights and squires. Priests know other clergy. Artisans are familiar with other masons and architects. If the player can narrate such a contact into the story of his lifepaths, he can test his Circles ability to see if he can track him down. Even character types indirectly tied to the lifepath—perhaps other lifepaths in the setting—can be rolled for.

A peasant hunter might know a peddler, and even his grandfather, but he can't and won't know the king, sea captains or high-ranking religious officials. These characters are beyond the reach of a Circles test for a player whose character has all Peasant Setting lifepaths.

Dro's cult priest is trying to track down an assassin. He uses his Cultist lifepath to test his Circles: "I think that maybe one of these cultists might be a poisoner and supplying the assassin." Poisoner and Cultist are two lifepaths in the same setting, Outcast. A perfect use of Circles.

The player's narration creates the circumstance for a Circles test. A successful Circles test indicates the character has found someone who fits his description.

Use the Lifepaths and Settings

When bringing in NPCs, use the lifepaths and settings as a guide. You can bring in someone who shares the same lifepath with you. You can bring in NPCs from your setting—so long as it makes sense.

I Don't Know You

If you don't share a lifepath or a setting with an NPC, then you cannot use Circles to bring him into play.

Scope of Reputations and Affiliations

In order to use a reputation or affiliation in a Circles test, you must have an appropriate circle to start from—you must have a lifepath which is related to the NPC you're looking for. If you don't, you can't test or help with your Circles test.

Reputation dice can only be used in the realm for which they are defined. A local reputation can't be used when traveling abroad, or anywhere beyond the next town over, for example. Affiliation bonus dice can only be applied within the affiliation or functions directly related to it.

Circles Obstacles

It is an Ob 1 Circles test to find a person involved in a trade or occupation, in his proper place, and of reasonable, appropriate disposition for his location/occupation: a bored shopkeeper in town, a fastidious clerk in the city, or a grim carpenter in the village. The exact parameters of those descriptors must be appropriate to your own game and setting, of course.

Expanding or narrowing these definitions modifies the obstacle for the Circles test. Add the following modifiers where appropriate—you don't have to add them all at once—to the base Ob 1:

Occupation

Who are you looking for? Name a role like, "an armorer," or "a scribe."

Broad occupation/profession, or same lifepath	—
Uncommon occupation, or within the same setting	+2 Ob
Specific occupation, an occupation rare or unique within your setting	+3 Ob

For characters with a City Dweller or Villager setting lifepath, any non-criminal City Dweller or Village lifepath falls under the broad occupation definition. Criminal elements could be considered uncommon occupations. A master burglar would be considered a specific occupation.

Station

Same station, rank or social class	—
Lower rank, station or class	+1 Ob
Higher rank, station or class	+2 Ob
Highest station or rank in the setting	+3 Ob

A sergeant looking for another sergeant has no obstacle penalty. A sergeant looking for a captain has a +2 Ob penalty. That same sergeant looking for someone among the camp followers and prostitutes has a +1 Ob penalty to his Circles test.

Disposition and Character Knowledge

You can add a qualification to the character you're looking for: he can be skilled in damascening, the best in town, loyal or have special knowledge.

Disposition or knowledge common to the circle	—
Disposition/knowledge different from members of circle	+1-2 Ob
A specific disposition or detailed/rare knowledge	+3 Ob

If you're part of a cell of insurrectionists, it's going to be easy for you to find people who want to assassinate the Civil Governor. If you're a minister

charged with investigating rebels, you're at a +2 Ob to find rebels with your Circles. Looking for rebels specifically bent on assassination would be +3 Ob.

Time and Place

Sometimes, it's not entirely believable that a character could call on a contact in a particular situation. For example, summoning a doctor in the middle of the night, a clergyman in the red-light district or finding a rescuer in the crowd at your execution. If that's the case, use these penalties.

Doesn't Matter	—
Unusual for this character	+1-2 Ob
Right here and now in the middle of trouble	+3 Ob

Testing Circles

When you're ready to test Circles to locate a prospective contact, you must state your intent and how you're undertaking the task—your character must write letters, ask around court, buy a round of drinks at the local merc bar, and so on. You must describe who you're looking for and where. You can also specify loyalty and knowledge for the NPC.

Circles+Rep+Aff Against Obstacle

Grab dice equal to your Circles. Add advantage dice for one applicable reputation and one appropriate affiliation. Add +1D advantage if you've named this NPC from a previous Circles test.

The base obstacle for a Circles test is 1. Add appropriate modifiers from the list above. Not all of the modifiers are applicable all the time; use only the penalties appropriate to the situation.

The result determines whether or not you've found who you're looking for and if that person is disposed toward or against you. The test isn't to see if such a character exists in the world, but to see if you can find him when you need him or if he's favorable to your cause.

Are you playing a noble looking to bump into a high-ranking noble any old time and not concerned with where? Ob 4 (Base 1 plus +3 Ob for highest rank). Looking to track down the duke's huntsman who knows something about strange goings on? Ob 6. (Ob 1 + specific occupation and different disposition.)

Help, FoRKs and Circles

Characters who share similar Circles may help one another for Circles tests. If you do not have similar Circles, you may not help. You may never FoRK into Circles. Circles is not a skill. FoRKs are only for skills.

Wises

Appropriate Wises can be used as linked tests for Circles.

Searching for a Reputation

If a character with a reputation is being sought, the seeker may use the character's reputation to his own advantage to find friends, associates and acquaintances of the person in question. Add the reputation as advantage to the Circles test. Reputations can make it a lot easier to be found.

Naming the Unknown

Once a Circles test is made to find a given character, the player may grant his new contact a legitimate and appropriate name. Doing so gives a +1D advantage to tracking down that contact with Circles in the future. The name must be written down by the player for the bonus to be earned. When trying to find a contact named in a previous Circles test, the player may search for named contacts without invoking any additional specificity penalties (i.e. it's the same obstacle as it was the first time).

In order to be able to name a contact, a player must either exceed the obstacle of the test, or fail the test outright and have the Enmity Clause invoked. If he merely meets the obstacle, the contact is just one of momentary convenience passing back into the shadow of obscurity after the deed is done. If he exceeds the obstacle, enough of an impression was made so that names are exchanged and remembered. If a Circles test is failed, and the GM invokes the Enmity Clause, then the contact can be named as a new enemy for the character! The GM must name and keep enemies.

Enmity Clause

When a player searches for a contact via his Circles, but fails the roll, the GM has the option to call on the Enmity Clause. Rather than finding someone who is favorably disposed to the character, the player finds he has an enemy out there! Someone who feels insulted, mocked, intimidated, cheated or scorned by the character.

Such characters are obviously unwilling to freely give information and favors to someone they perceive as their enemy! Any standard social skill tests used against them are +2 Ob. In a Duel of Wits, such enemies gain +4D to their body of argument roll.

Thor: "Are there any Noble families out of favor in Fürstenburg?"

GM-Luke: "Roll your Noble-wise. 2 successes? Yeah, the Ordog."

Thor: "I want to test my Circles—I'm born Noble—I paged with an Ordog as boy. I think they have a villa here...."

GM-Luke: "Okay, that's an Ob 5 test. Ya failed? Oh he's here, but he happens to be looking for you, too. Seems you won his horse from him in a bad bet."

Thor: "Oh. Heh. I did, didn't I? ::gulp::"

Inimical characters do not have to be outright enemies. Neither do they have to be the character the player was seeking. They can pretend to work with the players and help them. Of course, the information that they feed can be full of lies and half-truths. They can even attempt extortion and blackmail. That's half the fun of having an enemy!

Enemies to Friends, Friends to Enemies

The disposition of a contact can change. If, through play, the players manage to convince their enemies that they are on their side, that's cool. That's what the game is about. Of course, the opposite is true as well: Friends and favorably disposed contacts might turn out to be enemies. That +2 Ob penalty when dealing with your former friends can be back-breaking!

Affiliations

This section describes the rules for gaining new affiliations, advancing affiliations and losing affiliations.

Buying into New Affiliations

During the course of the game, a situation may arise where a character has the opportunity to affiliate himself with a new organization—a mercenary might get knighted, a noble might join the clergy, or a sorcerer might gather together bands of thugs to do his bidding.

If such a situation arises, make a Circles test using the appropriate Occupation/Station/Disposition obstacles. If successful, the player may invest in this new opportunity in order to gain further dice when using his Circles. Purchasing a 1D affiliation is an Ob 3 test Resources test, a 2D affiliation is Ob 5, 3D is Ob 7. If the affiliation is to an organization that demands expensive clothes or fine foods, like low nobility or

mercantile affiliations, add +1 Ob. If the affiliation is of high noble or ecclesiastical rank, or excessively wealthy, +2 Ob. If the affiliation is obscure, extremely elite or secretive (like a sorcerer's cabal), +3 Ob.

All affiliations, no matter how lowly, require this Resources test in order to be able to write the new dice on the character sheet. There are parties to throw, clothes to purchase, bribes to pay, gifts to give, dues to account for and other various and sundry expenses; this is all reflected in the initial Resources obstacles.

It is worth noting that an affiliation cannot be bought like bread. An in-game situation must arise in which the character is invited to join.

Advancing in Rank

Advancing an affiliation follows the mechanics for buying into a new affiliation. However, buying up within his own organization grants the character +2D advantage dice to the roll.

Exiled and Stripped of Rank

When involving his affiliations in a Circles test, a character may be exiled or stripped of rank in play and lose some or all of his influence.

If a player uses his Circles plus his affiliation dice to track down a contact and, in the course of dealing with that contact, fails a crucial social skill test or loses an important Duel of Wits, so that he actually causes harm or damage to his affiliation, then he loses 1D to his affiliation. This is completely conditional to play and arbitrated by the GM.

A player may opt to cut his ties with an affiliation at any time. The player may reduce the amount of dice as he sees fit to reflect his new status.

Lost affiliation dice can be regained if the character makes good on his failures, or rejoins his former crew. This must be accompanied by a successful Duel of Wits or successful series of social skill tests.

Reputations

This heading contains rules for gaining new reputations, advancing existing reputations, using infamous reputations, reducing reputations and losing reputations.

New Reputations

At the end of a scenario, players and GM may nominate characters for new reputations. This process is exactly the same as nominating and voting for a new trait for a character. Players nominate the character

based on how they think he was played—how the controlling player's roleplaying came across at the table.

The breadth of the reputation is dependant on the events that spawned it. A massive battle which saves the crown? 3D. A brilliant day at court? 2D. Settle a dispute between two feuding families? 1D.

Advancing in Reputation

In addition to earning new reputations, existing ones may be enhanced by a player's performance in game. At the end of the campaign/scenario, existing reputations can be nominated for increase. They may only increase +1D per scenario. Advancement is handled exactly like a trait vote—nominate, lobby, vote. Unanimous decision gets it. Reputations never advance beyond 3D.

Infamous and Hostile Reputations

If a character has an infamous or hostile reputation to a certain Circle—if he's a deserter from the navy, or an apostate from the church—then he gains +1 Ob per die of his reputation to Circles tests within that group. When testing with an infamous reputation you gain the advantage dice from the reputation and suffer the obstacle penalty at the same time.

Fallen Stars

Reputations may be lost, damaged or changed through play. The conditions are similar to losing an affiliation: If a player uses his reputation dice in a Circles test that gets him into a very bad situation—loses a Duel of Wits, loses a battle, bankrupts a Resources test, etc—he loses a die from the appropriate reputation.

Infamy

Rather than be forced into obscurity, a player may opt to have his character live in infamy. When threatened with losing a die to his reputation, the player may instead escalate the situation: He may end the meeting with a flurry of insults, curses and threats; he may challenge his accusers to a duel; or he may have his opponents coldly murdered in the night—any flagrant, socially unacceptable transgression will do. Undertaking this escalation changes the nature of his reputation and the Circles it influences. The player must rewrite his reputation including this new complication:

Our Head of the Household has lost a Duel of Wits with his uncle. He's been denounced as a criminal and blight to the family. The player lost the Duel of Wits, and thus his character's reputation is under threat. Rather than lose

a die, our player uses his Circles to find some thugs whom he hires to murder his uncle and aunt.

His former reputation is now reduced by one die, but that die is placed in an appropriate infamous reputation. Every time a player reduces his former reputation and exults in his infamy, he may increase this reputation. The GM may also opt to have relationships and named contacts turn into enemies.

The player rewrites his Reputation: From, "2D: Rules his house with a stern hand," to "1D Infamous: Ambitious, cold-hearted killer. 1D: Rules his house with a stern hand."

A Change of Identity

A player may also choose to change his identity and leave his reputation behind. All benefits of his former life are lost while under his new guise. Should he take up his old mantle, his former reputation is regained at one less die than its previous exponent.

Building Relationships with Circles

This is an optional rule, but we recommend it. Each character has a relationship aptitude equal to 10 minus his Circles exponent. If his *reputation* is favorable to the prospective contact, then subtract its dice from the aptitude. If the reputation is distasteful to the prospective contact, then reputation dice are *added* to the relationship aptitude.

Each time a new contact is tapped and named via a Circles test, the player may attempt to build a relationship with him. If you successfully tap a contact within your Circles a number of times equal to the relationship aptitude, the contact moves from your Circles into your relationships. You no longer need to test in order to find him or even to get information from him.

Circles and Advancement

Circles advances like a skill. Make sure to include the bonus dice from names, affiliations and reputations when counting the total dice versus the obstacle for advancement tests.

A character with a B2 Circles, a local reputation (1D) and a minor affiliation with the army (1D), makes an Ob 3 Circles test to track down some mercenaries willing to help out with a side job. Four dice vs Ob 3 is a difficult test. If the player had opted not to use his reputation and affiliation, it would have been two dice vs Ob 3 (a challenging test).

Circles in Brief

- Relationships are contacts bought in character burning or earned in play to whom the character has reasonably free access and strong ties. Players do not need to roll to contact them.
- Circles are peripheral characters, professional acquaintances, social friendships and familial relations, available as contacts. The range of Circles is determined by the lifepaths of the character.
- Test the Circles ability (plus an appropriate affiliation and reputation) to locate a person from whom you want information or services. The more obscure the contact, or the higher or lower the station of the contact, the higher the obstacle.
- If the player rolls more successes than the obstacle, he may name his contact. Doing so gives him a +1D advantage to his Circles test when trying to locate the contact again. The name must be written down and remembered by the player for the bonus to be earned.
- If a Circles test is failed, the GM may invoke the Enmity Clause.

Duel of Wits

The Dwarven prince appeared bored. The Elven ambassador droned on about the need for this agreement, yet he just couldn't see the point. Finally, the good seneschal stepped forward: "Allow me, sire." The prince nodded; now there would be some entertainment!

The Elven delegate frowned as the seneschal turned to address both prince and court. Neatly dressed and subtly ostentatious, the Dwarf loudly and clearly stated his case: The clan had always done right by themselves; there was no need to become embroiled in the internecine politics of outsiders.

Stung by the veiled insult, the Elven ambassador's nostrils flared. His voice swelled and carried clearly over the hall as he once again made his argument: Unless all stood together, all would fall. This was not a problem for one province or one clan, but all of the disparate crowns of the land.

Inwardly, the prince smiled This was going to be a good fight!

Wits, acumen and elocution are to the world of business, politics and religion what swords, fire and agility are to the world of war. In high-stakes political negotiations, a character might find himself caught so his only possible escape is to cut his way free with his tongue!

The Duel of Wits is an extended conflict mechanic used to resolve debate and argument in the game (and at the table). Characters use verbal attacks and maneuvers to overpower and destroy their opponents' arguments and make themselves appear, to all witnesses, correct.

The purpose in such a duel is not to reveal the truth, but to put forth your argument in the best light while dismantling your opponent's position—and to convince the audience that you have struck on the truth while your opponent is mired in half-formed thought and naive delusions.

Argument not Mind Control

The Duel of Wits is designed to simulate debate and argument: A speaker convinces an audience of the merits of his point. It is not designed to change a single character's or player's opinion. While this is possible, it is not the goal.

Think of it as something similar to a performance mechanic. Two performers hit the stage, competing for the audience's attention. One might be more skilled than the other but lack presence or fail to appeal to the audience's low taste. At the end of the performance, the audience is applauding the crass clown, while the virtuoso violinist is sulking in the corner. Neither of the performing characters' opinions has been changed by the event, but the audience thinks the clown is the cat's meow—because, for them, his performance was better.

Though the Duel of Wits cannot make a character like or believe anything, it can force him to agree to something—even if only for the time being.

In the previous example, the Dwarven seneschal and the Elven ambassador are about to argue whether or not it is right to go to war at this time. Should the Elf win, he would convince the prince and the court that now is the time. The Seneschal would obviously still disagree. However, he would have been bested in this verbal sparring match and must look for another opportunity to state his case. If the character loses this extended conflict, all of the rules for failure and Let it Ride apply.

Dueling Skills

Rather than fighting with axes and spears, a Duel of Wits is fought with words. Thus, your main battle skills are: Coarse Persuasion, Oratory, Rhetoric, Persuasion, Interrogation, Religious Diatribe or Stentorious Debate. Etiquette, Falsehood, Ugly Truth, Seduction, Soothing Platitudes, Conspicuous, Command and Intimidation are used in support roles.

Statement of Purpose

To begin a Duel of Wits, there must be two sides willing to defend their disparate positions. Each side clearly and succinctly states its case. This is called the statement of purpose.

You should arrive at this juncture after roleplaying and getting a feel for the situation. If you don't know what you want from a Duel of Wits, don't start one. Keep roleplaying until you want something. Once you do, state your case.

State Your Case

Each player briefly describes his point and why he is right. State your cases in an orderly fashion. Once you've stated your case, write it out.

The clan has always done right by itself; there is no need to become embroiled in the internecine politics of outsiders.

Unless all stand together, all will fall. This is not a problem for one province or one clan, but all of the disparate crowns of the land.

Agree to the Terms

Both sides must then agree to the terms of this debate before continuing. This is essentially a metagame condition. "If I win, you'll do *X*. If you win, I'll do *Y*." Each player states his terms and agrees to abide by them. Keep the demands reasonable and achievable. Break larger issues up into smaller arguments and span them across multiple duels. A war isn't won in a single clash of arms, nor is a court case won with a single battle of words. The point here is to get the argument into the mechanics so it can be resolved fairly. There's nothing worse than two hours of pointless player vs player argument. Bring arguments to the table, set the terms, roll the dice and move on.

If the Dwarven seneschal wins, the clan will stay out of Elven politics—including this war. It's a rather brutal statement of purpose, actually.

If the Elven ambassador wins, the Dwarves will stand with the Elves and the other crowns against this problem.

Walking Away

A player can never be forced to engage in a duel. If he wishes, he may always walk away from a challenge—refusing to debate the point. This is a valid method of preserving the sanctity of one's pride and one's argument, but it may allow your opponent to reign unchecked and control the outcome of the situation. Note, though, if a player chooses to walk away, he must shut up. No more talking about it with him!

The Body of Argument

Rather than shed blood and break bones, we undermine points and damage egos in the Duel of Wits. The body of argument represents the strength of your position at the start of the debate.

Body of Argument

Once the cases have been made clear, each player tests his skill. Add any successes from the skill test to the character's Will exponent. This total is the body of argument for this duel. Note this total.

Body of Argument Skills

Only Coarse Persuasion, Interrogation, Oratory, Persuasion, Poisonous Platitudes, Rhetoric or Stentorious Debate may be rolled for the body of argument test.

Unskilled Body of Argument

If you don't have one of these skills, test unskilled using Will. Two successes equals one point of body of argument.

When presenting his argument, a diplomat with a B5 Oratory rolls three successes and adds that to his Will of B4. His body of argument is 7 for this duel.

The purpose of the Duel of Wits is to reduce your opponent's body of argument to zero dice through use of clever strategy and outright attack.

Big Deal

If the GM judges the debate to be very important and deserving of some lengthy discussion, he may set the bodies of argument higher. Instead of rolling, add the Will exponent to the skill exponent.

Not a Big Deal

If for some reason two players are debating a minor point and desire quick resolution, use only the Will exponent as the body of argument.

Traits

There are many traits which affect the Duel of Wits. Be sure to consult any trait descriptions before the duel begins and add bonuses where and when applicable.

The Duel

In a Duel of Wits, players plan their strategies a few moves in advance—they build a hand of actions in order to outwit and overpower their opponent's feeble arguments.

Elven Ambassador's Actions

Volley 1	Volley 2	Volley 3
Verbal Attack Actions	**Verbal Attack Actions**	**Verbal Attack Actions**
[X] Point	[ ] Point	[ ] Point
[ ] Dismiss	[ ] Dismiss	[X] Dismiss
Verbal Defense Actions	**Verbal Defense Actions**	**Verbal Defense Actions**
[ ] Avoid	[ ] Avoid	[ ] Avoid
[ ] Obfuscate	[X] Obfuscate	[ ] Obfuscate
[ ] Rebuttal	[ ] Rebuttal	[ ] Rebuttal
Special Verbal Actions	**Special Verbal Actions**	**Special Verbal Actions**
[ ] Feint	[ ] Feint	[ ] Feint
[ ] Incite	[ ] Incite	[ ] Incite
Magic Actions	**Magic Actions**	**Magic Actions**
[ ] Cast Spell	[ ] Cast Spell	[ ] Cast Spell
[ ] Command Spirit	[ ] Command Spirit	[ ] Command Spirit
[ ] Drop Spell	[ ] Drop Spell	[ ] Drop Spell
[ ] Sing, Howl, Pray	[ ] Sing, Howl, Pray	[ ] Sing, Howl, Pray
Hesitation Actions	**Hesitation Actions**	**Hesitation Actions**
[ ] Fall Prone	[ ] Fall Prone	[ ] Fall Prone
[ ] Run Screaming	[ ] Run Screaming	[ ] Run Screaming
[ ] Stand & Drool	[ ] Stand & Drool	[ ] Stand & Drool
[ ] Swoon	[ ] Swoon	[ ] Swoon

Verbal Exchange

In Burning Wheel, we call our "round" the *exchange*. Each player plans three verbal actions for the exchange and writes them down in secret. We call this "scripting." Each action and the opponent's opposing reaction is contained in a smaller time segment called a *volley*. Players take one action per volley. Their actions are then played against one another.

I choose the following: "Volley 1: Point, Volley 2: Obfuscate, Volley 3: Dismiss. My opponent chooses: "Volley 1: Rebuttal, Volley 2: Point, Volley 3: Feint." In volley 1, we'll play my Point against his Rebuttal. In volley 2, I will try to protect myself from his Point with an Obfuscate. In volley 3, my Dismiss will crush his Feint.

Volley to Volley

Once the actions for the exchange are scripted, the GM calls for each volley of actions to be revealed, one at a time. "First volley!" he says. Each action is spoken and resolved before moving on: The actions for volley 1 are resolved before moving to volley 2; volley 2 is resolved and then volley 3 is revealed.

Dwarven Seneschal's Actions

Volley 1	Volley 2	Volley 3
Verbal Attack Actions	**Verbal Attack Actions**	**Verbal Attack Actions**
☐ Point	☒ Point	☐ Point
☐ Dismiss	☐ Dismiss	☐ Dismiss
Verbal Defense Actions	**Verbal Defense Actions**	**Verbal Defense Actions**
☐ Avoid	☐ Avoid	☐ Avoid
☐ Obfuscate	☐ Obfuscate	☐ Obfuscate
☒ Rebuttal	☐ Rebuttal	☐ Rebuttal
Special Verbal Actions	**Special Verbal Actions**	**Special Verbal Actions**
☐ Feint	☐ Feint	☒ Feint
☐ Incite	☐ Incite	☐ Incite
Magic Actions	**Magic Actions**	**Magic Actions**
☐ Cast Spell	☐ Cast Spell	☐ Cast Spell
☐ Command Spirit	☐ Command Spirit	☐ Command Spirit
☐ Drop Spell	☐ Drop Spell	☐ Drop Spell
☐ Sing, Howl, Pray	☐ Sing, Howl, Pray	☐ Sing, Howl, Pray
Hesitation Actions	**Hesitation Actions**	**Hesitation Actions**
☐ Fall Prone	☐ Fall Prone	☐ Fall Prone
☐ Run Screaming	☐ Run Screaming	☐ Run Screaming
☐ Stand & Drool	☐ Stand & Drool	☐ Stand & Drool
☐ Swoon	☐ Swoon	☐ Swoon

Exchange to Exchange

If one side's body of argument isn't reduced to zero at the conclusion of volley 3, start a new exchange. Both sides take a moment to choose three new actions. Do not roll for a new body of argument or otherwise adjust your current total. Once both sides have scripted new actions, play the exchange volley to volley as described above.

Speaking the Part

When playing actions, you must speak your part. Spitting out moves in a robotic fashion is not a viable use of these mechanics. The arguments must be made. Of course, no one expects you to be eloquent, so just the main thrust or a simple retort usually suffices (but a little embellishment is nice).

Points and Dismisses are spoken before a Rebuttal. Maneuvers like Feint and Obfuscate are used to literally interrupt the opponent's flow. If two players are simultaneously throwing Points, Dismissals or Incitements at each other, either let traits decide who speaks first or allow the elder character to proceed. The order doesn't really matter. The results of the tests are tallied after both characters have spoken.

Keep it simple and to the point. Say what you need to in order to roll the dice. Don't write out any speeches, just note your actions; let the oration come organically in play. A multipoint statement should be broken down into multiple actions across the exchange.

Elements of Elocution

There are seven actions a speaker can use in a Duel of Wits: Avoid the Topic, Dismiss, Feint, Incite, Obfuscate, Point and Rebuttal.

Interactions

Consult the table below for how to resolve the interaction of two Duel of Wits actions—a standard test, a versus test or no test at all. Each action interacts with the other actions differently. At the most basic level, the interaction determines whether or not you make a standard test, a versus test or no test at all. When checking this table, read left to right. Some of the interactions are asymmetric.

Resolving DoW Actions	Opponent's Action: Avoid	Dismiss	Feint	Incite	Obfuscate	Point	Rebuttal
Your Action: Avoid	—	—	—	Vs	Vs	Vs	—
Dismiss	Std	Std	Std	Std	Vs	Std	Vs
Feint	—	—	Vs	Vs	Vs	—	Std
Incite	Vs	Std	Vs	Std	Vs	Std	Std
Obfuscate	Vs	Vs	Vs	Vs	Vs	Vs	Vs
Point	Vs	Std	Std	Std	Vs	Std	Vs
Rebuttal	—	Vs	—	—	Vs	Vs	—

Std: In a standard test, roll the ability listed with the action at the obstacle indicated. Apply successes as instructed.

Vs: In a versus test, roll the ability indicated with the action against the ability indicated with the opposing action. Apply the winner's margin of success as instructed in the action description.

—: Do not test any ability for this interaction. You're vulnerable.

Consult the action descriptions for additional effects.

Avoid the Topic

Tests: Will

Speaking the Part: The speaking player must veer off topic, even to the point of sounding desperate or ridiculous.

Effects: Avoid successes are subtracted from your opponent's Point, Obfuscate or Incite successes. This reduces the effectiveness of an opposed action. If Obfuscate or Incite successes aren't reduced to zero, then the incoming action wins and takes effect. Avoid never suffers a double obstacle penalty for stat versus skill. It's special.

Knowing my opponent is going to come out of the gate blaring away with a Point, I script my first action as an Avoid. Successes from my Will test are subtracted from his Point successes.

Dismiss

Tests: Coarse Persuasion, Command, Intimidation, Oratory, Religious Diatribe, Rhetoric, Stentorious Debate, Ugly Truth

Speaking the Part: This maneuver is used for the cataclysmic and undeniable conclusion of an argument. Loudly declare that your opponent knows nothing about the topic at hand and, furthermore, he's a fool and a dullard and shouldn't be listened to any further!

Special: If a character fails to win the duel via his Dismiss action, he must hesitate for his next volley. Either cross off the next action, or skip the first volley of the coming exchange.

Effects: Scripting a Dismiss adds +2D to the character's skill. In a standard test, subtract each success rolled from your opponent's body of argument. Against Rebuttal, subtract your margin of success over your opponent's defense from the body of argument. If you win against Obfuscate, all Dismiss successes are subtracted from the body of argument—not just your margin of success.

I know I've got him cornered, he's only got 6 dice left in his body of argument. I'm going to gamble and throw a Dismiss into my script. Adding +2D to my BS Oratory, plus FoRKs for Intimidation and Falsehood, gives me a shot at knocking him out of the game. However, if I don't get six successes, then I hesitate for my next action!

Feint

Tests: Extortion, Falsehood, Interrogation, Persuasion, Poisonous Platitudes, Religious Diatribe, Rhetoric, Soothing Platitudes, Seduction

Speaking the Part: Using a Feint, the speaker leads his opponent on into a trap. He lures him to think he is discussing one point, until the hidden barb is revealed.

Effects: Feint can be used to bypass Rebuttal and to attack Feint, Incite and Obfuscate. In a standard test, each success subtracts from your opponent's body of argument. In a versus test, margin of success is subtracted from your opponent's body of argument.

My opponent's been playing pretty conservatively. I'll bet he thinks I'm going to come on strong in the first volley. Rather than script a Point, I'll put in a Feint to blast by his predictable Rebuttal. If I'm right and he scripts that Rebuttal, my Feint will ignore it and I'll get a free attack against his body of argument. If not, and he scripts a Point or Dismiss, I'll be in trouble.

Incite

Tests: Coarse Persuasion, Command, Extortion, Falsehood, Intimidation, Seduction, Ugly Truth

Speaking the Part: With an acid tongue and biting wit, a character may attempt to distract or dismay his opponent. The speaking player must pronounce an outright insult to his opponent.

Effects: In a standard test, the obstacle is equal to the victim's Will exponent. If the Inciting player passes the standard test or wins the versus test, the victim must make a Steel test. If the victim hesitates, he misses his next action. However, if the Incite fails, the margin of failure is added as advantage dice to the opponent's next test.

"'Idiot!' I scream and spit at him." I'm testing my character's B5 Intimidation plus a FoRK for Acting. My obstacle is his Will. If I'm successful, he's going to have to pass a Steel test. A very useful maneuver against green characters, but it's risky. I'm vulnerable to Points and Dismissal myself while I insult him.

Obfuscate

Tests: Falsehood, Oratory, Poisonous Platitudes, Rhetoric, Religious Diatribe, Soothing Platitudes, Stentorious Debate, Suasion, Ugly Truth

Speaking the Part: Obfuscate is a verbal block. The player attempting to Obfuscate must present some non sequitur or bizarre, unrelated point in an attempt to confuse or distract his opponent. Obfuscate is spoken while your opponent is speaking.

Effects: Obfuscate is tested versus everything, even itself. If the Obfuscator wins, the victim of this tactic loses his current action. If the Obfuscator exceeds his obstacle, his opponent also suffers a +1 Ob to his next action. If the Obfuscator loses the versus test, his opponent's current action goes off and his successes are applied as per his action description. Furthermore, he gain +1D to his next action.

"While my opponent is correct on many particulars, there are areas he's not considering. His viewpoints are shaky, his position weak. Have you considered

this? Have you considered the consequences of even considering such a consideration? Personally, this is something I wouldn't consider. And I would advise you not to as well. I hereby warn my opponent to cease considering such a dangerous course!"

Point

Tests: Coarse Persuasion, Interrogation, Oratory, Persuasion, Poisonous Platitudes, Rhetoric, Stentorious Debate

Speaking the Part: The Point action is the main attack of the verbal duelist. Hammer away using your statement of purpose and related points!

Effects: In a standard test, subtract your Point successes from your opponent's body of argument. In a versus test, subtract the margin of success from your opponent's body of argument. This is the way to win debates!

Judd exclaims, "I will not have my progeny remember me as a coward who let the Elves perform his labors for him. I'm coming with you; for glory and honor!" Testing his Oratory, he gets three successes. These are subtracted from the Elven prince's body of argument.

Rebuttal

Tests: Extortion, Interrogation, Oratory, Persuasion, Poisonous Platitudes, Rhetoric, Stentorious Debate, Suasion

Speaking the Part: The player first lets his opponent make his attack. He then refutes the arguments made while making a fresh point himself.

Special: When making a Rebuttal, you must divide your dice between attack and defense. This division happens before his opponent rolls. You must put at least one die in each pool. Any penalties to the action are applied to both pools. Any bonuses to the action are only applied to either attack or defense. If you only have one die, you can choose whether you attack or defend.

Effects: Successes from the defense roll are subtracted from the opponent's successes. To fully defend against an Obfuscate action, you must get more defense successes than your opponent's Obfuscate successes. Each success on the attacking portion of a Rebuttal reduces your opponent's body of argument.

I'm making a Point, but the Dwarven seneschal chose Rebuttal as his action. Before I roll, he divides his BS Stentorious Debate plus an Etiquette FoRK into two pools. In this case, he chooses two dice to defend with, and four to attack. I get three successes. He tests the 2D defense of his Rebuttal and gets two successes. My point is reduced to one success. He then rolls his attack and gets three successes. These are subtracted from my body of

argument. "Come now my good friend, you're being rash and not thinking clearly. No matter what happens here today, you'll earn all the glory. It's your heirloom, after all. But don't risk your life on such a foolish gambit!"

Special Interactions in the Duel of Wits

If you're praying, casting a spell, hesitating or doing anything else aside from using a Duel of Wits action in the Duel of Wits, your opponent uses the following interaction obstacles: Avoid, —; Dismiss, Ob 1; Feint, Ob 1; Incite, Ob=Will; Obfuscate, Ob 1; Point, Ob 1; Rebuttal, Ob —.

Baiting Beliefs

Players are encouraged to play on their opponent's Beliefs, Instincts and traits during the exchange. Using these facets of personality against their opponents, they can lead them on and predict their moves. Simply baiting an opponent to Dismiss prematurely can cause the fatal error one needs to pull off a coup!

Resolving the Argument

Winning a Duel of Wits

Reducing your opponent's argument to zero dice while maintaining dice in your body of argument indicates you've won the Duel of Wits. The terms the winning character set forth at the outset of the duel must now be abided by and acted on by all parties involved. The winning character has won this test, and like any other test in Burning Wheel, his intent is made manifest. (But remember, it's not mind control; it's an agreement between two people.)

These mechanics often refer to audience reaction. This is the true benefit of winning. Rarely is the opponent convinced of the merits of the argument, but all those around him now see the advantages clearly displayed against the fallacy of the loser's assumptions.

The ambassador wins his argument against the seneschal. The seneschal is still against joining his alliance. However, now the prince has heard both sides, he sees merit in the ambassador's plans. The prince, as the audience, agrees to the winning proposal—in fact, he must.

Compromise

It is a very rare circumstance in an argument when some concessions aren't made by the winning party to the loser. Sometimes it is ceding or validating a point, other times it's agreeing to disagree and still other times an actual compromise is reached.

When your body of argument is reduced by any amount of dice, compromises must be made. Victory is unconditional only if your body of argument is untouched.

Minor Compromise

If your body of argument is reduced by a few points, you owe your interlocutor a minor compromise. You must grant him a small concession regarding your goal or agree to an additional, minor condition that he puts forth.

You petition the Emperor to grant you his sister's hand in marriage. You win, but owe him a minor compromise. He asks only that you remain loyal to him. A small thing for an emperor to ask, no?

Compromise

If your argument is reduced to half (or thereabouts), you owe your opponent a solid compromise. You must grant a significant concession regarding your own goal or agree to an additional, related condition.

You and your friend are debating the ownership rights to a certain fabled sword. You win, but owe your friend a compromise. You agree to let him show it to his estranged father before you return it to your clan.

Major Compromise

If you lost all but a few of your body of argument points, you owe your adversary a major compromise. You must either grant him a major concession regarding your own goal, or agree to an additional related condition of considerable weight. Granting a major compromise should feel like losing.

You and your companions are arguing over the fate of an evil sorcerer. Should he be executed or should you join him? Your friends win, you'll join forces with him. But they owe you a major compromise. You'll only join forces with him until he ends this magical plague. After that, you will bring him to the emperor and the council of priests to account for his past evil deeds.

Losing

A Duel of Wits is over when one party's body of argument is reduced to zero. The loser must abide by the results of the argument: He's lost and he's agreed to go along with whatever it was his opponent proposed at the outset of the duel—for the time being, of course.

Remember that these rules don't dictate reality or true feelings. They only dictate public performance and acknowledgment of the "truth."

A diplomat may have his proposals denounced in front of the king, but he still believes in them and may even present them again at another time. A shopkeeper who lost a haggling duel will sell the item for the lower price, but he'll regret it later. In fact, he might harbor quite a bit of resentment toward the silver-tongued rascal who bedeviled him. He may even outright refuse to sell to him in the future!

If a player is particularly open-minded, he can, of course, have his character change his mind when and as he chooses. Being convinced of the merit of an argument is an acceptable result of these mechanics, but it is not a hard and fast rule.

Shocking Defeat

A character who has lost a Duel of Wits must make a Steel test. If his argument was reduced below zero, those dice are added to the hesitation obstacle. While the loser hesitates, the victor is free to gloat, run him through, exit stage left or offer a verbal *coup de grâce*.

Tying

If both arguments are reduced to zero in the same volley, the duel is a tie. Neither party is in a position to leverage a victory. Two options are available: The characters can part ways and agree to take up the argument at another time, or they can agree to a compromise.

Tied Compromise

The first rule of a compromise resulting from a tie is neither party can achieve the terms he sought at the outset of the duel. Both parties must agree to a point that sits squarely in the middle. It is best for each side to set forth a new offer—one more generous to their opponent than the original—and, if possible, have a neutral party offer a third, middle ground offer. The players then choose the most appropriate one and move on.

Ties are a difficult and tenuous matter. Hard and fast mechanics are too rigid to govern the myriad of situations that will arise in play using these mechanics. But it is important to remember that neither side has won. If a solid compromise can be reached, great. If not, perhaps it's time to escalate. See the Honor Besmirched section below.

We found it somewhat useful to count how far below zero each argument was driven. This isn't to determine a winner—since both parties hit zero—but to indicate which side had the initiative at the end of the duel. This margin can be used as moral high ground to allow one side to set the terms of the compromise.

Murder Most Foul

If a compromise cannot be reached in a Duel of Wits, either side may attempt to murder the other. And murdered they must be. You must kill the other side in order to erase this travesty. This does not win the duel. You abdicate any form of compromise. But it feels good. If you fail to kill the other characters, you have failed utterly. They win.

Honor Besmirched: I Demand Satisfaction

A character who has lost a Duel of Wits, but believes he has been slighted or defamed, may call upon his honor and demand satisfaction in a duel to the death or for blood. In this case, the winning character is free to choose to accept the duel or not—or perhaps appoint a champion. If the winner of the Duel of Wits refuses, he loses no standing in the eyes of his peers. He was clearly in the right the entire time and his opponent is behaving in an unseemly manner! If he accepts, perhaps he can put this matter to bed permanently.

Helping in the Duel of Wits

For group duels, it's best to adhere to the helping rules. One character—the speaker—acts at the primary for his side. He scripts the moves he'll use. As he goes, his allies make comments on his Points, etc, and throw in helping dice when they raise their voices. Once everyone has made their comments on the particular volley, have the primary roll the dice for his actions. It's the same as a regular Duel of Wits, but with helping dice.

In order to grant helping dice, a player must roleplay his character's participation. Failure to speak up or act means those dice may not be used on that particular roll. Also, there's no rule that says you have to help your own side. Supporting players may have their character help the opposing side through disparaging remarks, bad arguments or just plain treachery! Whatever they choose to do, they still must abide by the guidelines and intent of the particular verbal action they are supporting.

Alternate Dueling Method

The Patrol Method

If you have two or three characters per side, you can use Patrol Method. One player rolls the body of argument. The others help. Each player takes an action in the exchange. He speaks the part and rolls the dice. The other members of his side may support him as described under the Helping in the Duel of Wits.

Characters may not take two actions in a row—not from volley to volley or exchange to exchange. When starting the Duel, determine the order in which you'll act. When scripting, try to choose actions that will benefit the speaker—if a character doesn't have a Persuasion skill, don't script Points for him.

Duel of Wits in Brief

- Players (or a player and the GM) come to a significant disagreement in the game. The GM stops play, and asks if the players wish to resolve it with a Duel of Wits. Players can agree to this, walk away from the argument in disgust, or simply draw swords and skip to the Fight section.
- Players each state their case: What's the problem and why. Keep it short. Write out your statement of purpose.
- Once the case is stated, roll for the body of argument—test Coarse Persuasion, Interrogation, Oratory, Persuasion, Poisonous Platitudes, Rhetoric, Stentorious Debate. Add these successes to the Will exponent. This is how many dice your opponent must knock off in order to win the duel.
- After the body of argument has been established, agree to the terms: Each player states what conditions he wants if he wins, and what he'll do if he loses.
- Each player then scripts his first exchange—three actions from the list: Avoid, Dismiss, Feint, Incite, Obfuscate, Point, Rebuttal. The actions are played out in order, one at a time. Your first action is compared to your opponent's first action. Parts are spoken, dice are rolled. Second action is compared to second action. Parts are spoken, dice are rolled. After the third volley, if neither of the players has been reduced to zero dice, script another exchange and do this step again.
- The first player reduced to zero dice in his body of argument loses. Remember, actions in the same volley happen at the same time, so it's possible for two players to go out simultaneously.
- If the winner lost any dice from his body of argument, he must compromise on his terms.

Range and Cover

Max ducked through the undergrowth as he trotted silently along the deer path. His senses were pitched high, keyed to every movement and sound. His gloved hand cradled his hunting bow, an arrow at the ready. Shifting his course to take up position on a hillock, Max spotted movement down in the valley, off to his right. It was Holt! Without wasting a second, Max drew the string taut and levelled his bow. He realized a moment too late that Holt had spotted him as well.

When a character wishes to bring down his quarry at range with a bow, javelin or even a rock, we use a system similar to the Duel of Wits. Players plan an overall strategy for their characters by scripting three maneuver actions in three consecutive volleys. This time, though, there is no body of argument to destroy. Now you're trying to outmaneuver or simply kill another character.

Use these rules when your characters are in a skirmish, a riot or chase in which at least one group has missiles and the will to use them.

But I'm Not a Bowman

The term "bowman" is used in the Range and Cover rules simply as an example of a missile weapon-wielding character. It's a term of convenience. By no means are these rules limited to the use of bows and men.

Range, Cover and Position Basics

Before he can take a shot, a bowman must get into position. These rules determine who gets into position, and thus who gets to take a shot using versus tests between stats, skills and attributes.

The winner of the test has the opportunity to shoot, whereas his target has exposed himself or been outmaneuvered. The winner tests his appropriate weapon skill—Bow, Crossbow, Throwing, etc.—to hit the target.

Range and Cover Procedure

Determine Battlefield

When you start a battle or skirmish using these rules, the GM describes the battlefield—the terrain features, lay of the land, weather, light, etc.

Set Ranges

The GM decides the starting ranges for all parties involved: If the combatants are cautiously advancing, start everyone out of range. If the skirmish is taking place in a field, meadow, desert, plain or other open area, give the advantage to the group with longer-ranged weapons. Put them at extreme range for their weapon and set everyone else accordingly. If the fight is going down in confined conditions like city streets or even indoors, start everyone off at optimal range.

If one party is attempting to ambush another or otherwise set up this skirmish, test for Stealthy or Tactics vs Observation. The winner can set his starting range for his weapon.

Objectives

If there's a situation—defend the king, capture the flag, escape the catacombs—be sure to be explicit about it. Set conditions for achieving the objective. Conditions could be as simple as defeating a group of enemies, withdrawing out of range, closing into fighting distance or as complex as spending actions to accomplish other tasks within the battle—bashing through a door, scaling a wall or stealing a crown. Achieving the objective ends the conflict. Setting objectives focuses the conflict and increases tension.

Teams

Battles using Range and Cover often involve many characters. Break down into teams before you start using these rules. Teams can be altered between exchanges provided it makes sense to do so.

A team can be as small as one character and as large as ten. In general, the player characters should form one team, the GM should form another. If the GM has too many baddies for one team, split the players into two or more teams.

Choose Maneuvers

Each team privately chooses a set of three maneuvers for this exchange of Range and Cover—one for each volley. All teams reveal their first volley maneuver at the same time. Determine the results using the Field

Maneuvers table and descriptions. Any team member can make the maneuver test provided it's appropriate to the situation and any other rules. One other team member may help with the maneuver.

Adjust Range

Change the winning team's range according to the result of the maneuver. Consult the appropriate weapon table to determine the losing teams range.

Play Actions

The team that won the maneuver test can spend its margin of success to allow team members to perform actions. Resolve all of the actions earned in each volley before moving on.

Is It Over Yet?

At the end of the third volley, if the opposing team is still standing and at least one team is still in range and your objective is incomplete, privately choose three maneuvers again.

End

Battles using Range and Cover end when the other side is dead, run off, both sides have retired out of range, you've closed into fighting distance or you've completed your objective. Once an end condition is met, you can stop with Range and Cover and move on to other obstacles.

Range

In a skirmish, the distance between a bowman and his target is a vital detail. It sets the base obstacle to hit said target. In Burning Wheel, we're not concerned with precise distances. We only need to know broad categories: Either the target is out of range, at extreme range, at optimal range or too close to shoot. Moving from one range to the next is done through maneuvers. Listed below are descriptions of the range categories and the obstacle to hit targets at those ranges.

If an archer is at extreme range for his hunting bow and he wants to put himself in optimal range, he must win a positioning test.

Out of Range

Out of range is self-explanatory. If your target is beyond the extreme range for your weapon, you're out of range. You cannot shoot if you're out of range. You may take other actions.

Extreme Range (Ob 3)

Each weapon has an extreme range at which missiles start to lose power and thus become inaccurate. Extreme range for a weapon is always one step closer than being out of range. Shots at extreme range are base Ob 3.

Optimal Range (Ob 2)

Without benefit of sighting mechanisms or precision mechanical devices, archers, crossbowmen and fusilliers are forced to rely on their own eyesight, depth perception, good judgment and the power of their weapon. Your target is easiest to hit when you're in optimal range. Shots from optimal range are base obstacle 2.

Too Close to Shoot

If you are at optimal range and you close with your opponent, you are too close to shoot—now you're in a melee. Range and Cover is over. Same goes for your opponent: If he is in optimal range for his weapon and he closes in with you, he's drawn you into a fight.

Once a fight moves into the *too close to shoot* range, Range and Cover volleys end and players switch to melee using the Fight rules.

Max Range

All missile weapons have a maximum range listed in paces to help give players a sense of their effectiveness and to allow GMs to better narrate space and distance in the game.

Cover

Terrain, cover and shields raise your obstacle to shoot your opponent. They don't interfere with maneuvering per se. The GM sets the terrain and cover when he sets up the Range and Cover conflict unless the players use skill tests like Fortifications or wises to make or find cover.

Obstacle Penalties to Shooting, Launching, Throwing and Releasing

- Trees, wall, barricade, hedge: +1 Ob.
- Fortification, forest, or other dense cover: +2 Ob.
- Shields: +1 Ob.

Maneuver and Action

During the battle, the characters are doing their level best to outmaneuver their opponents so they can pull off a shot without being shot at themselves. The interaction between your maneuver and your opponent's maneuver determines which stat, skill or attribute you test. The weapon you're using adds dice to your maneuver.

The winner of the maneuver can change the distance between himself and his opponent and spend extra successes on taking actions during this volley. Your maneuver determines how the distance changes. Actions include shooting, casting a spell, saying a prayer, shrugging off a wound, opening a crypt, aiming or taking cover.

Stride Advantage

The character with the longest stride gets an advantage to maneuver. Dwarves have a stride of 6; Men, Orcs, Trolls and Great Spiders have stride 7, Elves and Roden have a stride of 8. Wolves have a stride of 11. Horses have a stride of 13. Traits and spells can modify these numbers. For teams, use the lowest stride rating.

Longest stride	+1D
Stride longer by 4 or more	+2D

Winning the Maneuver

When a character wins a maneuver test, he either gets in closer, gets farther away or keeps his position. When changing distances, you move one range category of your weapon—from extreme range to optimal, for example. You can spend extra successes on performing actions like shooting, casting spells or kicking in doors.

Maintain vs Maintain, Hold vs Hold, Maintain vs Hold

If two teams both choose a Maintain or Hold, there is no change in distance. The maneuver is still tested to determine who gets to shoot and act.

Losing a Maneuver

When you lose a test for maneuver, you're driven away or picked off before you can make any real headway. You don't necessarily sit still—maybe you ducked laterally across the field, finding cover behind a fallen tree—but you don't make any headway before your opponent spotted you and unleashed a hail of shot. The loser in a maneuver usually may not shoot or take any other action. He may keep any position dice he previously won so long as he scripted a Hold.

Tying for Maneuver

If two teams tie in a maneuver test, they both spot each other at the same moment and have a fleeting opportunity to capitalize. Of course, you can still break ties by spending a fate or deeds point or by using a call-on.

Tying for Maneuver—Who Moves?

If a closing maneuver ties with a withdrawing maneuver, there is no change of position.

If two groups both script the same action (except Hold or Maintain) and roll a tie, then both sides get their maneuver intent. Closing maneuvers both close one range. Withdrawing maneuvers both withdraw one range. This might result in one team moving too close to shoot or out of range.

Both sides choose Flank. Both sides roll four successes. One side was out of range, the other was at extreme range. The out of range team moves to extreme range. Extreme range moves to optimal. All characters on both teams can then shoot/cast at the current ranges.

If you tie with a maneuver of a similar type, break the tie according to the following rules: If Close is tied with Flank, the tie breaks in the Close maneuver's favor. If Sneak In is tied with Close or Charge, the tie breaks in Sneak In's favor. If Flank is tied with Sneak In or Charge, Flank is favored. If Charge is tied with Close, Charge is favored.

If Withdraw is tied with Fall Back, the tie breaks in Withdraw's favor. If Sneak Out is tied with Withdraw or Retreat, Sneak Out is favored. If Fall Back is tied with Sneak Out or Retreat, Fall Back is favored. If Retreat is tied with Withdraw, Retreat is favored.

The favored maneuver gets to advance or withdraw one range, according to your maneuver.

Tying for Maneuver—Who Shoots?

Each player on each team may shoot (or cast a spell) at his opponent or take cover instead. If he opts to shoot, he may fire at his current range obstacle. If he takes cover, he raises his opponent's obstacle to shoot him by one.

Spending Maneuver Successes on Actions

The three most common ways to spend your maneuver margin of success are to take a shot with a missile weapon, aim or take a position. However, that's not all you can do. See the Other Actions heading for additional suggestions.

Taking a Shot

You can spend one success per member of your team (including yourself) to give that character an opportunity to shoot. Obstacles are listed in the Range and Cover sections of this chapter. You may only shoot once per volley. You always shoot after determining the results of the maneuver, not before. Move then shoot.

I spend a success to shoot. At optimal range, my obstacle is 2.

Aiming Dice

Extra successes may be spent on aiming. The number of successes spent equal advantage dice for the skill test to hit the target. A character may accept aiming dice equal to half his Perception exponent rounded up.

Danny wins the positioning test by three successes. He spends one success to take a shot and uses the two additional successes to aim. With his character's BS bow skill, he'll roll seven dice to hit his target on this volley.

Aiming dice can be used this volley, or they may be carried over to the next volley. But if the character loses a maneuver test, fails a Steel test or is in any other way distracted before shooting, he loses the benefit of his aiming dice.

Remember, aiming dice are used for the shooting skill test, not for the maneuver test.

Taking a Position

Extra successes in a maneuver test can be used to draw additional advantage from the terrain or fortifications. Up to two successes from a winning test may be allocated to taking or building a better position. Successes spent on taking a position are advantage dice to positioning for the next volley.

You scoot behind a fallen tree. You duck into a hovel. You move along the riverbed.

You may only have at most a +2D advantage from taking a position. If you choose a closing, withdrawing or maintain action, position dice are lost after the maneuver test. If the Hold action is scripted, the position dice roll over to the next volley.

Other Actions

A character may only shoot once per volley, but his successes may be spent on other actions like shrugging off a wound, casting a spell, quickly memorizing a map, or prying open a tomb door. A player may take any action that can be accomplished in a short time. Actions are purchased with extra successes from the maneuver. Without those successes, the character just doesn't have enough time to get it done before the opposition fires off another shot. You get one action per success spent, and each player in the team may only take one additional action per volley.

Weapon Range Dice

The capabilities of a missile weapon in Burning Wheel grant advantage dice to the wielder's maneuver test according to his current range. The more dice, the greater the chance the character's chance to outmaneuver his opponent and pull off a shot before his opponent can return fire, escape or take cover. At extreme range, more range dice are granted, but as the characters close to optimal range, the bonus dice flatten out.

Weapon	Optimal	Extreme/OOR	Max. Range
Melee or None	—	—	7 paces
Pistol	2D	1D	10 paces
Thrown Weapon	1D	1D	30 paces
Arquebus	1D	1D	50 paces
Hunting Bow	2D	1D	100 paces
Crossbow	1D	3D	125 paces
Elven Bow	3D	3D	250 paces
Great Bow	2D	4D	300 paces
Heavy Crossbow	1D	5D	350 paces

Melee or None

Fighters without a missile weapon cannot shoot even if they win a maneuver test, but they can still maneuver. They must move into the special too close to shoot range to be effective.

Crossbow and Gun Reloads

To represent how slow crossbows and guns are to reload, these weapons have reduced range dice at optimal range.

My Range is Longer than Your Range

When you win a maneuver, you will find yourself at a range: out of range, extreme or optimal. This range sets the base obstacle to hit your opponent, and it determines your opponent's range to you (based on his weapon). Consult the table below to determine the loser's range. Read from left to right, winner to loser.

	Melee weapon is	Pistol is	Thrown is	Arquebus is	Hunting Bow is	Crossbow is	Elven Bow is	Great Bow is	Heavy Crossbow is
Thrown Weapon at									
Optimal (1D)	Extr	Extr	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt
Extreme (1D)	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr	Extr	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt
Out of Range (1D)	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt
Hunting Bow at									
Optimal (2D)	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt
Extreme (1D)	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt
Out of Range (1D)	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr	Extr	Extr
Crossbow at									
Optimal (1D)	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt
Extreme (3D)	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr	Opt	Opt
Out of Range (3D)	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr	Extr
Great Bow at									
Optimal (2D)	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr	Opt	Opt	Opt
Extreme (4D)	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr	Extr
Out of Range (4D)	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	Extr

Range tables for pistols, arquebuses, Elven bows and heavy crossbows can be found in the Weapons Appendix and on the back of the Range and Cover combat sheet.

Field Maneuvers

Playing out a duel of archery or a charge into a gunners' nest is similar to playing out the Duel of Wits. Each side builds a hand of three moves and tries to outmaneuver his opponent. Each player scripts his exchange of maneuvers—whether and when he'll close, withdraw or maintain his distance. As with Duel of Wits, each player plans out three volleys, one maneuver per volley.

Using missile weapons, cover and steely courage, there are ten ways to maneuver: Close, Sneak In, Flank, Charge, Maintain, Hold, Withdraw, Sneak Out, Retreat and Flee. The following descriptions lay out what stats, skills or attributes to roll and what penalties to apply.

	Close	Sneak In	Flank	Charge	Maintain	Hold†	Withdraw	Sneak Out	Fall Back	Retreat
Close *Speed*	vs Spd	vs Stealthy	vs Tactics	vs Steel	vs Spd	vs Per	vs Spd +2D	vs Stealthy	vs Tactics	vs Steel +1D
Sneak In *Stealthy*	vs Spd	vs Stealthy	vs Tactics	vs Steel	vs Spd	vs Observ	vs Spd +2D	vs Stealthy	vs Tactics	vs Steel +1D
Flank *Tactics*	vs Spd	vs Stealthy	vs Tactics	vs Steel	vs Spd	vs Observ	vs Spd +2D	vs Stealthy	vs Tactics	vs Steel +1D
Charge *Steel*‡	vs Spd	vs Stealthy	vs Tactics	vs Steel	vs Spd	vs Per	vs Spd +2D	vs Stealthy	vs Tactics	vs Steel +1D
Maintain *Speed*	vs Spd	vs Stealthy	vs Tactics	vs Steel	vs Spd	vs Per	vs Spd +2D	vs Stealthy	vs Tactics	vs Steel +1D
Hold *Special*†	Per vs Spd	Observ vs Stealthy	Observ vs Tactics	Per vs Steel	Per vs Spd	Per vs Per	Per vs Spd +2D	Observ vs Stealthy	Observ vs Tactics	Per vs Steel +1D
Withdraw *Speed*	+2D vs Spd	+2D vs Stealthy	+2D vs Tactics	+2D vs Steel	+2D vs Spd	+2D vs Per	+2D vs Spd +2D	+2D vs Stealthy	+2D vs Tactics	+2D vs Steel +1D
Sneak Out *Stealthy*	vs Spd	vs Stealthy	vs Tactics	vs Steel	vs Spd	vs Observ	vs Spd +2D	vs Stealthy	vs Tactics	vs Steel +1D
Fall Back *Tactics*	vs Spd	vs Stealthy	vs Tactics	vs Steel	vs Spd	vs Observ	vs Spd +2D	vs Stealthy	vs Tactics	vs Steel +1D
Retreat *Steel*‡	+1D vs Spd	+1D vs Stealthy	+1D vs Tactics	+1D vs Steel	+1D vs Spd	+1D vs Per	+1D vs Spd +2D	+1D vs Stealthy	+1D vs Tactics	+1D vs Steel +1D

‡Your opponent always gets a shot at you when you perform these maneuvers.
†You always get to shoot when you perform this maneuver.

Range and Cover Versus Tests

The interactions for Range and Cover are all versus tests. Check the table above to see which ability to test. Read from your maneuver and ability on the left to your opponent's maneuver and any advantage on the right.

Stat vs Skill in Range and Cover

When testing a stat vs a skill, the stat suffers a double obstacle penalty. Steel never suffers a double obstacle penalty.

Speed versus Stealthy imposes a double obstacle penalty on Speed. Testing Hold without Observation against a Flank with Tactics imposes a double obstacle penalty Beginner's Luck test on the holding character's Perception.

Closing Maneuvers

There are four closing maneuvers: Close, Sneak In, Flank and Charge. These maneuvers each attempt to bring you one range category closer to your opponent—from out of range to extreme range, from extreme to optimal and from optimal to too close to shoot.

Position dice are not carried to the next volley when using Close, Charge, Flank or Sneak In. You abandon your position. You may allocate margin of success to finding a new position in this maneuver if appropriate.

Close

Test: Close tests Speed plus advantage from weapon range, position and stride.

Effect: Using Close, the character attempts to dash into position quickly. If successful, the character advances one range category for his weapon.

Flank

Test: Flank tests Tactics plus FoRKs, advantage from weapon range, position and stride.

Effect: Using your knowledge of battle, you outmaneuver your opponent. If successful, the character advances one range category.

Charge

Test: Charge tests Steel plus advantage from weapon range, position and stride. The test is open-ended.

Effect: A player may choose to press on using his character's Steel rather than Speed, Stealth or Tactics. He pricks up his nerve, dashes from cover and charges screaming at his opponent. This is a difficult and dangerous maneuver. If he wins the versus test, then he closes one range.

There is a big "however" for Charge: Your opponents may always shoot—even if they lose the positioning test. If your Charge is successful, your opponent gets one free shot before you close in. If the Charge is tied, everyone on both teams gets to shoot. Very ugly. If the Charge is failed, your opponent gets two free shots plus whatever successes he spends on shooting. Lastly, if you fail a Charge, you hesitate in the next volley.

Sneak In

Test: Sneak In tests Stealthy plus FoRKs, advantage from weapon range, position and stride.

Effect: Using camouflage and stealth, you move unseen toward your opponent's position. If successful, the character advances one range category.

Maintaining Maneuvers

There are two maneuvers that allow you to hold your ground against your opponent: Maintain and Hold.

Maintain

Test: Maintain tests Speed plus advantage from weapon range, position and stride.

Effect: Using his footwork and reflexes, the character attempts to get the better of his opponent. If your opponent moves forward, you move back. If he moves back, you move forward. If the character is successful, he's held his opponent at the current range.

Hold

Test: Test Perception against Close, Charge, Maintain, Hold, Withdraw and Retreat. Test Observation against Sneak In, Flank, Sneak Out and Fall Back. Both variants gain advantage from weapon range and position, but not from stride.

Effect: When using the Hold action, the team does not move. Feet planted, they hold their ground and let fly for all they're worth.

Special Effects: There are three special effects for the Hold action. First, your opponent always moves in with a close-type maneuver or away with a withdraw-type. Second, you always shoot, even if you lose the maneuver test. If you win the maneuver test, you get a free shot in addition to your other actions. Finally, advantage dice from a position are carried over from Hold into your next maneuver.

Withdrawal Maneuvers

There are four withdrawal maneuvers: Withdraw, Fall Back, Retreat, and Sneak Out. These maneuvers attempt to increase the distance between you and your opponent by one range category—from extreme range to out of range or from optimal to extreme.

Position dice are not carried to the next volley when using Withdraw, Fall Back, Sneak Out or Retreat. You abandon your position. You may allocate margin of success to finding a new position in this maneuver if appropriate.

If you withdraw while out of range, check your opponent's current range. If he's also out of range, then you leave the fight. If he's not out of range, then the combat continues and you remain out of range for your weapon.

Withdraw

Test: Speed +2D plus advantage from weapon range, position and stride. Run!

Effect: Using Speed to Withdraw you beat a hasty retreat. If successful, you withdraw one range category.

Special Restriction: While this maneuver grants a +2D advantage, any actions taken while using Withdraw cost *two* successes. Taking a shot, shrugging off a wound or bolting a door closed requires that you win by at least two.

Special Action: For two successes from a successful Withdraw action, you can remain at your current range but then consult your range chart to find your opponent's adjusted range. You rerange your weapons!

I have a great bow. You have a hunting bow. You have closed to your optimal range. That puts me at optimal range as well. I successfully Withdraw. Rather than moving away, I readjust my range. I remain at optimal, but I put the hunting bow at extreme range. I'm leveraging my superior range.

Fall Back

Test: Fall Back tests Tactics plus FoRKs, advantage from range, position and stride.

Effect: Using sound tactics, you abandon your position to take up another, better rearward one. If successful, the character withdraws one range category.

Special Action: For two successes from a successful Fall Back action, you can set your range to your current range but then consult your range chart to find your opponent's range. You rerange your weapons!

Sneak Out

Test: Sneak Out tests Stealthy plus FoRKs, advantage from weapon range, position and stride.

Effect: Using guile and subterfuge, you move unseen away from your opponent's position. If successful, the character withdraws one range category.

Retreat

Test: Retreat tests Steel +1D plus advantage from range, position and stride. This test is open-ended.

Effect: Sometimes you've had quite enough. Screw this position, it's time to beat a retreat. This takes nerves! A player may choose to make tracks using his character's Steel rather than Speed, Stealth or Tactics. He pricks up his nerve, dashes from cover and makes a hasty advance to the rear. If successful, the character withdraws one range category.

There is a big "however" for Retreat: Your opponents may always shoot—even if they lose the positioning test. If the Retreat is successful, your opponent gets one free shot before you move out. If the Retreat is tied, your opponent gets two free shots. If the Retreat is failed, your opponents gets two free shots plus whatever he spends on his margin of success. Lastly, if you fail a Retreat, you hesitate in the next volley.

Free Shots

The Hold, Charge and Retreat maneuvers all grant free shots. Free shots never cost a success. You can do them in addition to your other actions. They are considered to be taken after other actions are taken, including aiming. Each player may only take one free shot on top of his other actions, no matter how many he has earned from the maneuver. Free shots may be distributed to team members as appropriate. You cannot use a free shot to cast a spell.

Too Close to Shoot

If a character closes from optimal range he moves into a range we call "too close to shoot." He has positioned himself so close to his enemy that they are now in range for hand-to-hand combat. Range and Cover ends. Resolve any last ditch arrows and see the next chapter, Fight, for how to resolve the melee.

Last Ditch Arrow

If a missile-armed character won or tied the maneuver test as he moved into the too close to shoot range, he may fire his one last shot at optimal range. If he stops his opponent there's no need to go into melee, is there?

If you lost the Range and Cover maneuver test that ended in too close to shoot, you do not shoot unless you're owed free shots. Fire at optimal range.

After firing any last ditch arrows, the Fight will begin with an engagement test as described in the next chapter. If you win that test, your weapon will be loaded and ready to shoot at the start of melee. If you lose that test, your weapon will only be loaded if you could have fired a last ditch

Orc Follower's Actions

Range and Cover

Volley 1	Volley 2	Volley 3
Move In	**Move In**	**Move In**
☐ Close (Speed)	☐ Close (Speed)	☐ Close (Speed)
☒ Sneak In (Stealthy)	☐ Sneak In (Stealthy)	☐ Sneak In (Stealthy)
☐ Flank (Tactics)	☐ Flank (Tactics)	☐ Flank (Tactics)
☐ Charge (Steel)	☐ Charge (Steel)	☐ Charge (Steel)
Hold Ground	**Hold Ground**	**Hold Ground**
☐ Maintain Distance (Spd)	☒ Maintain Distance (Spd)	☐ Maintain Distance (Spd)
☐ Hold Position (Per)	☐ Hold Position (Per)	☒ Hold Position (Per)
Move Out	**Move Out**	**Move Out**
☐ Withdraw (Speed+2D)	☐ Withdraw (Speed+2D)	☐ Withdraw (Speed+2D)
☐ Sneak Out (Stealthy)	☐ Sneak Out (Stealthy)	☐ Sneak Out (Stealthy)
☐ Fall Back (Tactics)	☐ Fall Back (Tactics)	☐ Fall Back (Tactics)
☐ Retreat (Steel+1D)	☐ Retreat (Steel+1D)	☐ Retreat (Steel+1D)
Hesitation Actions	**Hesitation Actions**	**Hesitation Actions**
☐ Fall Prone	☐ Fall Prone	☐ Fall Prone
☐ Run Screaming	☐ Run Screaming	☐ Run Screaming
☐ Stand & Drool	☐ Stand & Drool	☐ Stand & Drool
☐ Swoon	☐ Swoon	☐ Swoon

Range and Cover Example

An Orc Follower needs to gain a bridge and hold it before an Elven Ranger crosses it. The GM starts them both out of range in lightly wooded terrain, on either side of a river from one another. To gain the bridge, the characters must use a closing maneuver successfully. The Follower has a hunting bow. The Elven Ranger has an Elven bow. Each side plans their maneuvers. The Orc chooses to Sneak In (to get to the bridge), Maintain (to hopefully set up a position) and then Hold the bridge.

The Elf chooses to Maintain (hoping to gain a shot or an advantage), Flank (to pin down the Orc) and Close (to rush the Orc).

In the first volley—Sneak In against Maintain—we test the Orc's Stealthy against the Elf's Speed Since it's a skill against a stat, the stat suffers a double obstacle penalty. The Orc rolls Stealthy B4 +1D from his hunting bow at this range. He rolls three successes, but those count as six for the Elf because of the stat vs skill penalty. The Elf gets his B6 Speed, +1D because his stride is greater than the Orc's and +3D from his bow at this range. He rolls five successes. The Orc wins and he moves from out of range to extreme range for his bow.

Elven Ranger's Actions

Range and Cover

Volley 1	Volley 2	Volley 3
Move In	**Move In**	**Move In**
[ ] Close (Speed)	[ ] Close (Speed)	[X] Close (Speed)
[ ] Sneak In (Stealthy)	[ ] Sneak In (Stealthy)	[ ] Sneak In (Stealthy)
[ ] Flank (Tactics)	[X] Flank (Tactics)	[ ] Flank (Tactics)
[ ] Charge (Steel)	[ ] Charge (Steel)	[ ] Charge (Steel)
Hold Ground	**Hold Ground**	**Hold Ground**
[X] Maintain Distance (Spd)	[ ] Maintain Distance (Spd)	[ ] Maintain Distance (Spd)
[ ] Hold Position (Per)	[ ] Hold Position (Per)	[ ] Hold Position (Per)
Move Out	**Move Out**	**Move Out**
[ ] Withdraw (Speed+2D)	[ ] Withdraw (Speed+2D)	[ ] Withdraw (Speed+2D)
[ ] Sneak Out (Stealthy)	[ ] Sneak Out (Stealthy)	[ ] Sneak Out (Stealthy)
[ ] Fall Back (Tactics)	[ ] Fall Back (Tactics)	[ ] Fall Back (Tactics)
[ ] Retreat (Steel+1D)	[ ] Retreat (Steel+1D)	[ ] Retreat (Steel+1D)
Hesitation Actions	**Hesitation Actions**	**Hesitation Actions**
[ ] Fall Prone	[ ] Fall Prone	[ ] Fall Prone
[ ] Run Screaming	[ ] Run Screaming	[ ] Run Screaming
[ ] Stand & Drool	[ ] Stand & Drool	[ ] Stand & Drool
[ ] Swoon	[ ] Swoon	[ ] Swoon

Unfortunately, this puts the Elf at optimal range for his cheating Elven bow. Rather than shooting, the Orc player chooses to augment his dice by taking up a position on the bridge. He gains +1D to his next maneuver.

In the second volley, the Orc Maintains (Speed) while the Elf Flanks (Tactics). The Orc rolls Speed B5, +1D for his bow, +1D for his position on the bridge. He rolls four successes. The Elf rolls Tactics B2, +1D for his longer stride and +3D for his bow at this range. He rolls three successes. Since it's a skill against a stat, the Orc suffers a double obstacle penalty. The Elf counts as having rolled six successes. He beats the Orc by two. He spends one success to aim and one success to shoot. At optimal range in lightly wooded terrain, the Elf's obstacle to hit is 3. He tests his B5 Bow skill +1D for aiming. He gets four successes. He hits the Orc, but the Orc's armor narrowly wards off the blow.

In the last volley, the Orc Holds while the Elf Closes in. That interaction tests Perception against Speed. The Orc rolls his B5 Perception, +1D for his bow at this range. He doesn't have the die from his position any more since he Maintained on his last action. He rolls three successes. The Elf gathers his Speed B6, +1D for his longer stride, +3D for his Elf bow at this range. He rolls five successes. He decides to spend one success aiming and one shooting. He

wins the test and moves from optimal range to too close to shoot. However, the Orc scripted a Hold, so he also gets a free shot at optimal range.

This means both sides shoot! The obstacle is 2 for optimal, +1 for the terrain. The Orc rolls his B4 Bow skill. The Elf rolls his B5 Bow skill +1D for aiming. Both sides hit and both are injured. Both characters must pass a Steel test before they can continue the combat. Since they moved too close to shoot, we now use the Fight rules, rather than Range and Cover.

Fixed Positions and Fortifications

If you are behind prepared defenses—a staked out hill, a rampart or even a castle wall—these fortifications grant between 3 and 10 dice for maneuvers (determined by the GM at start or by using Fortifications or Tactics to set up a position prior to the battle). These dice can be used to supplement any maneuver, but they are only recycled into your next maneuver test if you use a Hold. If you use anything but Hold, you abandon your position. Once you abandon your fortifications, you have to win a maneuver test using any action other than Hold and spend a success per character to get them back into the fortifications.

Charging the Hill

You can only close into too close to shoot with a fortified opponent if you win a closing maneuver from your optimal range, spend an action to climb or overrun the fortifications (which might require a test!) and have the proper tools for the job (rope, ladders, hooks, etc.).

In addition, mounted soldiers attempting to overrun a fortified position may not close to Too Close to Shoot unless they dismount. The soldier must take that hill on his own. However, if a fortification can be destroyed or breached, the cavalry can ride right in.

Hesitation

If a character hesitates during the Range and Cover field maneuvers, he loses one die of position or aiming advantage taken per point of margin of failure. You also cannot act in the next volley.

Choose your hesitation reaction: Stand and Drool, Run Screaming, Fall Prone or Swoon.

Stand and Drool in Range and Cover

If you choose Stand and Drool while you hesitate, your opponent's maneuver test is Ob 1. If he is successful, he may spend his margin of success according to the standard rules.

Run Screaming in Range and Cover

If you choose to Run Screaming, while you're hesitating you must test against your opponent's maneuvers using either your Speed or Steel—your choice. Running Screaming does not grant free shots. You may not use position or weapon range dice. You may use stride. You must scream. You must drop an item from your gear list of the GM's choice. If you win, you may not aim or shoot, cast spells or act offensively, but you move away one range category. You may also take up a position or otherwise act.

Fall Prone and Beg For Mercy in Range and Cover

If you choose to fall prone and beg for mercy, your opponent's next positioning test is Ob 1. If he is successful, he may spend his margin of success according to the standard rules. When (or if) you recover, you find that you've soiled yourself but you have a 2D position.

Swoon in Range and Cover

Lastly, you may choose to Swoon. If you swoon, you may test Stealthy (or Inconspicuous if in a populated area) against your opponent's Observation. Neither side needs to spend a success. The test is automatic. If successful, you disappear. You fall down in the reeds, roll under a log or collapse under a cart. Your opponent can't find you in the confusion. If you were the only one left standing, this ends the Range and Cover. You wake up hours later, cold, alone and lost.

If your opponent wins the Observation test and spots you as you swoon, he makes his next maneuver at Ob 1. If he's successful, he may spend his margin of success according to the standard rules.

Capturing Sleeping Beauty

If you're at optimal range while your opponent is hesitating—if it makes sense given the terrain—you can use one of your actions to capture him, or, if he's part of a hesitating team, to capture the cowards. To capture, you spend the action (one success per character captured, of course). You strip him of his weapons and have him at bay. He can't run. He can fight if he's suicidal. If you'd rather just kill the cowards, spend your actions on shooting.

Forfeiting Actions in Range and Cover

A player may drop his third volley maneuver to change his second volley. This means the player hesitates with Stand and Drool during his third volley.

Teams in Range and Cover

Range and Cover can be used as a skirmish battle system for muddy mercenaries and sybaritic sorcerers.

At the start of the battle, break down into teams. The teams do not have to be the same size—you can be outnumbered. For player characters, break down into groups of two or three.

Help the Leader

Only one player makes the test for the maneuver. But this player can be helped by one other character. The helper must give help from the ability being tested or an appropriate wise skill.

Skirmish Tactics

A character with the Skirmish Tactics training skill can always help another character who also has Skirmish Tactics with a maneuver test.

Team Actions

In order to act within a team, you must be assigned an action from the team's margin of success. Once given an action on this volley, make any appropriate or necessary tests—shooting, spell casting or other skill tests.

Team Range

If you're in a team using weapons of varying ranges, position from the range of the weapon of the character who is making the maneuver test. Then consult the range tables to find everyone else's current range. Thus if you are at extreme range for a bow, you're out of range for a bomb.

Team Hits

When your team is hit by incoming fire, team members can volunteer to take the hit. Otherwise, the GM assigns the hits. In the case of ties, decide who will take the hits before you decide who is shooting and who is ducking. If your opponent targets you but you decide to duck, he can't change targets.

Two Teams on One

If you have two teams vying for position against one other, the single team rolls once for its maneuver. Consult the interactions for the two opposing teams. They must each contend with the targeted team's successes. If they're victorious, they can maneuver and apply their successes according to the action rules in this chapter.

An Orc Follower is holding a bridge as a rear-guard action against a group of Elves. Under his command are a handful of goblin Sun Blotters and a team of wolf riders. The wolf riders are on the road. The goblins are on the bridge with the Follower. The Elves are trying to drive the Orcs off. Thus the Follower chooses to Hold the bridge. The wolf riders Close with the Elves. The tricky Elves attempt to Sneak into range. The Elves get four successes. The Follower tests Observation. He gets two successes. The wolf riders get nine successes on Speed. Thus the Elves beat the Follower and close in one distance and can shoot twice with their margin of success. But the wolf riders beat their double obstacle penalty and get an extra success. They close in one distance with the Elves and can shoot once. The Follower and the Sun Blotters do not move, but even though they lost, they get a free shot against the Elves because they chose to Hold.

Team Hesitation

If a team of player characters is forced to make a Steel test in Range and Cover, they each make the test individually. Hesitating characters cannot act in the next volley. If the whole team hesitates, the player who made the maneuver test chooses the hesitation option for the whole team.

Spells in Range and Cover

Spells count as weapons for Range and Cover. They're listed with how many range dice they provide in their spell descriptions. If a sorcerer is leading a team, he should position using the combat spell he intends to cast—benefiting from its positioning dice even though he hasn't technically cast it yet.

You can cast up to 20 actions worth of a spell in one volley of Range and Cover. The rest of the specific rules for spells are contained in the Sorcery chapter under the Spells as Weapons heading.

Weather, Terrain and Light

During Range and Cover apply obstacle penalties for weather, terrain and light. Some penalties are for maneuver. Some are for shooting. Note that there are traits like Penetrating Gaze or Born Under Silver Stars or spells like Cat's Eye that can reduce or eliminate these penalties.

Weather

Fog or Mist (+2 Ob maneuver; +3 Ob shooting), Light Rain (+1 Ob to closing or withdrawing maneuvers except Sneak), Light Snow (+1 Ob to all maneuvers except Sneak; +1 Ob to shoot), Heavy Rain (+2 Ob closing

and withdrawing maneuvers except Sneak, +1 Ob Hold or Maintain, +1 Ob Sneak; +2 Ob shoot), Heavy Snow (+2 Ob to all maneuvers; +2 Ob shoot).

Terrain

Mud (+2 Ob to closing or withdrawing maneuvers), Snowy (+1 Ob to maneuver), Rocky ground (+1 Ob to Charge, Retreat, Flank and Fall Back), Bog or Swamp (+3 Ob to all maneuvers except Hold or Maintain).

Light

Twilight (+1 Ob to shoot; +1 Ob to closing and withdrawing maneuvers except Sneak), Moonlit darkness (+1 Ob to shoot; +2 Ob to closing and withdrawing maneuvers except Sneak), Starlit darkness (+2 Ob to shoot; +2 Ob to closing and withdrawing maneuvers except Sneak), Complete darkness (+3 Ob to shoot; +3 Ob to closing and withdrawing maneuvers except Sneak).

Range and Cover in Brief

- GM describes battlefield and sets any objectives.
- GM sets starting ranges unless Tactics or Stealthy are used to set the field of battle or ambush opponents.
- Break characters down into teams. Typically player characters will be on one team and NPC opponents will be on the other.
- Each team privately chooses three Range and Cover maneuvers—one in each volley for this exchange.
  - — All teams reveal their maneuver for volley 1 and test appropriate abilities: stat or skill plus weapon range dice plus stride or other advantages. Winning team spends extra successes to generate actions. Ties result in both teams shooting simultaneously, but consult the Tying for Maneuver section for who gets to move.
  - — If shooting, check range for weapon against winning team's weapon ranges. Current range plus cover determines shot obstacles.
  - — If winning team was closing or withdrawing, then they move in or out one range according to their weapon. The losing team's range is determined relative to the winner's new range.
- Repeat steps for volley 1 for volleys 2 and 3.
- If objectives incomplete or other team still standing, choose three new maneuvers.

Fight

The Burning Wheel represents a dangerous, confusing world. In this world, fighting is uncertain, dirty, undignified, bloody, brutal and ugly. Players control their characters' every move, but they don't *know what their opponent is going to do.*

Players square off with their opponents and try to predict what those adversaries are going to do. Players build "hands" of maneuvers that they use to protect themselves while simultaneously laying their opponents low. Outwitting your opponent and beating him to the punch are major factors when playing this game.

It's a game of strategy, tactics and straight up luck; it's a game where the unskilled can outwit the trained and win; and where the skilled fighter is supremely dangerous in his element.

Mechanically, Fight is analogous to the Duel of Wits and Range and Cover rules. A series of privately chosen actions made across a short span of time represent the characters vying for position and bashing away at each other. But unlike the Duel of Wits statement of purpose or an objective in Range and Cover, a Fight is resolved by incapacitating or killing your opponent. Once the knives are out, the time for debate and nuance is over.

Picking Your Battles

There are a number of ways to get into a fight. You and your opponent could agree to fight and simply square off: It's the honorable thing to do. You could throw a drink (or gauntlet or punch) and start a brawl. You could ambush or be ambushed. You could lead a small band on a raid or into a skirmish. You could be thrust into a battle. I'm sure there are other methods, but you get the idea.

When squaring off with an opponent for a serious one-on-one fight, ready your character: armor up, unlimber your shield, draw your weapons. Then start the fight—simple, bloody, or detailed.

When you start a brawl, it's usually best to roleplay in the situation for a bit. What event precipitates the action? A sucker punch, an

insult or a dirty trick can be resolved with a versus test—Intimidation or Brawling—before using the full-blown fighting rules. Use the results of the lead-in test to set up the conditions of the engagement—one side hesitating or wounded to start, for example.

When conducting an ambush, use the ambush rules described in this chapter.

Leading a small band on a raid or into a skirmish probably involves using the Range and Cover rules before you get down to hand-to-hand combat. But if you find yourself fighting in small groups, use the rules for multiple opponents found later in this chapter.

Battles—clashes of companies, battalions, armies—are beyond the scope of these rules. Try to find a smaller moment in the battle in which personal valor, skill and bloody-mindedness will decide the day. Use the Fight rules to determine the outcome of those vital moments. You can use Strategy and Logistics to overcome large, battle-oriented obstacles and possibly to create moments in which individual heroics are necessary.

Simple Martial Conflict

You can resolve a fist fight, a brawl or even a duel with a simple versus test.

State your intent—to kill, to injure, to capture, to shove aside, etc. Any goal that can be accomplished by immediate physical action is appropriate. Then tell us how you intend to accomplish that goal—what are you doing? Examples include: stabbing him with my knife, smashing his head into the wall until he stops, pinning him so I can talk sense into him, shouldering him aside so I can grab the idol, etc.

Your opponent states an appropriate intent and task of his own. Test your appropriate skill or stat with any applicable advantage. The winner earns his intent, the loser does not. In the case of a tie, the defender (if there is one) wins. If there is no defender, the opponents are deadlocked. They must find another way to best each other.

How do you know if you should use a versus test? Ask yourself if this fight is a big deal or not. If it's just a beat in the story—or you're pressed for time—a versus test is appropriate. Is a Belief involved? If the fight is against an important opponent or it's the climax to this part of the story, you want to use the more detailed Bloody Versus or Fight rules.

Sir Thormund and Khalid Mohammed stand over a sarcophagus. Inside rests the preserved corpse of a great Moorish captain, clutching his fabled scimitar.

Next to them, Sir Carl consults his notes and prays for guidance. What to do next? Seeing his chance, Khalid lunges for the scimitar!

Luke turns to the GM and announces, "I grab it; I lunge for the scimitar."

Dro, playing Thormund, blinks. "I stop him; I hold him back!"

The GM raises an eyebrow: "Roll for it: Power vs Power."

Both players come up with four successes. Since Khalid was the aggressor in this situation, the tie goes to Thormund, the defender. The burly knight grabs the Mameluke around the shoulders and holds him back.

Luke continues to mime struggling for the sword, even telling the GM, "I don't stop!" but the Let It Ride rules are in effect. He lost that versus test to Dro, so his task fails and his intent is not carried out. We don't roll again.

Bloody Versus Tests

Rather than using a straight versus test, you can use this slightly more nuanced rule, the Bloody Versus test. This rule is for quick resolution of a fight.

In a Bloody Versus, test both players divide their weapon skills (plus FoRKs and other advantages) into two pools. One for attack, one for defense. Each player then rolls his attack pool and then his defense pool. Successes in the defense pool subtract from the opponent's attack successes. Extra successes in the attack pool do damage as described in the Weapons chapter section. In these rules, armor is an advantage; it is not tested separately as in the full Fight rules.

Advantages to Bloody Versus Attack

Longer weapon (when appropriate) +1D, shorter weapon (when appropriate) +2D, versus armor (when fighting armored opponent) +1D per point of VA.

Advantages to Bloody Versus Defend

Shield +1D, gambeson +1D, reinforced leather or light mail +2D, heavy mail or plated chain +3D, full plate +4D.

General Bloody Versus Advantages

These advantages can be applied to either pool at the player's discretion: Higher Reflexes +1D, longer stride +1D, appropriate FoRKs.

Sir Carl and the bandit square off. Carl's player, Danny, divides his B5 Sword skill, putting 3D in attack and 2D in defense. The GM divides the bandit's B4 Axe skill, putting 3D in attack and 1D in defense.

Danny rolls one measly success on his attack dice. The traitors! And another success on his defense dice. The GM rolls three successes on the bandit's attack, and one on his defense. Nice.

Danny's defense success subtracts one of the GM's attack successes, leaving two remaining. The GM's defense success knocks off Danny's measly one success attack. Uh-oh. Danny lost the attack versus test—meaning Sir Carl lost this fight and is injured

Bloody Versus Results

There are three possible results for a bloody versus test: one side successfully attacks, both sides successfully attack and neither side successfully attacks.

One Side Hits

In the struggle, the losing side was wounded. Apply wound result as per the Weapon rules. Describe how you've bested or run off your opponent. This fight is over!

Both Sides Hit

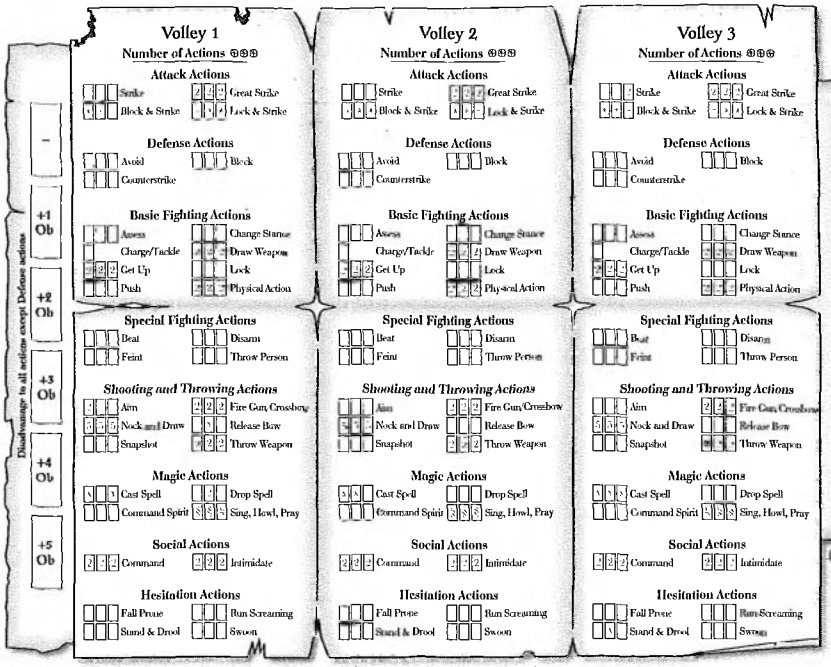
A desperate battle leads to both sides wounded. Apply a wound result as per the Weapon rules. Make Steel tests as appropriate. If one side hesitates, he is out of the fight—captured or run off. If both Steel tests are passed, the side with the most attack successes decides what happens next: another round of fighting (preferably with a different skill), a Forte versus test to outlast your opponent, a Power versus test to subdue your opponent or a Speed versus test to escape.

Neither Side Hits

This titanic struggle leads to a deadlock. No wounds are suffered. The side with the most defense successes decides what happens next: another round of fighting (preferably with a different skill), a Forte versus test to outlast your opponent, a Power versus test to subdue your opponent or a Speed versus test to escape. Or both sides may agree to call it a draw.

But I Want More Fighting!

Versus and bloody versus tests are an abstracted and simple way of conducting a martial conflict in Burning Wheel. They use the basic concepts of the game to resolve the fight, but they rely heavily on luck. If you require more control of the outcome—Can I try a different strategy? Can I shake it off and stab him in the throat? Can't I just execute him?—use the Fight rules.



Fight Procedure

The full Fight rules are detailed, chaotic and fierce. You choose a strategy to protect yourself while overcoming your opponent. Like Duel of Wits and Range and Cover, Fight is broken down into exchanges of volleys and volleys of actions.

Use these full rules during climactic moments—when confronting a major enemy or when striving to fulfill a Belief. Don't use these rules to dispatch mooks or spice the game up with a little fisticuffs.

Engage

To kick off a fight, each combatant squares off with his opponent. A test is made to determine who has the initial advantage in the upcoming exchange.

Rich announces, "I've drawn my sword; I'm entering the fray." That's his intent. A pretty guarded one, but that's cool.

Exchange

The exchange is our "round" in Burning Wheel. We play out a burst of action in each exchange. Between exchanges, we momentarily regroup and rethink our tactics.

Rich wins the advantage. He then takes a moment to privately note what his character is going to be doing for this exchange of blows: Whacking that Orc on the head, dodging back, pushing that other one to the ground and then finishing him with a thrust. Straightforward stuff for a knight.

We do not play out the exchange in one blast. Like the Duel of Wits and Range and Cover, Fight exchanges get broken down into manageable chunks and played out moment to moment.

Exchange After Exchange

If all of the actions for the exchange have been announced and executed, and there is still conflict to resolve, we start another exchange. Vie for position or engage a new opponent then privately choose your actions again. Continue like this until there is either a winner in the fight or there's no one left standing.

Volley

The clash of steel and deadly impact of arrows happens in the volley. Each exchange is broken down into three volleys. We play out each volley, one at a time, before moving on to the next. In each volley, a character can perform up to three actions. The exact number is determined by his Reflexes and current level of injury.

Actions

Within each volley, we break time down into actions. These are the actual moments of play: a strike with your sword, a block with your shield, a trip with your hobnailed boot. The actions contained in each volley are played out—announced, executed and resolved—before moving on to the next.

Positioning

Between exchanges in a fight, the combatants maneuver against each other, trying to get an advantage or neutralize their opponent's advantage for the next exchange. This is done before choosing actions so you can best plan your course in the coming exchange.

Starting a Fight

To start a fight, you square off with an opponent either by ambush, surprise or by engaging him. This section discusses how to square off with or confront an opponent. Ambush and surprise are discussed at the end of the chapter.

Unless otherwise stated, you only ever engage one opponent at a time. You engage, fight and, if you want, you can disengage to take on another opponent—but we're getting ahead of ourselves.

Engage

When you *engage* your opponent—you try to put yourself at the most advantageous fighting distance for yourself. Both fighters test Speed plus advantages for longer stride and longer weapon. The winner sets himself at his best striking distance and his opponent at his worst possible disadvantage for their relative weapon lengths.

Same Weapon Length

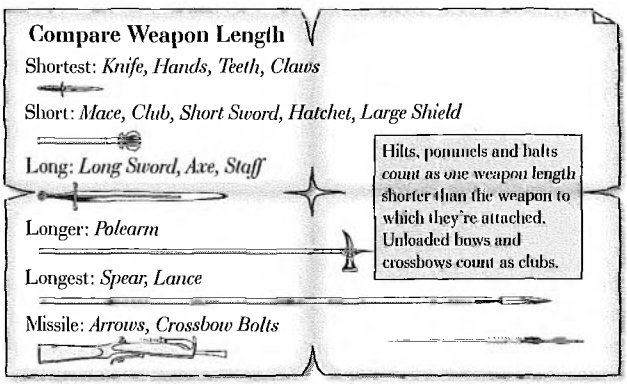
If both fighters have the same weapon length, neither gains advantage or suffers disadvantage. There's no need to test to engage. The combatants are in striking distance of one another.

Stride: +1D, +2D

Longer stride grants +1D. If your stride is greater by 4 or more, you get +2D. Dwarves have a stride of 6, Men, Orcs, Trolls and Great Spiders have stride 7, Elves and Roden have a stride of 8. Wolves have a stride of 11. Horses have a stride of 13. These numbers can be modified by traits and spells.

Longest Weapon: +1D, +2D

The longest weapon gains the advantage to engage. If your weapon is one length longer than your opponent's, you gain a +1D advantage. If your weapon is two or more lengths greater than your opponent's, you gain +2D to engage. You can never have more that +2D advantage from weapon length.



Tied Engagements

If your test to engage is tied, the tie goes to the opponent with the longest weapon.

Engaging an Opponent in an Ongoing Fight

If you are not engaged in a Fight you can engage a new opponent at the start of the next exchange. Meanwhile, use the Eye of the Storm rules found later in this chapter.

Engaged at Your Advantage (or Disadvantage)

If you win the engagement test, you put your opponent at a disadvantage. Consult the Opponent's Disadvantage by Weapon table on the next page for the precise penalty. Find the winner's weapon on the left and the loser's weapon along the top.

Each weapon type indicates the obstacle penalty applied to the loser's attack, basic, special, shooting, social and magic actions so long as you retain the advantage. Defense actions are not penalized.

When you have the advantage and your weapon is longer, you're holding your opponent at bay. If your weapon is shorter, you're in his face, preventing him from maximizing his advantage. On the left, longer weapons gain advantage over shorter weapons. As the numbers move to the right, shorter weapons gain advantage over longer ones as they move in and restrict the movement of their opponent's clumsy weapons.

		Opponent's disadvantage					
		Knife	**Mace**	**Sword**	**Pole**	**Spear**	**Missile**
This weapon has advantage	**Knife, Hands** *(shortest)*	—	+1 Ob	+2 Ob	+3 Ob	+4 Ob	+5 Ob
	Mace, Club *(short)*	+1 Ob	—	—	+1 Ob	+2 Ob	+3 Ob
	Sword, Axe *(long)*	+2 Ob	+1 Ob	—	—	+1 Ob	+2 Ob
	Polearm *(longer)*	+3 Ob	+2 Ob	+1 Ob	—	—	+1 Ob
	Spear *(longest)*	+4 Ob	+3 Ob	+2 Ob	+1 Ob	—	—
	Missile	+5 Ob	+4 Ob	+3 Ob	+2 Ob	+1 Ob	—

+0b—Penalty for your opponent's attack, special, basic, magic, social or shooting actions (any action but defense and positioning).

Dash—No bonus or penalty for you or your opponent.

Actions in Volleys

In order to control your character in a Fight in Burning Wheel, you must engage in a few exercises: You must first think as he does. What would he do? You must then consider your opponent. What will he do? You must then decide if your action is valid in the face of your opponent's anticipated stratagem. Lastly, you then translate what you want your character to do—your intent—into actions.

Any kind of physical or mental task in detailed combat is broken down into an action or a series of multiple actions. Striking someone with a sword is a simple action. Drawing an arrow, nocking it and releasing it into the chest of your enemy is more complex—it eats up more time and hence more of your character's actions.

Rich knows he wants his knight to do the following: Whack that Orc on the head, dodge back (just in case), shove that other one to the ground and then finish him with a thrust. To describe this for his character he notes the following actions: Strike, Avoid, Push and Strike. Pretty simple.

Reflexes

The Reflexes attribute determines how many actions a character can perform in the exchange. The exponent is the number of actions.

A character with a B4 Reflexes has four actions to play with.

Divide Actions by 3 Volleys

Actions are divided into three volleys as evenly as possible. You can't double up unless you have one action in each volley. You can't triple up unless you have two actions for all three volleys.

Rich's knight has a B4 Reflexes. He gets four actions in the exchange. That means one action in each volley, plus one doubled up (which means he gets a second action).

What follows is a list of Reflexes exponents and the possible action divisions across all three volleys.

Reflexes	Actions Per Exchange	Volley and Action Combinations (V1/V2/V3)
B1	1	1/–/– or –/1/– or –/–/1
B2	2	1/1/– or –/1/1 or 1/–/1
B3	3	1/1/1
B4	4	2/1/1 or 1/2/1 or 1/1/2
B5	5	2/2/1 or 2/1/2 or 1/2/2
B6	6	2/2/2
B7	7	3/2/2 or 2/3/2 or 2/2/3
B8	8	3/3/2 or 3/2/3 or 2/3/3
B9	9	3/3/3

With a B4 Reflexes, Rich's knight has four actions in the exchange. He can take 2 actions in volley 1, one in volley 2 and one in volley 3. Or he could do one action, then two, then one again. Or one, one and then two. Whereas a character with a Reflexes of B6 has two actions in each volley. A character with a B5 Reflexes has two actions in two volleys, and one in the remaining volley.

This is important for sequencing the actions. Read on and see why!

Changes To Reflexes

If your Reflexes change during the exchange due to injury, magic or another effect, apply the change at the start of the next exchange not during this one.

Fight Scripting

At the start of each exchange, after engaging or positioning, each player privately chooses his character's actions. We call this scripting. That's our term for building a plan of action for your character. The plan is not immutable, but it's what you are committing to for the moment. Players are rewarded for thinking ahead and penalized for having to rethink their course of action.

As a player lists what he wants his character to do, he must note in what order he wants those actions to happen. This is very important for determining which actions play off against each other and which slip through uncontested.

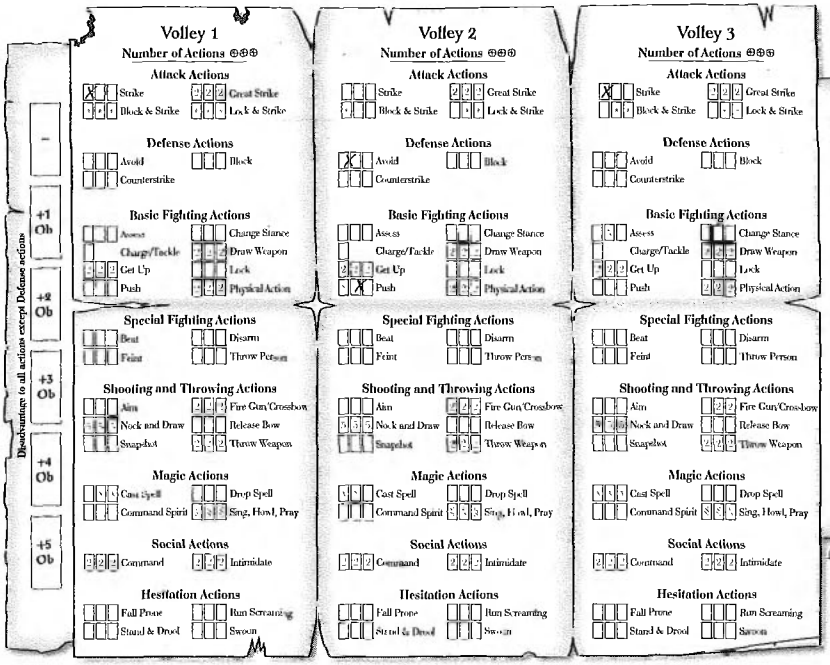
You can have up to three actions in a volley. However, when choosing your actions, your first action plays against your opponent's first action. Your second action plays against second actions. Third actions play against third actions.

Once Rich determines what actions he wants to take, he needs to figure out their timing and order. The timing—in which volley they happen and whether they are his first or second action in that volley—determines whether or not another character can oppose or interfere with him as he's acting. His script for the exchange is as follows: Strike, Avoid, Push, Strike

Simultaneous Action

Once all players have scripted for their characters, reveal all of actions for volley 1. All actions scripted for volley 1, action 1 happen at the same time. Volley 1, action 2 are simultaneous, as well. Announce them, roll for them and resolve the results—wounds, incapacitation, failed Steel tests, death, etc—before moving on and revealing the actions for the next volley.

Rich's Knight's Actions



At the beginning of this combat, the GM took a moment and wrote a script for this Orc (and probably a few others).

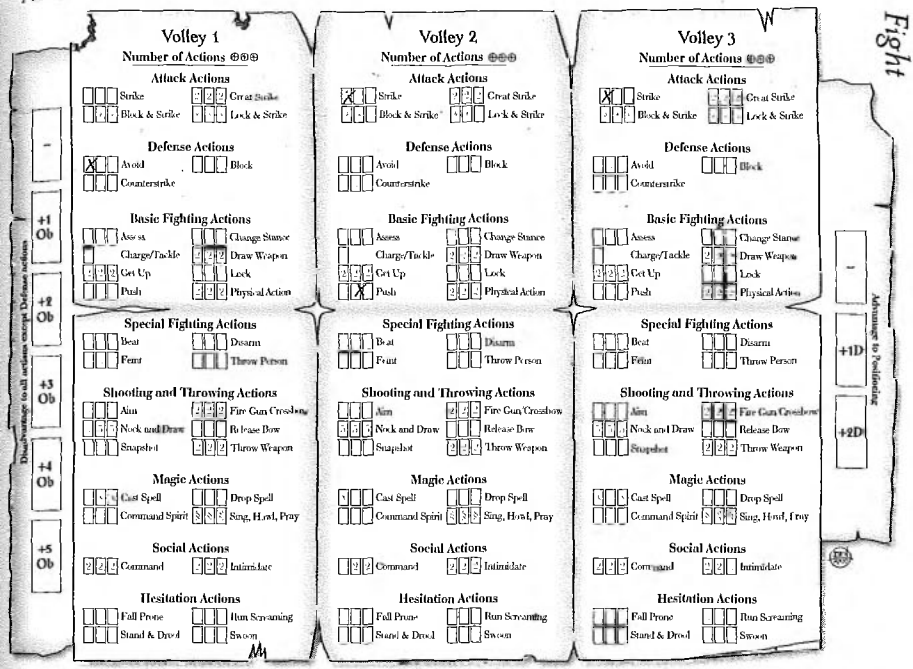
Once we're in the heat of combat, we start with volley 1 and compare actions. The GM demands, "Everyone announce their first volley." Rich has his character Striking on volley 1 (V1), first action. The Orc is Avoiding. Consulting the action descriptions in this chapter, we see that these two actions oppose one another, so a versus test is made.

Volley 2: First action, situation is reversed. The Orc Strikes while Rich's knight Avoids. On the second action, both characters have a Push scripted. The Push actions are both attacking type maneuvers—both characters are attempting to forcibly shove the other to the ground at the same time. That calls for a versus test.

In volley 3, both characters are Striking simultaneously. It's possible for them both to be injured or killed at the same time.

That's the basic gist of the scripting system: Plan ahead, note your actions, decide where they fall in the exchange, then play them out against your opponent. From here on out, we get into the nitty gritty—how to integrate movement, what the effects of the actions are, speech and surprise and how to change your mind.

NPC Orc's Actions



Roll When?

Dice aren't rolled for actions until everyone has announced their actions and declared their intents. All actions are taken into account—compare the interactions for all of the actions—and then roll the dice. Each action interacts with the other actions differently. Sometimes you'll make versus tests, sometimes just standard tests.

Positioning During a Fight

Combat is a dynamic affair. Fighters shift their positions, trying to gain advantage over one another. Thus, as actions are played out, each character is assumed to be ducking, dodging and dashing as he is best able. He is never still, he's always vying for advantage.

Positioning Procedure

At the start of each exchange after the first, privately choose whether you're going to vie for position (to gain advantage), disengage (to get out of the fight) or let 'em come (to cede the advantage to your opponent). Once everyone has decided, reveal your positioning choice and resolve the test. Once the positioning has been resolved, choose your actions and play out the exchange.

Same Weapon Length

If two fighters are using weapons of the same length, you do not have to test to vie for position. Neither can gain advantage nor put his opponent at a disadvantage. Only test if one fighter attempts to Disengage. Otherwise skip this step and go right to choosing your actions for the next exchange.

Unengaged During an Ongoing Fight

If you're part of an ongoing fight and you're unengaged, you can attempt to engage with another combatant at the start of the exchange rather than vying for position or disengaging. In that case, use the rules for engaging, not vying for position.

Stride in Positioning

When positioning, the character with the longest stride has the advantage. He gets a +1D to position against his opponent. If his stride is longer than his opponent's by four or more, he gains +2D to position against him.

Vie for Position

When you vie for position, you attempt to either put yourself at an advantage (and your opponent at a disadvantage) or you attempt to maintain your current advantage.

If you vie for position, test your Speed plus advantages for stride and your positioning advantage—do not use the weapon length list in the engage section. Use this table instead.

Positioning Advantage	Your Opponent's Weapon: Knife	Mace	Sword	Pole	Spear	Missile
This weapon has advantage						
Knife, Hands *(shortest)*	—	+1D	+2D	+2D	+2D	+2D
Mace, Club *(short)*	+1D	—	—	+1D	+2D	+2D
Sword, Axe *(long)*	+2D	+1D	—	—	+2D	+2D
Polearm *(longer)*	+2D	+2D	+1D	—	—	+1D
Spear *(longest)*	+2D	+2D	+2D	+1D	—	—
Missile	+2D	+2D	+2D	+2D	+1D	—

After determining a winner and loser, consult the Positioning table to determine the effects for this upcoming exchange.

Tied Vie for Positioning

If you tie when vying for position, the fighting distance and advantage remain unchanged. If your opponent attempts to Disengage and you tie him, he fails. You remain at the same fighting distance, advantage and disadvantage.

Disengage

If an opponent proves too much for you, you can use the disengage maneuver to pull back and get some distance.

Test Speed with a +1D advantage plus advantages from stride and the Positioning Advantage and Disadvantage table. You must win the test, not tie. If you're successful, you retreat out of range of your opponent's attacks. He may not act against you; you may not act against him (unless otherwise noted by special conditions). If you fail to Disengage, your opponent places you at his best advantage. Consult the Positioning Advantage and Disadvantage table.

When you disengage, you may not reengage or be reengaged by that opponent for this exchange. If you disengaged from one opponent, but another opponent attempted to engage you at the same time and beat your positioning successes, then you are engaged with that second opponent. Otherwise you are disengaged.

If you remain disengaged, you may engage with another opponent or your previous opponent at the start of the next exchange, or you may remain out of the fight. If you wish to remain out of the fight, but an opponent attempts to engage you, you must test to disengage as above.

During the exchange, If your opponent is dead, incapacitated or hesitating for the whole volley, you can disengage from the fight at will without need for a test. Or you can hang in there and engage another opponent at the start of the exchange.

Hanging Back

If you want to hang back at the edge of the melee and wait for an opportunity—use the disengage maneuver. You'll keep away from anyone who tries to engage you. This is a good tactic to use while you're preparing a spell, loading a bow or shrugging off a wound. See also the Eye of the Storm heading later in this chapter.

Disengaged When Shooting and Casting
In order to release a spell or arrow, you must engage with a target (or be engaged by him).

Double Disengage
If you and your opponent both disengage at the same time, you are both successful. You both pull back out of striking distance.

I'm Done
If you've disengaged and there's no new opponent to engage you, you can declare that your character is out of the fight. If you're the only other combatant, the fight is over. If you're one of many, you can head off to other business while your companions duke it out. If you want to stay in the fight, you must engage a new opponent.

Let 'Em Come!

If a player so desires, he can have his character stop all this dancing around and just plant his feet and stand his ground. In this case, so long as his opponent rolls one success while vying for position, he gains positioning advantage or disengages as per his chosen maneuver.

Let 'Em Come! Shooting Advantage
If you have nerves of steel and script a Let 'Em Come against your opponent, you gain +2D to hit your opponent with a bow, crossbow, gun or thrown weapon. However, you must pay the penalty if your opponent puts you at a disadvantage.

Retaining or Taking the Advantage

Once the fight is on, the fighters continue to battle for dominance. At the end of the exchange, one fighter will usually have an advantage over his opponent. You can retain the advantage you won at the start of the exchange. Or you can take the advantage by using actions like Beat, Charge and Lock. Regardless of how you got it, the fighter with the advantage at the end of the exchange gets a bonus to vying for position at

the start the next exchange. Consult the table under the Vie for Position heading and compare your weapon to your opponent's weapon to see what kind of bonus you get.

Fighting Skills

Unskilled

If you're unskilled in a Fight, you suffer double obstacle penalties to your standard test actions. In versus test actions, you must generate two successes for each one of your opponent's successes. To overcome a +1 Ob penalty, however, you only need one success.

Brawling

Brawling grants access to attack, defense and basic actions, but not special actions. You may use the Brawling skill in place of Power for the Lock and Push actions at your discretion.

Boxing and Martial Arts

Boxing and Martial Arts skills allow a character to use all attack, defense, basic and special actions. You may use the skill in place of Power for Push and Lock at your discretion.

Weapon Skills

Weapon skills grant access to all attack, defense, basic and special actions except Throw Person. Weapon skill does not replace stat tests for any action.

Savage Attack and Other Monstrous Skills

Savage Attack gives a monster access to attack, defense, basic and special actions. Do not replace any stats with this skill.

Fight Actions

Fights are resolved action by action. Each action interacts with the other actions differently. Sometimes you make a standard test against an obstacle. Other times you make a versus test.

Each action lists the ability you test when using this action. Use this ability against the obstacles described for each action.

Fight Action Tables

Each action has a small table attached to it. The table shows the obstacles for using this action against the other fighting actions. This

small table is the simple, condensed version. A full-blown table can be found on the back of the scripting sheet available for download from our website: burningwheel.com The full sheet shows all of the obstacles for all interactions.

Non-Fighty Actions

For non-fighty actions like Assess and Cast Spell, the table lists the obstacles for actions played *against* you while you're using that action. The obstacles listed are not for casting spells or assessing the situation. Those actions have their own special obstacles.

Dash Interactions

A dash — indicates that you do not test any ability for this action. However, your opponent might test depending on what his action interaction says, so be sure to check that.

Standard Test Actions

Standard tests are indicated by an obstacle. Do not roll against your opponent. Test the indicated ability against the obstacle in the action description. Meeting the obstacle passes the test (and gets you one level of effect). Apply margin of success for additional effect.

Half Stat or Skill Obstacles

Many of the obstacles for these actions are half of your opponent's stat or skill. Always round up when calculating these obstacles.

The Compleat Obstacle

A complete obstacle consists of a handful of factors: the obstacle listed in the action, the disadvantage if any, wounds, and other conditions like darkness or being knocked down.

A Strike is Ob 1, but if I have a +1 Ob disadvantage from positioning, +1 Ob from a wound and +1 Ob for fighting in torchlight, my actual obstacle for this Strike is 4.

Versus Test Actions

Vs stands for versus test. Roll the stat or skill listed with the action against the stat or skill listed with your opponent's action. The player with the highest number of successes wins. Apply your margin of success for the effect of the action. Each action lists which abilities to test.

Versus Test Disadvantages

When making a versus test, add any obstacle penalties that you're suffering to your opponent's roll. Thus if you're at a +1 Ob disadvantage, you add one success to your opponent's roll.

Skill vs Skill, Stat vs Stat, Skill vs Stat

Versus tests in Fight obey the fundamental skilled/unskilled conventions of the game: In the case of skill vs skill or stat vs stat tests, the player with the most successes wins. When playing a stat against a skill, impose a double obstacle penalty for the stat. When using a stat in place of a skill, use the Beginner's Luck rules.

Tied Versus Tests

A tied versus test in Fight indicates no result. Move on to the next action.

Versus Test plus Obstacle Actions

Vs+ is tricky. You make a versus test between your ability and your opponent's, but your opponent gets to add his skill exponent to his number of successes. So if he has a skill of B4 and rolls one success, he has a total of 5 successes to defend with on this roll.

Against No Action

If your Reflexes allows you to play an action, but your opponent doesn't have anything scripted because he's slower than you, consult the following table for your obstacle:

Obstacles for Actions Played Against No Opposed Action											
G/S	Str	Avd	Blk	Cstr	Beat	Dis	Fnt	Cha	Lok	Psh	Thw
Ob 1	Ob 1	—	—	—	½ Skill	Ob = Skill	—	½ For	½ Pow	½ Spd	½ Spd

Attack Fighting Actions

There are four attack actions in Fight: Strike, Great Strike, Block & Strike and Lock & Strike.

Strike

Test: Strike tests your weapon, Brawling or Boxing skill.

Effect: Successes over the obstacle or margin of success in versus tests are used to increase damage and target a specific location. See the Weapons chapter for instructions on doing damage. You can only Strike consecutively a number of times equal to your weapon speed. If you're alternating between different weapons, use the lower weapon speed.

Obstacles for Strike											
G/S	Str	Avd	Blk	Cstr	Beat	Dis	Fnt	Cha	Lok	Psh	Thw
Ob 1	Ob 1	vs Spd	vs Skill	vs Skill	Ob 1	Ob 1	Ob 1	Ob 1	Ob 1	Ob 1	Ob 1

Great Strike

Test: Great Strike tests your weapon, Brawling or Boxing skill.

Restrictions: Great Strike costs two actions to perform. On the first action, you take a breath to set up your attack. You are effectively defenseless on this action; you count as Stand and Drool hesitating. Also, while any weapon can perform a Great Strike, you must be able to put two hands on the weapon to do so. A Great Strike counts as one action against your weapon speed limitation.

Effect: A Great Strike, is a lunging thrust, an overhand strike or a half-sword technique. On the second action, Great Strike acts like a Strike but with two exceptions: It bypasses the Block action and it grants a bonus to damage or armor penetration. Choose before you roll: +1 to your Incidental, Mark and Superb damage results or +1 to your weapon's versus armor rating.

Obstacles for Great Strike											
G/S	Str	Avd	Blk	Cstr	Beat	Dis	Fnt	Cha	Lok	Psh	Thw
Ob 1	Ob 1	vs Spd	vs Skill	vs Skill	Ob 1	Ob 1	Ob 1	Ob 1	Ob 1	Ob 1	Ob 1

Block & Strike

Restrictions: Block and Strike is a special action reserved for characters with Shield Training who are fighting with a shield or parrying blade, or with Two-Fisted Fighting Training and two weapons.

Test: Block and Strike tests the character's weapon skill. Divide your dice into two pools before rolling—one for defense, one for attack. Add any shield dice to the defense portion, less the versus armor rating of your opponent's weapon.

Effect: Successes from the Block portion reduce the successes of your opponent's action. The Strike dice act like a Strike action. Apply penalties from wounds, light, weather and knock down to both parts of the actions. Any advantages are only applied to one side. You don't have to allocate any skill dice to defense, you can rely solely on your shield to protect you. Disadvantage from weapon length or vying for position only applies to the Strike portion.

Interactions: Block and Strike counts as Block *and* a Strike for the purposes of interactions. Test your divided pool against the possible interactions for both of those actions. Against Counterstrike, both characters defend and both attack according to their action.

Lock & Strike

Restrictions: This action requires a special trait like Crushing Jaws.

Test: Savage Attack.

Effect: Successes over the obstacle count as damage as per the standard IMS damage rules and as a Lock as per the Lock action.

Obstacles for Lock & Strike											
G/S	Str	Avd	Blk	Cstr	Beat	Dis	Fnt	Cha	Lok	Psh	Thw
Ob 1	Ob 1	vs Spd	vs Skill	vs Skill	Ob 1	Ob 1	Ob 1	Ob 1	Ob 1	Ob 1	Ob 1

Defense Fighting Actions

There are three defensive actions in Fight: Avoid, Block and Counterstrike.

Avoid

Test: Avoid tests your Speed.

Effect: Successes from the Avoid action reduce the effectiveness of the opposing action. If you roll one success on an Avoid, and your opponent rolls two, you've reduced his effective total to one. If you roll two and he rolls two, you have stopped his action altogether.

Special: Avoid defends against all incoming attack, basic and special actions. Test once; let Avoid successes ride for the action. Avoid is special: it never suffers a double-obstacle penalty for being unskilled. It does not protect against Shooting, Throwing or Magical Actions.

Obstacles for Avoid											
G/S	Str	Avd	Blk	Cstr	Beat	Dis	Fnt	Cha	Lok	Psh	Thw
vs Skill	vs Skill	—	—	—	vs Skill	+ vs Skill	—	vs Pow	vs Pow	vs Pow	vs Skill

Block

Test: Block tests your weapon, Brawling or Boxing skill.

Effect: Block deflects and redirects the incoming attack. Like Avoid, your successes reduce the effectiveness of the opposed action. Each Block success reduces your opponent's total. If you roll successes equal to your opponent, you've stopped his action completely. If you roll additional successes, you can spend your margin of success as follows:

- One extra success: +1D to your next action or, to vying for position if Block is your last action of the exchange).
- Two extra successes: +1 Ob to the blocked character's next action.

- Three extra successes: Blocked character loses his next action. He hesitates, but may only Stand and Drool as a result.

Note: These effects can only be generated through the use of the Block action. Counterstrike, Change Stance and the Block & Strike actions do not gain these extra effects.

Obstacles for Block											
C/S	Str	Avd	Blk	Cstr	Beat	Dis	Fnt	Cha	Lok	Psh	Thw
—	vs Skill	—	—	—	vs Skill	+ vs Skill	—	—	vs Pow	vs Pow	—

Counterstrike

Test: Counterstrike tests your weapon, Brawling or Boxing skill. After actions are revealed, but before your opponent rolls, divide your fighting skill and any advantages into two pools—one for defense and one for attack.

Effect: In versus tests, use the defensive portion to oppose your opponent's action. Successes from your defense reduce his successes. The attack portion counts as a Strike action. However, the *Strike* portion of Counterstrike doesn't suffer disadvantages from weapon length or vying for position.

Obstacles for Counterstrike											
C/S	Str	Avd	Blk	Cstr	Beat	Dis	Fnt	Cha	Lok	Psh	Thw
vs Skill	vs Skill	—	—	—	vs Skill	+ vs Skill	—	—	vs Pow	vs Pow	—

Basic Fighting Actions

There are six actions that anyone can attempt during a Fight, regardless of ability: Assess, Change Stance, Charge/Tackle, Draw Weapon, Get Up, Lock, Physical Action and Push.

Assess

Assessing allows a player to look for specific details—easy exits, the sources of that burning smell and unarmored locations on his opponent.

Test: An assess nets the character a Perception test in search of what he described in his intent and task.

Special: An assess takes one action. This is a quick, over the shoulder glance. Additional actions may be spent on an assess in order to gain advantage dice to the Perception test—+1D for a second action and +2D for a third.

Obstacles for Actions Played Against Assess											
G/S	Str	Avd	Blk	Cstr	Beat	Dis	Fnt	Cha	Lok	Psh	Thw
Ob 1	Ob 1	—	—	—	½ Skill	Skill	—	½ Spd	½ Pow	½ Pow	½ Spd

Change Stance

Test: It does not require a test to change stances. There are three fighting stances: neutral, defensive and aggressive. Decide which stance you're changing to when you select this action.

Neutral Stance: Neutral stance is the default. You start a fight in neutral stance unless otherwise noted. It grants no advantage and suffers no disadvantages. The Change Stance: Neutral action counts as a Feint.

Defensive stance: Defensive stance grants +2D to Avoid, Block and Counterstrike. Strike and Great Strike suffer a +2 Ob penalty when performed from defensive stance. The Change Stance: Defensive action counts as a Block.

Aggressive stance: Aggressive stance grants +2D to Strike and Great Strike. Block and Counterstrike suffer +2 Ob penalty. You may not Avoid. If you accidently script Avoid while in aggressive stance, you hesitate for an action. The Change Stance: Aggressive action counts as the first action of Intimidate (found in the Social Actions section). If you wish to complete the action, script one more action of Intimidate. See Social Actions for rules on Intimidate.

Special: Instead of using the stance dice as a bonus to actions in the script, a player may use his +2D bonus to aid him vying for position.

Obviously, this must be declared at the top of the exchange. *Stance dice used to position cannot then be used as a bonus to actions, but all other action/stance penalties apply.*

Restrictions: You keep your stance until you change stance, disengage, are incapacitated, hesitate or use the Charge/Tackle action. Any of these conditions automatically drops the character back to neutral stance. You *may* be Locked (but not incapacitated), on top of your opponent, on your back, riding a horse or unskilled and still take a stance.

Charge/Tackle

Test: Charge/Tackle tests your Power with a +1D advantage plus stride advantage. Charge/Tackle must be your first action in the volley.

Effect: When performing this action, choose whether you're charging your opponent or tackling him. If you charge, you attempt to knock him down but you remain on your feet yourself. If you tackle, you take your opponent down with you. If you win the versus test by one or meet your obstacle in a standard test, you stagger your opponent. He's at +1 Ob to his next test, whatever it may be. If you win the versus test by two or exceed your obstacle in the standard test, you knock your opponent down. He is off his feet and suffers the appropriate penalties until he rights himself.

Charge: If you successfully charge, you also take the advantage for your hands or for whatever weapon you're holding except spears and missiles—your choice.

Tackle: If you tackle your opponent, you take the advantage at the Hands fighting distance. If you successfully tackle your opponent, he may not use the Shooting and Throwing or Magic actions. There is one exception: He may discharge a pistol at this range.

Restrictions: Your stance reverts to neutral stance if you Charge/Tackle. If you fail this action, you give your opponent the advantage and lose your next action.

Special: When you use this action you change weapons to your hands, unless you're using a shield which uses the short weapon length.

Obstacles for Charge/Tackle

C/S	Str	Avd	Blk	Cstr	Beat	Dis	Fnt	Cha	Lok	Psh	Thw
½ For	½ For	vs Spd	½ Spd	½ Spd	½ Spd	½ For	½ For	vs Pow	½ For	vs Pow	vs Skill

Draw Weapon

Action Cost: Two actions are required to unsheathe/unsling a handheld weapon. This includes sheathed swords, throwing knives, slung crossbows, etc. Readying a weapon before a fight—on a strap or in an off hand—decreases draw time to one action.

Physical Action

Test: Physical actions typically use Power (to rip something open), Agility (to grab something) or Speed (to vault something).

Action Cost: Physical acts eat up two actions.

Effect: This category of actions covers everything from overturning tables to opening doors and climbing through windows.

Obstacles for Actions Played Against Physical Actions											
G/S	Str	Avd	Blk	Catr	Beat	Dis	Fnt	Cha	Lok	Psh	Thw
Ob 1	Ob 1	—	—	—	½ Skill	Skill	—	½ Spd	½ Pow	½ Spd	½ Spd

Push

Test: Push tests Power. Push uses the Hands weapon length.

Effect: If you win the versus test by one or meet your obstacle in a standard test, you stagger your opponent: He's at +1 Ob to his next test, whatever it may be. If you win the versus test by two or exceed your obstacle in a standard test, you stagger your opponent and take the advantage so long as your weapon length is *long* or shorter. If you win the versus test by three or exceed your obstacle by two in a standard test, you knock your opponent down. He is off his feet and suffers the appropriate penalties until he rights himself.

Special: When you use this action you change weapons to your hands, unless you're using a shield which uses the short weapon length.

Obstacles for Push											
G/S	Str	Avd	Blk	Catr	Beat	Dis	Fnt	Cha	Lok	Psh	Thw
½ Spd	½ Spd	vs Spd	vs Skill	vs Skill	½ Spd	½ Pow	½ Spd	vs Pow	½ Spd	vs Pow	vs Skill

Lock

Test: Lock tests Power. Lock uses the Hands weapon length.

Effect: If you win the versus test by one or meet your obstacle in a standard test, you grab your opponent: His Agility, Speed, Power and Forte and his fighting, shooting and magical skills are all reduced by one die. Each additional success reduces your opponent's abilities by another point. (Reflexes is not reduced.)

Pulled In: If you manage to grab your opponent with a Lock, you pull him in. You have the advantage at the Hands fighting distance.

In Your Face: If you successfully Lock your opponent, he may not use the Shooting and Throwing or Magic Actions with one exception: He may shoot if he's using a pistol.

Increase the Pressure: You can script multiple Lock actions and increase the value of your Lock on your opponent. You maintain your grip so long as your opponent fails to escape, you don't hesitate or voluntarily let go. Each additional successful Lock test further reduces your opponent's abilities by your margin of success.

Incapacitation: If you reduce your opponent's Agility, Speed, Power or Forte to zero dice, he is incapacitated. He may not resist or act in any fashion until you release him. Skills cannot be used at all.

Escaping Locks: If you're in a Lock and wish to escape, use the Avoid action but replace Speed with Agility, Power or Forte (your choice). If scripted against a Dash interaction, test Avoid against Ob 0, otherwise use the results of the versus test. Margin of success for the action reduces any standing Lock penalty. The dice are regained and may be used on the next action.

Special: When you use this action you change weapons to your hands.

Restriction: You must have at least one hand free to perform this action. If you do not, you drop one item that you're holding as you go for the grab. You cannot vie for position, engage or disengage until you've broken or let go of any locks.

Obstacles for Lock											
G/S	Str	Avd	Blk	Cstr	Beat	Dis	Fnt	Cha	Lok	Psh	Thw
½ Pow	½ Pow	vs Spd	vs Skill	vs Skill	½ Pow	vs Skill	½ Pow	½ Pow	vs Pow	½ Pow	½ Pow

Get Up

Characters are always getting knocked down. It requires two actions to get up from being laid flat. See the Knocked Down rules later in this chapter.

Obstacles for Actions Played Against Get Up											
G/S	Str	Avd	Blk	C/S	Beat	Dis	Fnt	C/T	Lok	Psh	Thw
Ob 1	Ob 1	—	—	—	½ Skill	Skill	—	½ For	½ Pow	½ Spd	½ Spd

Special Fighting Actions

There are four special actions: Beat, Disarm, Feint and Throw Person.

Beat

Test: Beat tests your weapon skill.

Effect: If you meet the obstacle or win the versus test, you steal the advantage from your opponent. He now suffers the appropriate disadvantage according to your weapons and you gain an advantage to the positioning test at the start of the next exchange (provided you maintain advantage). If you already have the advantage, you can give your opponent a +1 Ob penalty to his next action or you can take +1D to your next action. You choose.

Special: Gain a +1D advantage to the Beat test if you're using two hands on your weapon. You cannot hold anything in your off hand!

Obstacles for Beat											
C/S	Str	Avd	Blk	Cstr	Beat	Dis	Fnt	Cha	Lok	Psh	Thw
½ Skill	½ Skill	vs Spd	vs Skill	vs Skill	vs Skill	+ vs Skill	vs Skill	½ Skill	½ Skill	½ Skill	½ Skill

Disarm

Tests: Weapon or Boxing skill.

Effect: Disarm is a difficult action to pull off, but if successful its results are spectacular. If successful, you knock your opponent's weapon away. A successful Disarm also grants you the advantage for your weapon.

Special Versus Test Rules: In order to Disarm someone in a versus test, you must win by a margin of success equal to his weapon skill—except in the case of Disarm vs Feint. Hence the + sign in the interactions tables for Disarm.

Obstacles for Disarm											
C/S	Str	Avd	Blk	Cstr	Beat	Dis	Fnt	Cha	Lok	Psh	Thw
Skill	Skill	vs + Spd	vs + Skill	vs + Skill	vs + Skill	Skill	vs Skill	Skill	Skill	Skill	Skill

Feint

Tests: Weapon or Boxing skill.

Effect: Feint is a special attack designed to defeat defenses. Feint does damage like a Strike. See the Weapons chapter for the damage rules.

Obstacles for Feint											
G/S	Str	Avd	Blk	Cstr	Beat	Dis	Fnt	Cha	Lok	Psh	Thw
—	—	—	Ob 1	Ob 1	vs Skill	vs Skill	vs Skill	—	—	—	—

Throw Person

Tests: Boxing skill.

Effect: If you win the versus test by one or meet your obstacle in a standard test, you successfully throw your opponent off his feet and he suffers the appropriate penalties until he rights himself. You can choose how to spend additional successes: One additional success can be spent to do an Incidental bare-fisted hit or cause a Steel test. Two additional successes can be spent to cause a Mark hit or an Incidental and a Steel test. Four additional successes can be spent to deliver a Superb hit.

Restrictions: You must have a hand free to perform this action. If you do not, you drop your weapon as you go for the grab.

Obstacles for Throw Person											
G/S	Str	Avd	Blk	Cstr	Beat	Dis	Fnt	Cha	Lok	Psh	Thw
½ Spd	½ Spd	vs Spd	vs Skill	vs Skill	½ Agi	½ Agi	½ Spd	vs Pow	vs Pow	vs Pow	vs Skill

Shooting and Throwing Actions

Use the actions in this section to shoot or throw weapons in a Fight. Shooting and throwing weapons do not make use of actions like Strike, Block or Beat.

Interactions: Shooting and Throwing actions don't interact with the fighting actions like other fighting actions.

Obstacles for Actions Played Against Shooting and Throwing Actions											
G/S	Str	Avd	Blk	Cstr	Beat	Dis	Fnt	Cha	Lok	Psh	Thw
Ob 1	Ob 1	—	—	—	½ Skill	Ob = Skill	—	½ Spd	½ Pow	½ Spd	½ Spd

Throw Object/Weapon

Action cost: It costs two actions to throw a weapon like a knife or stone.

Test: Test Throwing skill. It's an Ob 2 test to hit plus disadvantages from vying for position, weather and light.

Restrictions: Once you throw, you cede advantage to your target.

Aim

Special: A player may spend actions aiming a loaded and ready weapon—a knife in the hand, nocked and drawn bow, a loaded gun, etc. Each action spent gives a +1D advantage. Characters may aim for as many actions as half their Perception exponent rounded up. When aiming with a crossbow, gun or thrown weapon, script your Aim actions first, then script your Throw or Fire actions. When aiming a bow, put your Aim actions after your Nock and Draw actions, before you script Release.

Nock Arrow and Draw Bow

Effect: This extended action readies your bow to shoot. Each type of bow has a different load time: Hunting bow, 5 actions; Elven bow, 5 actions; Great bow, 7 actions. To hit your target, script the Release action after Nock and Draw.

Special: You can prep a bow and keep it ready by spending three actions to nock the arrow. Then when you want to get down to business, you can pay the remainder of the Nock and Draw action to finish readying it. "Always keep an arrow nocked" is a good Instinct.

Reload Crossbow or Gun

Special: Crossbows and pistols require 16 actions to draw and load. Heavy crossbows and muskets require 32 actions.

Fire Gun or Crossbow

Action cost: It costs two actions to fire a gun or crossbow in combat.

Test: Firearms or Crossbow skill as appropriate. It's an Ob 2 test to hit with a gun (plus disadvantages for vying for position, light and weather).

Restrictions: Once you fire, you cede advantage to your target.

Release Bow

Action cost: One action is required to release an arrow from your bow.

Test: Bow skill against Ob 1 plus disadvantages for vying for position, wounds and other appropriate conditions.

Restrictions: Once your arrow is released you cede advantage to your target.

Snapshot

You can use a snapshot with a bow, crossbow, gun or thrown weapon.

Effect: For a crossbow, gun or thrown weapon, a snapshot costs one action. For a bow of any type, a snapshot reduces your draw and nock time by one action. It allows you to release one action sooner.

Test: Snapshot is an Ob 4 test for the Bow, Crossbow, Firearms, or Throwing skill.

Restriction: You may not aim a Snapshot, and once you snap that shot off, you cede advantage to your opponent.

Magic Actions

Casting spells is described in the Sorcery chapter (and the Magic Burner). Faith, Elven songs and Great Wolf howls do not require actions. They are sung simultaneously with other actions. See the Speech, Song and Prayer heading.

Use these obstacles for actions played against Cast Spell, Drop Spell and Command Spirit:

Obstacles for Actions Played Against Magical Actions											
G/S	Str	Avd	Blk	Cstr	Beat	Dis	Fmt	Cha	Lok	Psh	Thw
Ob 1	Ob 1	—	—	—	½ Skill	Ob = Skill	—	½ Spd	½ Pow	½ Spd	½ Spd

Cast Spell

Special: Spells take a number of actions to perform. Spell actions must be performed continuously and without interruption (otherwise bad things happen). Spells have weapon lengths. See the Sorcery chapter for details. Spell casting suffers from weapon length and vying for position disadvantage penalties at the time of its release. If you have the advantage, there's no worry. If you've lost (or never gained) the advantage, apply the appropriate obstacle penalties.

Test: Sorcery or appropriate spell-casting skill after the sorcerer has spent the prerequisite actions casting the spell.

Effect: Spells have effects listed in their individual descriptions.

Drop Spell

Special: If a caster no longer wishes to concentrate on a spell being sustained, it costs one action to drop it.

Command Spirit

A summoner may command a spirit using Spirit Binding during a fight. It only costs one action, but it's very risky. See the Magic Burner.

Social Actions

Use these obstacles for actions played against Command and Intimidate:

Obstacles for Actions Played Against Social Actions											
G/S	Str	Awd	Blk	Cstr	Beat	Dis	Fnt	Cha	Lok	Psh	Thw
Ob 1	Ob 1	—	—	—	½ Skill	Ob = Skill	—	½ Spd	½ Pow	½ Spd	½ Spd

Command

Action Cost: Commanding another character to get back into the fight costs two actions.

Effect: Command can help reduce hesitation. See the Command skill description for the rules.

Intimidate

Action Cost: Using the Intimidation skill on another character in a melee costs two actions.

Test: Intimidation Ob = Will.

Effect: If successful, target must test Steel. Your target hesitates for one action per point of margin of failure.

Hesitation Actions

A character can hesitate due to a failed Steel test, a failed Charge or as the result of a spell or other special effect. When a character must hesitate, the player may choose how he hesitates unless the effect is specified. There are four options: Stand and Drool, Fall Prone (and beg for mercy), Run Screaming and Swoon. You can only choose one option when hesitating.

Your character has a Hesitation of 4. You flub his Steel test—no successes (oh, the traitors!). He now hesitates for four actions, starting with the next action. Choose whether you're going to stand and drool, fall prone, run screaming or swoon for those four actions.

If you had rolled one success, your character would hesitate for three actions. If the character's Reflexes was B5 and he failed the Steel test on his second action, he'd lose all his remaining actions to hesitation.

If you hesitate for a complete volley, you give up your advantage in positioning (if you had any). If you are hesitating at the start of an exchange, you can only disengage if you're Running Screaming. Other hesitation options count as Let 'Em Come.

Stand and Drool

The character is stunned. He does nothing while hesitating.

Obstacles for Actions Played Against Stand and Drool											
G/S	Str	Avd	Blk	Cstr	Beat	Dis	Fnt	Cha	Lok	Psh	Thw
Ob 1	Ob 1	—	—	—	Ob 1	Ob 1	—	Ob 1	Ob 1	Ob 1	Ob 1

Fall Prone (and beg for mercy)

The character falls to his knees or stomach and pleads for his life in the name of compassion, honor, mercy or the gods.

Obstacles for Actions Played Against Fall Prone (and beg for mercy)											
G/S	Str	Avd	Blk	Cstr	Beat	Dis	Fnt	Cha	Lok	Psh	Thw
Ob 1	Ob 1	—	—	—	Ob 1	Ob 1	—	Ob 1	Ob 1	Ob 1	Ob 1

Run Screaming

The character drops what he is holding, turns about and bolts for the exit. If the hesitation crosses the top of the exchange, the player must choose to disengage. He does not have access to weapon length dice.

Obstacles for Actions Played Against Run Screaming											
G/S	Str	Avd	Blk	Cstr	Beat	Dis	Fnt	Cha	Lok	Psh	Thw
½ Spd	½ Spd	—	—	—	Ob 1	½ Skill	—	vs Spd	vs Agi	vs Spd	vs Spd

Swoon

The character passes out. He's out of the fight. If appropriate, he appears dead! He cannot be acted against unless another character pays special attention to him—to finish him, slit his throat, check his pulse or whatever.

Knocked Down

If you're knocked down by your opponent you're considered to be in a bad way. You suffer a +2 Ob to attack actions and +1 Ob to all other actions until you regain your feet.

For purposes of positioning, if you are knocked down, your opponent puts you at his advantage and your disadvantage. You can change this by winning the next positioning test! Crawl away fast!

Getting Up

It takes two actions to get back to your feet or right yourself. These actions can be split in the script. You can write, for example, Get Up (1), Avoid in one volley, and Get Up (2) in the next. If you're halfway up, you're considered +1 Ob to all actions until you finish getting up. Meanwhile, the GM may assign +1D advantage to standard tests made against you.

Speech, Song and Prayer

Characters may speak a few words in each volley they are not hesitating. (That's up to 8 syllables, for the pedants.)

Song, Howls and Prayer

Elven songs, Great Wolf howls and prayers using Faith do not cost an action to perform. They may be performed at the same time as any other action.

Going Places During a Fight

If there's ever a question about one character reaching a destination before another character, make a versus Speed test. If you're trying to get somewhere quickly during a Fight, use the Physical Action choice. The GM should set an obstacle and you can test your Speed to get where you need to be.

Terrain

Most fights take place in unrestricted terrain. Fighters have freedom of movement and room to wield their weapons effectively. However, a fight can take place in a disadvantageous or restricted setting. This limits the advantage a fighter can win from positioning.

Forest

A forest is a perfect example of disadvantageous terrain. There's room to move, but the trees hamper the use of most weapons. Reduce your advantage for engaging or vying for position by -1D. Reduce disadvantage by -1 Ob for all weapon categories unless the weapon holding the advantage is a knife (shortest) or a mace (short). Use this modifier for any situation in which your use of weapons is marginally restricted: a forest, a statuary, a street, etc.

Thus a spear's advantage over a knife could be +1D/+3 Ob at best.

Corridors

Corridors are restricted terrain. It is challenging to use longer weapons in these conditions. Reduce positioning advantage for long, longer, longest weapons by -1D and the disadvantage they cause by +2 Ob.

Thus a spear's advantage over a knife could be +1D/+2 Ob at best. So the spear can still maintain a solid advantage, but it's not as great as if the spear had freedom of movement.

Use this modifier when fighting in restricted conditions: a dungeon corridor, a stair case, in the stacks of an ancient library, etc.

Narrow Confines

Combat in tight locations like tubes, tunnels and cages limits the advantage of long weapons. Anything long, longer, longest can only give a maximum +1 Ob disadvantage. These weapons cannot get advantage dice for positioning, and they suffer a +1 Ob to all actions themselves. Missiles cannot be used in these circumstances.

Changing an Action

Players can change upcoming actions in the exchange. First rule: you cannot change an announced action. That is, as soon as anyone has announced any action, no one can change any of their scripted actions for that volley. Once the GM has called for the volley to be announced, it's too late.

Second rule: To change an action, you must forfeit an action. Actions can be forfeited or changed in any unannounced volley in the exchange. So if you have two actions in a volley you may lose one to change the other one. During the forfeited action, you are considered to be doing nothing.

Any prayer, song or speech associated with the lost actions is lost as well. However, for the action being changed, prayer and speech may be changed as well.

No Forfeiting or Changing in Volley 1

There's no forfeiting or changing anything in volley 1. After volley 1 has been announced and played, you may forfeit and change in volley 2 or 3. After volley 2 is played, if you have two actions in volley 3, you may forfeit and change. If volley 1 and 2 have been played, and you only have one action left in volley 3, you're stuck.

Optional Rule: Forfeiting to Stand and Drool

A player may choose to voluntarily hesitate for his action. It does not cost an action to do this, but it must be announced/changed in accordance with the timing rules described above. The character does nothing at all, and all of the strictures for hesitation are in play.

Optional Rule: Oh F&cK!

This rule allows players to forfeit an action to freely change their *current* announced action to an Avoid or Block. It's good to use while players get their feet under them in this system, or if you want your game to be less gritty and more dramatic. It still costs an action to change an action!

Your opponent announces Strike and you have a Feint scripted. You're in trouble. Using this rule, you can lose an action in a later volley to change your current (doomed) action to Block or Avoid

Eye of the Storm

During a melee, it's possible for you to eliminate your opponent in the middle of the exchange while the rest of the fight swirls around you. If you dispatch your opponent and you still have actions left in the exchange, you can change them to any other action so long as you do not interfere with another ongoing fight. You do not have to obey the standard rules for forfeiting actions. Thus you can shrug off wounds, ready weapons, assess, cast short spells, reload, pray, open doors, grab stuff or other sorts of physical actions.

The same goes if you manage to disengage in a fight, but plan on reentering the melee. Simply spend a number of actions equal to your Reflexes to shrug off wounds, ready weapons, assess, cast short spells, reload, pray, open doors, grab stuff or other sorts of physical actions.

Switching Weapons During an Exchange

Any time you change, switch, drop, choke up on, or otherwise futz with your weapon, you cede the advantage to your opponent. If you have the advantage with your sword, but you use your hands to push, you cede advantage. Consult the disadvantage chart according to your new weapons to see what you penalty is.

If you launch a missile in the fight, you cede the advantage to your opponent in the next volley. If you Push, Charge or throw, you change weapons to your hand and cede advantage. If you use a weapon to Strike, other than what you positioned with, you change weapons and cede advantage.

Shortening Weapons

I'm using a knife, you're using an axe and I have the advantage. That means you suffer a +2 Ob penalty. You want to switch to your hilt as a weapon to reduce your penalty. Just slide up the table for your new penalty—from axe (long) to mace (short).

The hilt is one length shorter than the main weapon. Thus a mace pommel is as long as a knife. A sword pommel is as long as a mace. A polearm haft strike is as long as a sword Damage for these weapons is different than that of the main weapon. See the Weapons chapter for more info.

In the case of a knife against a sword hilt, the swordsman suffers a +1 Ob penalty to his actions.

Fighting with Two Weapons

If you're fighting with a sword and knife, a sword and shield or even sword and open hand, choose which weapon you're positioning with at the top of the exchange.

You have a sword and shield. I have an axe. You decide to engage me with your shield rather than your sword. You win. My axe is now at a disadvantage while you're using your shield to attack and defend. However if you use your sword to Strike or Disarm me, you cede the advantage to my axe. In practice, your action put us both in striking distance for the sword and the axe (since they're the same weapon length). And when you do that, you then place your shield at a disadvantage since we're now fighting further apart.

If you're using two actions with different weapon lengths in the same volley—Push (with your hands) and Strike (with your sword), for example—take the appropriate entry from the table for each weapon against the weapon that holds the advantage.

I have a knife and you have a sword, but I have the advantage. You script Push and Strike. Your Push against my knife imposes no penalty for either of us—hands and knives are the same length. When we consult the table for knife having advantage over sword, we see your sword Strike suffers a +2 Ob penalty. I'm in too close on you for you to get a clean attack!

Two-Fisted Fighting Training and Shield Training

There are two special skills that train a character to fight with two weapons (yeah, a shield is a weapon). They each grant different benefits. Check them out in the skill list.

Trading Advantage

It's possible to trade advantage back and forth during the exchange. Thus it is important to track who has the advantage and who is at a disadvantage. If there is ever a question about what weapon one should position with, gain or lose advantage with, refer to the weapon with which you started this exchange.

Fighting Multiple Opponents

Fighting multiple opponents at once is a dangerous game. The best way to run a skirmish is to square off one-on-one and let each pair fight it out. Winners can engage new opponents.

Hordes of Mooks

If you're fielding ye olde hordes of mooks, make liberal use of the helping rules. Have those three goblins help one another for positioning and actions. Even though they are acting as unit, our hero must run off, kill or incapacitate each one of them separately.

A group of mooks uses the same weapons and positioning actions. They gain advantage and disadvantage together. They can script actions as is appropriate—suffering the applicable advantage and disadvantage.

In a group of four, for example, two can script Strike and two can script Push. One of each pair helps the primary. So a pair of mooks with a B4 Brawling rolls five dice to Strike.

Two on One

Rather than using mobs of mooks, you can pit two independent characters against another character. In this case, all rules for positioning and actions are the same except that each action must be targeted at a specific opponent. Actions cannot affect multiple opponents. The Avoid action is the exception. Successes from Avoid count against all incoming actions on that action that it is scripted.

Once engaged, all fighters may act against one another so long as they use the appropriate disadvantages according to their weapons on the Advantage and Disadvantage table.

Three on One, etc.

When three fighters are facing off against one opponent, they gain certain advantages. With three fighters facing off against one, the lone fighter suffers a -1D penalty to advantage from weapon length or from vying for position. Furthermore, the third opponent reduces his own disadvantage by one step. If he would normally suffer a +2 Ob penalty due to the relative weapon lengths, under these circumstances he only has a +1 Ob penalty.

If you have four on one, the fourth fighter negates any weapon length or positioning advantage the lone fighter might gain. In addition, his weapon length disadvantage is reduced by two steps. If he would normally suffer a +2 Ob penalty, he suffers none in this case. The other fighters still suffer their disadvantages as appropriate.

Once engaged in this fashion, all opponents may act against one another so long as they use the appropriate disadvantages according to their weapons on the Advantage and Disadvantage table.

Melees

If you're running a combat with many fighters, try to pair up the combatants as best you can. When outnumbered, use the rules for two on one and three on one described above. You must engage with or be engaged by a fighter to act against him.

Targets

Choose the target for your action when you announce it. An outnumbered character should get a little leeway to choose the best target. If he's Feinting, he should get to smack the guy who's scripted a Counterstrike, and not simply get whaled on by the guy with a Strike.

Defense Actions Against Multiple Attacks At Once

Block, Counterstrike, Defensive Stance, Block & Strike only protect against one incoming action. If you are being targeted with multiple incoming actions, pick the one you will defend against before rolling. The other actions interact with you as if you had No Action scripted.

Avoid protects against all incoming actions on that particular interval. Test Speed once. Successes stand against all actions targeting you at that moment.

Ganging Up During a Fight

During a fight, it's possible to gang up on one opponent. If you manage to disengage from your opponent, you can engage another character on the field, even if he's already engaged. Engage is always done at the start of an exchange. Use the rules for Two on One as applicable. If you're coming to the aid of an outnumbered ally, you may engage one of his attackers at the start of the exchange. Pick your target, if you win you peel him off and can engage him one on one. If you lose, your target can choose to engage you or pass you off to his partner.

Disengaging From Your Opponent

At the start of the exchange, you may disengage from an opponent. If successful, you may use the Eye of the Storm rule or if there is an ongoing fight, you may test to engage another opponent right away.

Surprise and Ambush

To effect an ambush, set up a situation that uses Stealth or Inconspicuous vs Observation, or—if you're in a small group—uses Tactics vs Tactics or Observation. You can, of course, test using Beginner's Luck in all of these instances.

If the ambusher fails to ambush his quarry, the victims of the attack may choose to engage in combat as normal or they may avoid the combat altogether—fleeing, sneaking by or whatever's appropriate. Test as necessary.

If the ambusher wins this test, he counts as having won the engagement at the start of the combat. In addition, the target must pass a Steel test. His hesitation indicates how many actions he loses from the start of this exchange. It's quite possible this could result in a slaughter.

Hesitate from surprise for two actions and you lose your first two actions of the exchange. Better Run!

Fight Sequence in Brief

- Determine if you'll use simple versus tests, bloody versus tests or a full fight.
- For versus tests, gather advantage dice and resolve the test.
- For a full fight, compare weapon lengths and test to engage.
  - — Winner of engagement test puts his opponent at a disadvantage.
- Privately choose actions equal to Reflexes exponent.
- Declare actions in volley 1. Resolve interactions. Repeat process for volleys 2 and 3. Note who has advantage at the end of each volley.
- Are opponents still standing and willing to continue? If so, continue. If not, end fight.
- To start next exchange, determine if you will vie for position or disengage from the fight.
  - — Use advantage from weapon for bonus dice to position.
  - — If successfully disengaged, you are out of reach of opponent.
  - — If you successfully vie for position, you put your opponent at a disadvantage.

Weapons

To Hit and Damage?

The acts of hitting and damaging a target are combined into one roll for melee weapons in Burning Wheel. Players who meet the obstacle of a test to hit their opponent with a weapon do damage. The more successes over the obstacle, the more damage done. There's a method to it and a limit, too. Damage is done in three stages; successes over the obstacle pushes damage from one stage to the next.

I M S

The three stages of damage for a weapon are: Incidental, Mark and Superb hits (IMS). The level of damage done is determined by successes from the wielder's skill. The actual amount of damage done is based on Power.

For the purposes of example, let's look at the most basic weapon: the fist.

Incidental

An Incidental (I) hit does half of the attacker's Power rounded up.

If your character is punching someone, and his Power exponent is 4, his Incidental hit result is 2. (Half of his exponent.) Power 5 has a 3 Incidental.

An Incidental result is achieved when the player meets his obstacle to hit.

Mark

A Mark (M) does damage equal to the wielder's Power.

A character with a Power exponent of 4 has 4 Mark result damage. Power 5 has a 5 Mark.

A Mark hit is achieved when you get one or two—depending on the weapon—successes over the obstacle.

Superb

A Superb shot does damage equal to 1.5x the attacker's Power. Always round down any fractions when factoring this one.

A character with a Power exponent of 4 has a 6 Superb result. (One and a half times his Power.) Power 5 has a 7 Superb.

To achieve a Superb result, players need two or four successes over the obstacle, depending on the weapon used.

Shade of IMS

The shade of the IMS is equal to the shade of the Power of the weapon. To do gray shade damage, you need either gray shade fists or a gray shade weapon. Neither are easy to come by.

Coordinates not Points

The shade and exponent for the damage level of a hit are coordinates on a wound scale. This scale, and the effect of these hits, is discussed in the Anatomy of Injury section. For now, let's just concentrate on hittin' the bastards!

Missile Weapons

Missile weapons have their own fixed Power. They don't rely on the wielder's strength, just his skill. Read on.

Striking Your Opponent

When a player wants his character to take a swing at another character he tests his appropriate weapon, martial arts or Brawling skill. If he doesn't have an applicable skill, test Agility.

The obstacle to hit depends on the action of his opponent, fighting distance, whether or not a character is on his feet, weather, and various other disadvantages.

Defender Declares his Posture

Before the dice are rolled, the defender or target of the blow describes how his character is standing and what area of the character is most vulnerable to attack.

Defender Chooses Where He Wants to Get Hit

By declaring his position, and where he is vulnerable, *the defender tells the attacker where he will be hit*—he's got his arms up defending his head, so he's left his legs open, for example. Choosing from one of the locations described below, he announces it to his attacker: "My legs are open."

Body Targets

There are four main target areas: head, torso, arms and legs.

Occasionally, it will be important to determine right arm or left arm. If the defender is strongly favoring a side, right and left limbs may be used as additional locations. In this special case it costs one success to go from leg to leg, and two to go from arm to arm. See below for more on this. If the GM determines the favoring to be detrimental to the character, he can apply a +1 Ob disadvantage.

Landing the Blow

Once the defender has declared where he is vulnerable, the *attacker* may use his skill to move the location of the blow. He may dedicate his *extra* successes from his attack roll to improve his aim and move the blow. It costs one success to move from the torso or the arms to any other location. It costs two successes to go from legs to head or from head to legs.

The target of a sword thrust declares that his chest is open—he's wearing a breastplate, so he should be able to absorb whatever comes his way. If the attacker spends one of his extra successes to aim his blow, he can move the shot from the chest area to the head, arms or legs.

Successes applied to aiming a blow do not count toward determining IMS damage for a hit. The attacker allocates his successes to location and damage before any defense is rolled.

Defending Against Aimed Shots

Blocks, Counterstrikes and Avoids knock off the attacker's extra successes. Thus, they can be used to alter the attacker's aim. If the blow

is not entirely dodged or deflected, successes from defensive actions force the aim of the attacker back to the location the defender offered by knocking off his extra successes.

One character is Striking another who is Blocking. The Strike is Ob 1, and two successes are rolled. The defender declares that his torso is open to attack. The attacker uses his extra success to aim the blow at the legs. The defender gets one success on his Block, eliminating the extra success. He tips the shot back up to his heavily-armored breastplate.

Melee Weapons

Sample Melee Weapon: Sword

	Weapon Power	Add	VA	WS	Weapon Length
Sword	+3	2	–	3	Long

Weapon Power

All melee weapons are listed with their own Power. This is called Weapon Power, and is added to the character's own Power before the IMS is factored.

A character with a B4 Power wielding a Long Sword (+3 Power) does a B4 Incidental, a B7 Mark and a B10 Superb.

Add

A player may spend his extra successes with a melee weapon on two things: location and damage. The Add number tells the player how many extra successes must be allocated to damage in order to go from an Incidental to a Mark result and from a Mark to a Superb.

A weapon with an Add 2 requires two successes over the obstacle get from Incidental to Mark and two more over that to get to Superb (four all together).

A sword has an Add 2. If performing an Ob 1 Strike, the player delivers a Mark hit with three successes and a Superb hit with five successes.

If the base obstacle to hit was 3 (due to movement and injury penalties), five successes would give a Mark result, and seven would get a Superb.

Any successes not spent on aiming a blow must be dedicated to improving damage. There's no holding back once the swing is in motion.

Weapon Speed (WS)

Weapon Speed dictates how often a particular type of weapon may *Strike* in the exchange. Weapon speed is rated from 1 to 4 and X.

Knives X, Fists 3, Spear 2, Mace 2, Long Sword 3, Light Axe 2, Footman's Axe 1.

The number indicates how many times the weapon can strike consecutively in a fight. X indicates that the weapon can Strike consecutively any number of times. After Striking with a weapon a number of times equal to the weapon speed, the player must take a rest action. This rest action can be any other action except Great Strike or Strike.

If you switch weapons in an exchange, you're limited to the lowest weapon speed applicable to the moment.

If you have a sword in one hand and a knife in the other, you can Strike three times consecutively. If you have a sword and mace and you Strike two times with the sword, you must rest before you can use another Strike action—even if you want to switch to the mace.

Versus Armor (VA)

This attribute describes how well a weapon penetrates armor. This is discussed in the Armor and Shields section. For now, it's enough to know that the higher the VA, the better.

Handedness

Weapons require the use of one or two hands. One-handed weapons can be used with shields and off-handed weapons. Two-handed weapons cannot be used in that fashion.

One-handed weapons can use the Great Strike action, provided the wielder can put both hands on his weapon for this action. Thus you can't be using your off-hand for anything or be restrained or whatever in that volley. One-handed weapons can also gain a +1D to the Beat action if you have a free off-hand in that volley. Thus you cannot use another weapon, use your hand for Push, Lock or Charge or be restrained. Two-handed weapons can always Great Strike and always get +1D to the Beat action.

Shooting Your Opponent

The process for engaging in combat with a bow, crossbow, pistol or throwing knife is described in detail in the Range and Cover section—the obstacle is based on the current range and the amount of cover.

If used in the Fight rules, consult the shooting and throwing actions for obstacles.

Target Location = Chest

For missile weapons, the target location is always considered the chest/torso. The target of missile fire can't choose where he is hit.

But I'm Behind a Wall!

If the chest of the target is hidden, use the largest exposed location as the default target. If a character's poking his head out from cover, he gets hit in the head, not the foot. If he's hiding his head behind a shield, then his legs are the target.)

Moving the Target Location

Shooting players may spend their extra successes to move the location of the hit. It costs one success to hit the arms or legs, and two successes to hit the head.

Missile and Thrown Weapons

Missiles are used primarily in Range and Cover, sometimes in Fight and occasionally in other situations.

Sample Missile Weapon: Crossbow

Crossbow	DoF: 1-2	3-4	5-6	VA
	I: B5	M: B8	S: B11	2
				Fight Actions: Fire Crossbow.
Ranges:	**Optimal**	**Extreme**	**Max. Range**	
	1D	3D	125 paces	

Bow, Crossbow and Gun Damage

Missile weapons have fixed damage. Since they are mechanical devices, they are not affected by the wielder's Power. They have their own effects. There is no Add for missile weapons, they rely on the Die of Fate to determine what kind of damage is delivered.

Die of Fate (DoF)

The successes over obstacle do not increase the damage stage. Instead they act as a bonus to the Die of Fate.

When a character hits with a missile or thrown weapon, we roll the DoF to see whether an Incidental, Mark or Superb hit is done. Missile weapons are slightly more unpredictable than melee weapons in this regard. But (and this is a big "but"), *anyone* who picks up a crossbow has a chance of inflicting serious harm on their target. Serious harm is not solely confined to the realm of the skilled user.

Bow/Crossbow DoF	*Thrown* DoF	*Gunpowder* DoF
1-2 Incidental	**1-3** Incidental	**1-4** Incidental
3-4 Mark	**4-5** Mark	**5** Mark
5-6 Superb	**6** Superb	**6** Superb

Extra Successes: Bonus to the Die of Fate

Successes over the obstacle with a missile or thrown weapon—that are not allocated to aiming—give a bonus to the DoF roll:

- One extra success gets a +1 to the DoF
- Doubling the obstacle gives +2 to the DoF
- Tripling the obstacle is +3

A player's character has a hunting bow and is shooting a target at optimal range (Ob 2). She rolls four successes. That is double her obstacle. When she rolls the DoF, she adds 2 to her result.

Alternately, our crack-shot hunter could allocate two of those successes to hit her target in the head. Her remaining success would just meet the obstacle, so she would get a normal DoF roll to determine damage.

Versus Armor

Versus armor describes how well a weapon penetrates armor. The mechanics for this are described in the Armor and Shields chapter.

Thrown Weapons Damage

Thrown weapons differ slightly from missile weapons. Their Power *is* dependent on the wielder's Power.

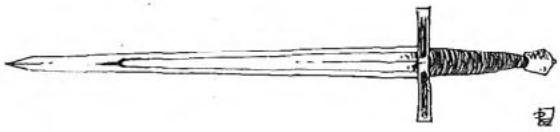
Thrown weapons have a Weapon Power like melee weapons and use the same process to factor their IMS. However, they use the DoF to determine the actual damage delivered. Thrown weapons have a list of types, damages and ranges in the Weapon Appendix.

Sample Thrown Weapon: Knife

Throwing Knife	Weapon Power	DoF:	1-2	3-5	6	VA
	+1		I	M	S	—

Fight Actions: Throw or Snapshot.

Ranges:	Optimal	Extreme	Max. Range
	1D	1D	10 paces



Balance Dice

Occasionally, a weapon will be so well made that it is a joy to use—so light and balanced, it practically hits the target itself! Dwarven-made weapons, for example, are superbly crafted.

Weapons of such quality and caliber have what we call "balance dice." These are bonus dice which are added to the user's skill for all melee maneuvers involving the weapon—Strikes, Great Strikes, Blocks, Counterstrikes, Feints and Disarms. Missile and thrown weapons of Superior Quality give a balance die to the user's appropriate skill for the purposes of hitting the target. Balance dice are the same shade as the weapon.

Complications and Balance

If you're using the persona Complications rule and a weapon with balance dice is involved in the complication, the weapon will always lose its balance dice before being broken completely—it gets chipped or warped, rather than being snapped outright. Balance dice so lost can never be recovered.

Gunpowder Die

Gunpowder weapons use a special die called the *gunpowder die*. Before rolling to hit, pick up a Die of Fate and roll it. If the die comes up as a 1, the firearm has misfired. Reroll the die: On a 4+, the gun jams or flashes and must be reloaded completely. On a 1-3, the gun misfires. Roll the DoF for the weapon and apply the damage to the shooter.

Sample Firearm: Arquebus

Arquebus	DoF: 1-4	5	6	VA
	I: B4	M: B8	S: B12	*

Fight Actions: Fire Gun.

Ranges Dice	Optimal	Extreme	Max. Range
	1D	1D	50 paces

*VA by Range: Too Close to Shoot/Fight VA 4, optimal VA 3, extreme VA 1

Explosives

There may come a time in your game where primitive or medieval explosives come into play. Depending on the type of campaign you're running, the skills Firebombs, Alchemy, Artillery or Munitions can be used to create the explosives. Artillery, Throwing or even Inconspicuous can be used to deliver them.

Sample Bomb

Iron-Cased Bomb	DoF:§	1-2	3-4	5-6	VA
		I: B3	**M:** B6	**S:** B9	4

Fight Actions: Physical Action (light fuse), Throw Object.

Ranges Dice	Optimal	Extreme	Max. Range
	1D	1D	50 paces

§ -1 to the DoF when thrown at extreme range or detonated at lunging distance.

Bombs in Fight

A bomb is a tricky weapon to use in Fight. The close-quarters nature of a melee, makes explosives inherently dangerous to everyone.

Light the Fuse

Lighting the fuse takes two actions with a ready flame. After the fuse is lit, the bomb explodes in the same volley/action of the *following* exchange. If it's lit on volley 1/action 1, it detonates in volley 1/action 1 of the next exchange.

Positioning with a Bomb

A *lit* bomb counts as a missile in Fight.

Throwing a Bomb

Use the Throw Object action. However, since bombs are awkward weapons, bombs always suffer a +1 Ob penalty to hit. Remember, the bomb only detonates three volleys after it's lit.

Run Away! Run Away!

If a bomb is undetonated at the start of the exchange, fighters may attempt to disengage. The bomb still counts as a missile.

Explosion!

When the bomb detonates, roll the die of fate. If it was successfully thrown, the target takes the damage listed. Roll another Die of Fate for each person in the melee. On a roll of 1, that character is caught in the explosion. He takes a wound from the bomb at one lesser stage—I, M or S—than the original damage. If the toss was missed, the GM can

decide the throw long and harmless or he can say the throw was short and everyone in the fight takes a hit from the bomb. Roll a Die of Fate for damage for each character.

Explosives Misfire Die

When the fuse is lit, roll the DoF. On a 1, the explosive misfires. If it was built on a failed skill test, it detonates immediately. Otherwise roll again, on a 4+, it's a dud. On a 1-3, it explodes in the next *volley*.

Bombs in Range and Cover

Due to the more abstract nature of Range and Cover, you don't have to worry about many of the details for bombs. The bomb is assumed to be lit and ready to go. It counts as a 1D range weapon with a 30 pace maximum range. Throwing it uses the range obstacles from Range and Cover. It also has three special properties: If up against another 1D range weapon, bombs get 2D to position; bombs negate one point of the opponent's position or fortification; if the bomber doesn't win the positioning test, the bomb explodes in his hand on a DoF 1.

Weapons in Brief

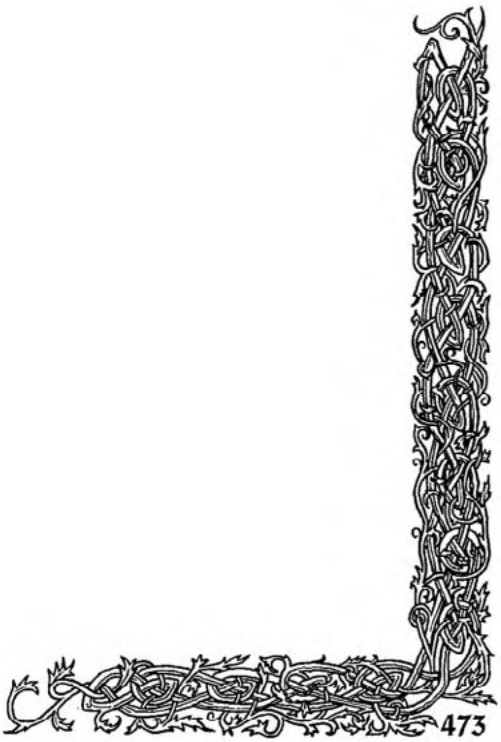
Melee Weapons

- Weapon Power adds to the character's Power when determining damage.
- Incidental damage is half of Mark (rounded up). Mark is the character's Power plus the weapon's Power. Superb is one and a half times the Mark (rounded down).
- Striking a target is Ob 1 plus disadvantages.
- The location hit by a Strike is determined by the *target*. He declares what area is vulnerable and open to attack. The attacker may spend extra successes to aim his blow and hit another, more desirable, location.
- Target locations are: head, arms, torso and legs. (If the defender is strongly favoring a left or right side, right and left limbs may be used as locations. It costs one success to go from leg to leg, and two to go from arm to arm.)
- Remaining extra successes are allocated to damage.
- The *Add* of a weapon determines how many extra successes must be allocated in order to push a weapon from Incidental to Mark and then how many more to go from Mark to Superb.

Missile and Thrown Weapons

Don't forget, use the Range and Cover rules for resolving missile vs missile love.

- Targets are hit in the chest by default. If the shooter wishes to target another location, he must spend his extra successes: One success to hit an arm or leg, two successes to hit the head.
- Remaining extra successes modify the Die of Fate roll.
- Missile and thrown weapons do damage using the DoF, each weapon type has a table showing what needs to be rolled in order to score an Incidental, Mark or Superb result.
- Missile weapons have fixed damages. Thrown weapons use the thrower's Power as a base, like melee weapons. Guns must roll a gunpowder die.



Armor and Shields

Armor protects its wearer from harm. While it doesn't always work, it often can stave off death so the character may live just a moment longer.

Shields are the middle ground between armor and a weapon. In this system, they are considered a defensive weapon: They add dice to the character's Block and Counterstrike maneuvers, count as cover from missile fire and can be used as an off-handed weapon.

Armor Locations

In Burning Wheel, armor is worn to cover one or more of six locations on the character's body: Head, face and neck (one location); torso; arms and legs. Each location, if covered with armor, receives its own dice to protect it from harm. Thus a character can wear a helmet, to protect his head, a full suit of mail, helmet and breastplate, or other combinations.

Armor Types

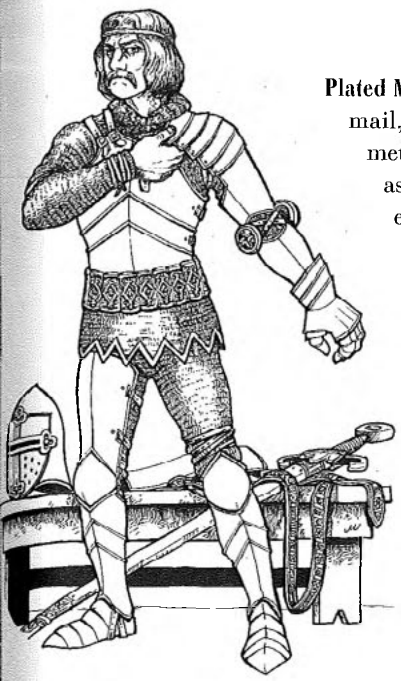
There are six different types of armor available in Burning Wheel. In order of protective capability they are: leather, hides and quilting; plated leather; light mail; heavy mail; plated chainmail; and full plate.

Gambeson– Gambesons are cloth, padded armor and thin, boiled leather. This armor was cheap, easy to make and effective when enough was worn.

Reinforced Leather– Reinforced leather was boiled and reinforced with metal rings, studs or lamellar. This was probably the most popular armor for foot soldiers worldwide. It was fairly cheap and very effective; it can stop all but the most powerful blows.

Light Mail– Light mail is a gambeson with a coat of thin, metal plates sewn into the cloth. It's light, flexible and concealable.

Heavy Mail– Interlocking rings form a shirt, hood, sleeves, skirt and leggings all worn over leather or cloth padding—which provides protection from impact (and from the armor itself). More often than not, the chain is covered by a decorative outer layer of cloth as well. Heavy mail is versatile, effective, heavy and expensive.



Plated Mail– Using the same basic kit as heavy mail, certain areas are reinforced with hard metal plates; usually a breast and back plate, as well as arm and leg greaves. This armor is extraordinarily expensive and very effective.

Full Plate– This is the Cadillac and armored tank of the Middle Ages rolled into one. It is the most frequently depicted armor in cinematic recreations of the Middle Ages—though its historical lifespan was actually rather short. This is the stuff of the knights in shining armor. It is rare, heavy, powerful and hideously expensive to maintain.

Armor Protection Dice

When a character is struck in a location covered by armor, the player rolls the appropriate number of dice according to the armor type to attempt to ward off the blow.

Gambeson	1D
Reinforced leather	2D
Light mail	3D
Heavy mail	4D
Plated mail	5D
Full plate	6D

If a character wearing a gambeson is struck on the arm, he rolls one die to ward off the blow.

Chest Armor

The chest location—the breastplate—is the most heavily reinforced section of the armor. For all types of armor, the chest/torso always receives a bonus die (+1D) to protect its wearer.

If a character wearing heavy mail is struck in the chest, he rolls four dice plus one for the chest bonus. Five dice total. He rolls four dice for all other locations.

Helmets and Headgear

Helmets and headgear are described separately from the main armor types so you can combine different types of armor.

Skull cap or leather hood	1D
Light helmet, Pot helm	2D
Spangenhelm	3D
Open-faced Bascinet, Barbute	4D
Sallet, Closed Bascinet	5D
Great helm	6D

Armor Test Obstacles

Armor dice act like any other ability in Burning Wheel. Players test the appropriate number of dice and attempt to get successes equal to the obstacle.

The base obstacle for all armor tests is 1. As long as the obstacle is met, the blow is warded off completely.

A character wearing a reinforced leather helmet who is punched in the head, would roll 3D versus Ob 1.

Armor Difficulty Number and Shade

Armor obeys the rules for shade just like any other ability. Therefore, mundane (black shade) armor is difficulty number (DN) 4, gray shade armor is DN 3, and white shade is DN 2. All armor is mundane unless explicitly stated otherwise. Heroic and supernatural shade armors are extremely hard to come by.

Weapons Versus Armor

Weapons are listed with a Versus Armor (VA) rating. This describes the weapon's ability to penetrate, crush or bypass armor. The number indicates the obstacle penalty for any armor test caused by that weapon.

An axe has a VA 1, so any armor tests made against it are at +1 Ob. Therefore, if a player's character is hit on the arm by an axe, he needs to roll two successes on his armor in order to ward off the blow. (Ob 1 + VA 1 = Ob 2.) If he fails, the blow penetrates and the character is injured.

A knife has a VA –. It does not raise armor test obstacles at all. All armor tests against a knife are Ob 1.

Power and VA
Characters with a Power exponent 7 or higher add +1 VA to their attacks.

Great Strikes and VA
As discussed in the Melee Maneuvers section, Great Strike actions may be used to either increase the weapon's Power or increase the VA of the attack by 1. The player must choose before he rolls to land the blow.

Armor Quality
Whenever a die comes up a 1 on an armor test, that particular location is considered damaged or rendered less effective until the armor is repaired. Next time that armor is tested, roll one less die.

Poor Quality Armor
All 1s count on every roll. This armor literally falls apart under stress.

Run of the Mill Armor
Only one 1 counts per roll (you can only lose one die at a time).

Superior Quality Armor
Only one 1 counts per roll, and that 1 may be re-rolled. If the reroll is a 2-6, the armor remains undamaged. If the die comes up a second 1, the armor on that location is reduced by one die.

Armor Shade and Damage
Gray shade armor can't be damaged by black shade attacks. White shade armor cannot be damaged by gray or black shade attacks. Simply ignore 1s rolled in these instances.

Repairing Armor
Gambesons and reinforced leather are repaired with the Armorer, Mending, Sewing or Tanner skills. Light mail, heavy mail, plated mail and full plate may be repaired using the Mending, Blacksmith and Armorer skills. Repairs are made to individual locations. Test against the obstacle according to how badly the armor is damaged. Meeting the obstacle repairs one die. Margin of success can repair additional dice.

Sewing, Tanner: Gambeson, Ob 1. Reinforced leather, Ob 2. Light mail, Ob 4.

Mending: Lightly damaged (1D), Ob 1. Moderately damaged (2D), Ob 2. Badly damaged (3D), Ob 4. Shredded (4D), Ob 6. Ruined (5D), Ob 8.

Blacksmith: Light mail or light helmet, Ob 2. Heavy mail or spangenhelm, Ob 3. Plated mail or bascinet, Ob 4. Sallet, Ob 5. Great Helm, Ob 6. Full plate, Ob 7.

Armorer: Gambeson, reinforced leather, light mail or light helmet, Ob 1. Heavy mail or spangenhelm, Ob 2. Plated mail or bascinet, Ob 3. Sallet, Ob 4. Great Helm, Ob 5. Full plate, Ob 5.

Clumsy Weight

To the unaccustomed, armor is heavy, hot and uncomfortable. This can cause the untrained certain problems.

Untrained Armor

Characters without the Armor Training skill who wear light mail suffer +1 Ob to Health and Forte tests for fatigue or athletics. Those in heavy mail suffer +1 Ob penalty to all tests. Wearing plated mail or full plate without Armor Training incurs a +2 Ob penalty.

The Armor Training skill negates these penalties.

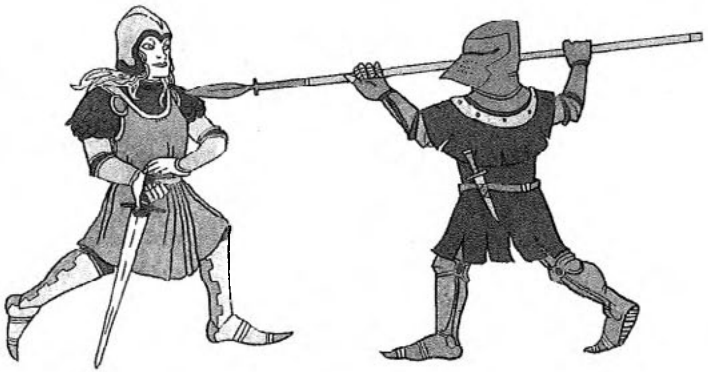
Clumsy Weight

Even to the trained, armor is still bulky and cumbersome. Consult the following two tables for your armor and your helmet's clumsy weight penalties. This is in addition to the above penalties.

Armor Type	Agility	Speed	Climbing	Health or Forte for Fatigue	Throwing and Shooting	Stealthy	Swimming
Gambeson	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Reinforced leather	+1 Ob	—	—	+1 Ob	—	—	+1 Ob
Light mail	+1 Ob	+1 Ob	—	+1 Ob	+1 Ob	+1 Ob	+1 Ob
Heavy mail	+2 Ob	-1D	+1 Ob	+1 Ob	+2 Ob	+1 Ob	+2 Ob
Plated mail	+2 Ob	-1D	+1 Ob	+2 Ob	+2 Ob	+2 Ob	+2 Ob
Full plate	+1 Ob	-1D	+1 Ob	+2 Ob	+1 Ob	+1 Ob	+3 Ob

Arms and greaves affect Agility, throwing and shooting. Leggings affect Speed and climbing. Chest pieces affect Health, Forte and Stealthy.

Helmet Type	Perception and Observation penalty
Skull cap or leather hood	—
Light helmet, Pot helm	+1 Ob
Spangenhelm, Open Bascinet	+1 Ob
Barbute	+2 Ob
Sallet, Closed Bascinet	+2 Ob
Great helm	+3 Ob



Mixing and Customizing Armor

Players may wish to customize their characters' harness. This can be done in two ways: mixing pieces and using half pieces.

Mixed Armor

A player who purchases a suit of armor may trade any of his pieces for lighter bits (from armor with fewer dice). You can buy Full Plate and replace the great helm (6D) with a bascinet (5D), for example. Use the clumsy weight penalties for the new, lighter piece. Players may also purchase heavier pieces and add them to their harness. In this case, use the detrimental clumsy weight penalties from the heavier armor.

Half-Leggings, Skirts and Half-Sleeves

In order lighten his load but still maintain some modicum of protection, a player may decide his character is wearing half pieces on the arms or legs.

Armor Type	Half Sleeve Protection	Half Sleeve Clumsy Weight	Half Legging Protection	Half Legging Clumsy Weight
Gambeson	—	—	—	—
Reinforced leather	1D	—	1D	—
Light mail	2D	—	2D	—
Heavy mail	2D	—	2D	—
Plated mail	3D	+1 Ob	3D	+1 Ob
Full plate	3D	—	3D	—

Half sleeves reduce the armor on the arms and the clumsy weight penalties for Agility, climbing, throwing and shooting. Half leggings reduce the armor on the legs and the clumsy weight for Speed.

Armor and Artha

Armor tests may use artha like any other ability test, except that armor dice may not be doubled via a deeds point.

Shields

Shields are the midpoint between armor and weapon. A fighter holds his shield on one arm, away from the body, and uses it to deflect incoming blows. Shields, while eminently useful, are heavy, clumsy and often fall apart rather quickly.

Like armor, there are a variety of types of shields:

Shields	Dice
Parrying Blade	0D*
Buckler	1D
Target	2D
Heater	3D
Great Shield	4D

*Parrying blades do not provide bonus dice for defense, but they still allow the player to use the Block & Strike action. If a player chooses to Block with his sword and Strike with his parrying blade, he may add +1D to the Block portion of the Block & Strike action.

Shield Training

In order to best use his shield, a fighter must have the Shield Training skill. This training skill grants the character bonus dice to Block, and allows access to the Block and Strike technique.

Defense with a Shield

Using a shield in melee in conjunction with the Block or Counterstrike actions allows the trained fighter to add the shield dice to his defensive maneuver. In the case of Counterstrike, the shield dice are added to the defensive half of the maneuver. Shields are never used in conjunction with an Avoid.

Shields may be Feinted out of position. Shields may Block the Great Strike action (whereas parrying blades and similar items may not).

Block and Strike

Fighters with the Shield Training skill can perform a special action in the melee called Block and Strike. See the Fight chapter for the rules of using that action in combat.

Push and Charge

Heater and great shields may use the Push and Charge actions at the short weapon length, rather than the shortest length for hands and knives.

Untrained Shield Fighters

Characters without Shield Training may only use shields to augment their Block actions, and do not have access to Block and Strike.

Shields and VA

A weapon's Versus Armor rating reduces the number of shield dice rolled to deflect an attack, to a minimum of 1D. After VA is subtracted, the remaining dice are rolled as the part of a Block or the defensive portions of Block & Strike and Counterstrike.

Shield Failure

Shields abide by the same damage and quality rules as armor. A 1 rolled on the shield dice indicates the device has become damaged. All subsequent tests with the shield are reduced by one die. For the most part, damaged shields aren't repaired, they are discarded. A shield reduced to zero dice is destroyed and useless. Use different colored dice for shields to track any shield damage.

Clumsy Weight for Shields

While useful, shields are heavy, difficult to use and require serious shield-arm strength and stamina.

- Using a shield restricts a character to one-handed weapons.
- In Fight, a shield reduces your opportunity to attack. This is represented by a reduction in advantage dice—from weapon length, stride or advantage—that would normally be added to your engage, withdraw or vie for position tests. Target shields reduce your advantage dice for positioning by 1 to a minimum of 1. Heaters reduce your advantage dice for positioning by 1 with a minimum of 0. Great Shields reduce your advantage dice for positioning by 2 with a minimum of 0.
- A shield reduces your ability to grapple. You must have a free hand to grapple. If your other hand is encumbered by a shield, the maximum level of Lock you can apply is reduced as follows: buckler max Lock dice = Power exponent; target shield max Lock dice = Pow -1; heater max Lock dice = Pow -2; great shield max Lock dice = Pow -3.
- If a shield is destroyed while you're wearing it—reduced to zero dice—you suffer a +1 Ob disadvantage to martial actions until you get rid of it. It's wrapped around your arm, weighing you down and getting in your way. Shields are heavy, clumsy and often strapped to the fighter's arm. It requires one action to drop a buckler, and two actions to get rid of other types of shields.

Shields vs Missile Weapons

Shields may not actively "block" incoming missile weapons. You may not roll your character's skill to reduce your opponent's shooting successes. However, shields do provide a modicum of cover from such attacks.

Shield vs Missiles in Fight

Great shields increase obstacles to be shot by +3 Ob; heaters increase obstacles to be shot by +2 Ob; target shields increase obstacles to be shot by +1 Ob.

If a missile weapon's VA is greater than or equal to a shield's dice, the shield provides no protection for its bearer against the missile. Otherwise, don't worry about missile weapon VA and shields.

Shields vs Missiles in Field Maneuvers

When using the Range and Cover rules, shields increase the cover rating for their bearer by one step—from no cover to reasonable cover,

for example—so long as the number of shield dice is greater than their opponent's VA. If the missile weapon's VA is equal to or greater than the shield dice, no protection is offered. But you can give great shields a +1D to Steel-based maneuvers in Range and Cover.

Defensive Weapons

Unless otherwise noted, bucklers and target shields are Power 1, VA –, WS 2, shortest weapons when used as a weapon in combat. Heaters and great shields are Power 2, VA –, WS 1, short weapon length.

Shields at Inside Striking Distance

Shields cannot be used for defense if one fighter has locked another or tackled him to the ground.

Armor in Brief

- When hit, test the armor on the location struck. Roll armor dice against Ob 1 plus the VA of the weapon.
- Meeting the obstacle indicates the blow is deflected. If the test is failed, the character is injured by the blow.
- Any 1s on the dice indicate armor damage. One less die is rolled next time.
- Armor is heavy and clumsy and causes obstacle penalties to sneaking, swimming, climbing and similar activities (sometimes even Avoiding).

Shields in Brief

- Shields add their dice to Block and Counterstrike.
- With Shield Training, shields can also be used to Block as the user Strikes. Add any number skill dice into the shield to defend on the same action as the character is Striking.
- VA reduces the number of shield dice rolled to defend. Dice can't be reduced below 1D.
- 1s rolled count as damage to the shield. 1D is subtracted from the shield's rating. Shields have the same "quality" characteristics as armor.
- Against missiles in Fight: Great shields increase obstacles to be shot by +3 Ob; heaters +2 Ob; target shields +1 Ob. In Range and Cover, shields increase cover by one.

Anatomy of Injury

Injury, Treatment and Recovery

Characters are forever getting shot and stabbed, burned by sorcerous hellfire and falling off cliffs. All of these recreational activities take their toll. They grind the characters down until they eventually give up the ghost. The Injury mechanics describe just how big a toll they take. Recovery and Treatment describe ways to get by without paying!

The Physical Tolerances Grayscale

The physical well-being of a character is represented by the Physical Tolerances Grayscale (PTGS). When a character is injured, hurt or debilitated, the degree of the effect is determined by where it falls on his PTGS.

Tolerance																
Coordinate	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8	B9	B10	B11	B12	B13	B14	B15	B16
Injury	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○

Shade

The PTGS is divided into three shades. Black is our shade, the mundane shade; gray is heroic, and white is supernatural.

When a character is injured, the player is given a shade and number to mark on his grayscale—B3, for example. This tells the player where to mark the wound. What a B3, G3 or W3 means to an individual character is determined by his tolerances.

Gray-Shade Physical Tolerances

Tolerance																
Coordinate	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7	G8	G9	G10	G11	G12	G13	G14	G15	G16
Injury	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○

White-Shade Physical Tolerances

Tolerance																
Coordinate	W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7	W8	W9	W10	W11	W12	W13	W14	W15	W16
Injury	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○

These three scales run end to end. The graphic is too long to show in one unit, therefore we've broken it down by shade. But to be clear, a B17 is a G1. A G20 is a W4. The majority of your games will be populated with creatures and characters with black-shade physical tolerances. Some powerful creatures might have gray-shades—giants, dragons, demons—but they're rare. Deities and enormously powerful creatures have white-shade physical tolerances. They're practically unique. Most never encounter them in the course of play.

Tolerances

Every character has six tolerances, or wound levels, that are spread out along his grayscale: superficial, light, midi, severe, traumatic and mortal.

Superficial wounds are deep cuts, hard bumps, bruises and bad scrapes. Light wounds are bad burns, fractures and cracking knocks; broken toes, a broken nose, a missing ear, or even the pain from an extremely hard gut punch. Midi wounds are broken arms, ribs and legs; yanked muscles, twisted ligaments, missing digits and massive cuts. Severe wounds are shattered bones, horrible burns, torn limbs and internal bleeding. Traumatic wounds are missing limbs, shattered ribs, third degree burns and disembowelment. Mortal Wounds come in a variety of flavors, from decapitation, to a shot in the heart, to a good knock on the skull.

Tolerances are placed on a character's grayscale as per the rules discussed in *Step 11. Physical Tolerances* in the Character Burner.

Taking the Hit: Registering Wounds on the PTGS

Every time a character is injured, plot the damage on the PTGS and note what tolerance it falls on. If the mark falls between two tolerances, then the player notes the effect for the left-most or lesser wound. Each new injury is marked separately from any previous ones.

To mark a B3 wound: "B" tells the player that the wound falls in the black section of the PTGS and "3" tells the player to mark the circle beneath the number 3, like so:

Tolerance			Su		Li		Mi	Se	Tr	Mo						
Coordinate	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8	B9	B10	B11	B12	B13	B14	B15	B16
Injury	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	● ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○

A B3 hit for this character is a superficial wound.

If a character is injured twice and suffers a B3 wound and B5, each is marked separately on the PTGS. Their effects are added together and to any wound modifiers he has already taken.

Tolerance			Su		Li		Mi	Se	Tr	Mo						
Coordinate	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8	B9	B10	B11	B12	B13	B14	B15	B16
Injury	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	● ○ ○	○ ○ ○	● ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○

A B5 hit on this character is a light wound

Wounds are always considered to be separate entities and are not "added together." However, the effects of wounds are compiled as an overall penalty for the character.

Once the wound is noted, consult the list below for its effect.

Effects of Wounds

Superficial Wounds +1 Ob

Superficial wounds are small injuries that cause sudden, sharp and eye-watering amounts of pain. However, the shock from these wounds quickly fades. Taking a superficial wound gives the character a +1 Ob penalty.

Light Wounds -1D

Light wounds are minor injuries that cause pain and debilitation. Light wounds subtract 1D from the character's abilities.

Midi Wounds -2D

Midi wounds are debilitating injuries that are not life-threatening, but still extremely painful. Midi wounds subtract 2D from the character's abilities.

Severe Wounds -3D

Severe wounds are life-threatening, painful and often maiming injuries. A character who receives a severe wound is in danger of bleeding to death. Severe wounds subtract 3D from the character's abilities. Untended severe wounds continue to bleed. See Bleeding for more on that.

Traumatic Wounds -4D

Traumatic wounds are life-threatening and crippling. Traumatic wounds subtract 4D from the character's abilities. Untended traumatic wounds continue to bleed.

Mortal Wounds Dying

Mortal wounds instantly knock a character flat. There is no die penalty—the character is down.

Left of Superficial

Wounds that fall to the left of the superficial marker on the PTGS are considered bruises, scrapes and cuts that do not affect the performance of the character. They will heal on their own without any trouble.

Right of Mortal

Any damage that registers on or to the right of the character's mortal wound tolerance is considered a fatal blow. If a character has a mortal wound tolerance of B10 and he takes a Superb hit from a heavy crossbow, a B13, he is killed. In fact, even a Superb hit from a hunting bow—B10—would lay him low. See the sections mortal wounds and Recovery for more on surviving this.

The Feel of Physical Tolerances in Burning Wheel

The system described above is intended to be painful and ugly. Characters are meant to feel like corporal beings, vulnerable to harm. Most will suffer one good wound and find themselves unable to continue; after being pierced with a sword, a character's will to fight on drops dramatically. In game-mechanical terms: Less dice are rolled and a tough Steel test is required.

This feel is deliberate in the mechanics and meant to set the mood of the game. Pain is a real thing for characters in this game, and it is something the players should remain aware of. It is possible, of course, to build a character who is highly resistant to pain, but he would be the anomaly and not the rule. For most of us, one good injury and we are in trouble.

I take the time to describe this here because I know it influences play. It seems like a rule in our games: when swords are drawn nobody flinches. We assume we'll take our whacks and then it will all be over, neat and clean. That is not the case in this game. Combined with

the scripted melee system, injury is ugly and messy. It seriously affects game play—characters can be forced out of action for long periods of time, or even removed from play entirely.

After such a stark warning, this may seem odd to say, but Burning Wheel is not a deadly game. More often than not, a character is injured and drops out of the fight. It's uncommon for one to be killed outright. Which, again, is the exact intent of these rules.

So be aware that your characters exist in a world where a single sword thrust or a bow shot can mean something. And let that knowledge drive ferocious and desperate battles!

Wounded Dice

Wound penalty dice are subtracted from stats, skills, Reflexes and Steel. Health, mortal wound, Circles, Resources and Emotional Attributes like Faith are not affected. Do not refactor attributes or damage due to wounded stats. (Note that Reflexes is affected directly.)

The penalties from various wounds are cumulative:

A character who soaks up a light and midi wound has three dice subtracted from all stats and skills, and Steel and Reflexes.

Superficial Wounds and +1 Ob

Superficial wounds have a different cumulative effect. If a character takes a second superficial wound, his obstacle penalty remains at +1. The adrenaline is pumping, and at this stage another scrape doesn't matter too much. However, it gets worse....

Three Superficial Wounds

When a character receives his third superficial wound, the +1 Ob penalty is removed and replaced with a -1D penalty. Now those cuts and bruises start to slow you down.

The wounds are now considered a single light wound for purposes of die penalties and recovery.

Zero Skills

A skill that is reduced to zero dice from wound penalties cannot be used by the player—it can't be tested, used to help or as a FoRK.

Zero Stats = Incapacitation

A character who absorbs enough wounded dice to reduce one of his stats to zero is considered incapacitated. The pain and trauma overwhelms him and he collapses.

A character with a B3 Forte as his lowest stat takes a severe wound (-3D). He immediately collapses due to the intense pain. Alternately, he could suffer three light wounds before giving up or even nine superficial wounds before he blacks out.

If it is a physical stat—Power, Forte, Agility or Speed—that has fallen to zero, then the character is rolling around drooling, in pain. He may still observe and even think. Maybe he can watch his enemy put the sword to his throat!

If the character is incapacitated by Perception or Will being reduced to zero, he is considered unconscious.

Incapacitation is not Death

Incapacitation is not a mortal wound or death. However, severe, traumatic and mortal wounds bleed, causing further damage through blood loss. A character incapacitated by a severe wound or worse must be tended to or he will bleed to death. If an incapacitated character is not in danger of bleeding to death or has been treated for his wounds, he will regain consciousness as he recovers from his wounds.

Steel and Pain

An arrow came humming deadly down out of the sky and drove into the Black Destroyer's chest. Fortunately for him, it glanced off one of his ribs and didn't penetrate his vitals. He didn't flinch, but the pain was enough to make his eyes water.

Anytime a character suffers a -1D or greater injury, he must make a Steel test. The severity of the wound is subtracted from Steel before the test is made. This includes the third superficial wound (equalling -1D).

Hesitation caused from pain takes effect immediately, interrupting anything the character was doing. (The next action and those following are lost if he hesitates.)

Argh, My Arm! Optional Rule

Players looking to add a nice veneer of grim brutality to their games might consider these specific hesitation results:

- If a character is hit on the arm, is wounded and fails a Steel test due to that wound, he drops whatever he was holding.
- If a character is hit on the leg, is wounded and fails a Steel test due to that wound, he falls to one knee. If he fails the Steel test by two actions or more, he falls prone. Apply the appropriate penalties.
- If a character is hit on the head, is wounded and fails a Steel test due to that wound, he hesitates for an *additional* action.

Bleeding

If not tended quickly, wounds in Burning Wheel will bleed out. This can cause further debilitation and penalties, and can also result in the character's death.

Superficial and Light— These wounds do not bleed.

Midi— A midi wound must be treated before the conclusion of the session or else the wound becomes a severe wound. The wound ceases to bleed at severe.

Severe— A severe wound must be tended to before the conclusion of the second scene after its issue or else the wound progresses to traumatic.

Traumatic— A traumatic wound must be treated before the conclusion of the next scene or else it progresses to a mortal wound.

Mortal— A mortally wounded character must be treated before the conclusion of this scene. If treatment hasn't begun, the character expires. See the *Will to Live* section below.

Blood Clock

A wound begins to bleed as soon as it is received. The clock starts tickin'...

Thor's Black Destroyer was wounded by an arrow in a raid. He suffered a Severe. He decides to suck it up and ride back to the clan still bleeding, rather than stopping to tend his wound. After dealing with the Named, Dro's Headtaker pins down Thor's character and treats the wound, knowing that if he doesn't get to it now, he's going to be much worse off.

If a wound bleeds from severe to mortal, the character is considered to have taken a mortal wound.

Treatment

You cannot recover from midi through mortal wounds until you have been treated. Treatment here means help from someone trained in either Herbalism, Apothecary, Bloodletting, Field Dressing, Surgery, Khirurgy or the Song of Soothing.

Obstacles for wound treatment by skill

	Field Dressing	*Bloodletting*	*Apothecary*	*Herbalism*	*Surgery*	*Song of Soothing*	*Khirurgy*	*Child Rearing*	*Nursing*
Superficial	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Light	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Midi	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	4	4
Severe	8	8	6	5	4	5	4	8	8
Traumatic	12	12	8	6	5	6	5	12	12
Mortal	16	16	12	10	7	10	7	16	16

Working Diligently with Medical Skills

Extra successes on the treatment test count as advantage dice for the injured character's Health test. (This is a special linked test.) Thus, even for superficial and light wounds, it often behooves a player to wait until his character is treated before making the Health test for recovery.

Using his Field Dressing, the Sergeant quickly tends to his injured comrade's wounds. The player tests his B4 Field Dressing against the Ob 2 for a light wound. The player rolls an amazing four successes—two over the obstacle. He dedicates one to his friend's Health test and the other to reducing the time.

Treatment Time

Field Dressing requires 10 minutes per obstacle point to treat a wound. Herbalism, Bloodletting and the Song of Soothing requires 15 minutes. Surgery, Apothecary, Khirugeon, Nursing and Child Rearing require 20 minutes. These times may be reduced using the working quickly rules.

Stop the Bleeding

Your friend's bleeding to death. You're not skilled enough to save him. What do you do? Medical skills can be used to try to stop him from bleeding to death until you find a doctor.

This isn't a treatment test, but a test to delay death until real treatment can be found.

Staunching the Flow

A doctor can staunch the flow of blood for one scene. If treatment doesn't begin at the end of the next scene, the character begins bleeding again. He then bleeds until he dies or is treated.

Obstacles to stop bleeding by skill

	Field Dressing	*Apothecary*	*Bloodletting*	*Herbalism*	*Surgery*	*Song of Soothing*	*Khirurgy*	*Child Rearing*	*Nursing*
Midi	2	2	1	3	2	1	2	3	3
Severe	3	3	2	4	3	2	3	4	4
Traumatic	6	4	3	5	3	3	4	6	6
Mortal	8	6	4	7	5	4	5	10	10

Stop the Bleeding Times

Child Rearing and Nursing require 15 minutes per obstacle point. Song of Soothing, Field Dressing, Apothecary and Herbalism all require 10 minutes per obstacle point of the test to stop the bleeding. Surgery, Khirurgy, requires 5 minutes per obstacle point. These times may be reduced using the standard working quickly rules.

Recovery

Recovering from an injury is a hard deal. For the lesser wounds, it's possible for the body to take care of itself, but for midi through mortal, the character's own Health must be augmented by external aid. Typically, this aid comes in the form of medical skills like Field Dressing, Herbalism and Surgery. See the Treatment section for the full rules on recovering from midi through mortal wounds. To recover, a character must rest—he can travel, study or converse, but not fight or adventure.

Obstacles for Recovering from Wounds

Superficial Wounds—Ob 1

To recover from a superficial wound, a character must pass an Ob 1 Health test. If successful, the pain fades immediately. If failed, it remains throbbing for 10 minus Forte in hours.

Light Wounds—Ob 2

Recovering from a light wound requires an Ob 2 Health test. If successful, the pain fades immediately. If failed, the penalty remains for 24 hours minus the Forte exponent.

Midi Wounds—Ob 3

Midi wounds require an Ob 3 Health test in order to recover. However, this test may not be taken until and unless the character receives treatment from Field Dressing, Herbalism, Apothecary, Surgery or an analogous skill. See below for more on tending the wounded.

A midi wound takes 2-12 weeks to recover from. The first die is recovered as soon as a successful medical skill test is made. The second die is recovered when the wound closes completely.

Severe Wounds—Ob 4

Severe wounds require an Ob 4 Health test in order to recover. This test may not be taken unless the character receives treatment from Herbalism, Surgery or an analogous skill.

A severe wound needs 1-3 months to heal completely. The first die is recovered as soon as a successful medical skill test is made. The second die is recovered at the halfway point in the healing time. The third die is recovered when the wound closes completely.

After being stabbed badly, my character is laid up for a few months. He suffered a severe wound. The GM says it'll take two months to heal completely. I test my Health and barely make the Ob 4 test. Two months divided into two: I recover the first die as my character is tended; the second die comes at the end of the first month; the third die is recovered at the close of the full two months.

Traumatic Wounds—Ob 5

These terrible wounds require an Ob 5 Health test in order for the character to recover. However, the test may not be taken until the character receives treatment from Herbalism, Surgery or an analogous skill.

2-6 months of rest are required to heal from a traumatic wound. The first die is recovered as soon as a successful medical test is made. The second die is recovered in one-third of the healing time, the third die heals in two-thirds of the total time and the fourth die comes back once the wound is completely closed.

Mortal Wound—Ob 6

Recovering from a mortal wound most definitely requires the aid of Herbalism, Surgery or an analogous skill. It is an Ob 6 Health test to recover from a mortal wound.

A mortal wound heals differently from the other wounds. The character must heal from each type of wound in succession from mortal down to superficial. The necessary healing time is divided into six unequal parts: mortal, traumatic, severe, midi, light and superficial stages. The mortal stage is the longest. For the duration of this period, the character is incapacitated and unconscious. This stage usually lasts 4-24 months. Test Health vs Obstacle 6. Subtract 10% of the time for each extra success, if any (90% maximum reduction). After the character has passed through the mortal stage, he makes another Health test for the traumatic stage and heals following the rules for traumatic wounds. After he has recovered from the traumatic wound, then roll for recovery of the severe wound. Roll for each wound, all the way down to superficial, until the character has completely healed and recovered all his dice. On average, the entire process takes about 18-20 months. Not bad for a near-death experience!

Remember that in order to allow treatment to have an effect and to begin recovery, a player must explicitly state his character has the Will to Live and pay a persona point of artha.

Ugh. My character took a B12 to the chest from a longbow. That's a mortal wound. I've been playing him for a couple of years, and I definitely don't want him to go under. I pay the persona point for Will to Live. Thankfully, one of the other PCs is a surgeon. He passes his test to treat me. So, I test my Health (plus bonus dice from the treatment roll) vs Ob 6. I pass that (with tons of artha). The GM determines that this'll take a year to recover from, minus time for my extra successes. Then I have to pass another Ob 5 Health test for the traumatic recovery time, and sit out another three months. Then an Ob 4 for the severe stage and another two months tacked on. Then an Ob 3 for the midi stage and another month tacked on. So four big Health tests just to get me back to fighting condition. They take place across a year and a half.

Recovery Times

All recovery times may be reduced by using extra successes from the Health test. Each extra success over the obstacle reduces time by 10%. Time can be reduce by 90% maximum. Exact recovery times (1-3 months, 2-12 weeks, etc.) are either determined by the GM or left to a random die roll.

Failed Treatment or Recovery

If both treatment and recovery are successful, the character is on the path to recovery. All his dice will be eventually regained. But sometimes luck is against a character and something goes wrong in either the treatment process or with the Health test. See below for the disastrous results.

Failed Treatment for Superficial and Light Wounds

This isn't so bad. The character rolls his recovery Health test as normal, but does not have access to the bonus dice provided by treatment.

Failed Treatment for Midi through Traumatic

This is really bad. These tests require treatment in order for the recovery process to begin. Essentially, what's happened is either the doctor has thrown up his hands and said, "There's nothing I can do!" or fumbled around and made matters worse.

For midi wounds, one die is permanently subtracted from an appropriate stat, but the character can recover the other one. For severe and traumatic wounds, the injured character is bleeding to death and better get real help quickly or he'll die!

Failed Treatment for Mortal Wounds

It's going to take a heck of a long time to recover. See the Mortal Wound heading following this section.

Failed Recovery for Superficial and Light Wounds

The character is scarred up a bit and recovers in the full time required. The die penalties remain in effect for the duration of the recovery time.

Failed Recovery for Midi, Severe and Traumatic Wounds

At least the bleeding is stopped. The character heals in the full length of time required, but only recovers half of the dice lost. The remaining dice are permanently subtracted from an appropriate stat. If that stat happens to be reduced to zero, the character is permanently comatose. Better save artha for your Health tests! Also, reduce the cap of the depleted stat by one. Thus, if you fail to recover from a midi wound to the arm you lose one die from—say—Power and your Power cap is reduced from 8 to 7. Take a die trait to represent this.

Failed Recovery Mortal Wounds

See the Mortal Wound section following this one.

Mortal Wounds

When a character suffers an injury that meets or exceeds his mortal wound tolerance, he's in trouble. The wound instantly drops him—stops him dead in his tracks and sends him tumbling.

At this stage, he is considered dying. Honestly, I feel it's best to give characters the benefit of the doubt in this case. Sure it looks bad, but we'll give 'em one last chance.

Will to Live

If a player's character is felled by a mortal wound, he has the option of declaring that his character cannot be saved—by any means, ever—and allowing him to pass on. The player simply states, "He doesn't have the will to live."

If a player wishes his character to continue on he must state, "He has the will to live" and spend a persona point of artha. If a player doesn't have a persona point, the character passes on regardless of his wishes. Cruel fate has taken its toll. If the persona point is spent on the Will to Live, then the character may receive treatment and hopefully recover. See the Artha chapter for how to earn persona points, and see below for Recovery and Treatment.

Mortal Wound Recovery

If your character suffers a mortal wound and you spend a persona point for the Will to Live, then your character is guaranteed to recover—but you still must test at each stage of recovery. The wound will close over time and he will wake up, but need to test to determine how bad it is.

Mortal Wound Treatment

Treatment and Heath tests are conducted at each stage of recovery. The obstacles remain as described under the Recovery heading of this chapter. Your character can get back on his feet after the mortal wound stage has passed and he's recovered enough dice so that none of his stats are at zero.

Successful treatment at each stage grants advantage dice equal to margin of success to the Health test for recovery. Failed treatment grants disadvantage to the Health test equal to the margin of failure.

A successful Health test for recovery reduces recovery time for the stage by 10% per extra success. A failed Health test indicates maximum time for recovery for the stage, and the character earns a trait.

If the mortal wound stage is failed, the character earns the Mortally Wounded in the Gut (or Head or Ass or whatever) trait. This trait reduces the maximum for one stat by 3—from 8 to 5 for Humans, for example. The GM may determine the stat to be capped.

If the traumatic to light wound stages are failed, in addition to losing the wounded dice as described in Recovery, the character earns a trait like Blind, Lame, Missing Limb, Palsied or any other penalty-inducing trait that the GM deems appropriate.

Shrugging It Off

Clearing the Cobwebs: Reducing +1 Ob

A character may take a moment to clear the cobwebs from his head and reduce his current wound penalties. Reducing the +1 Ob superficial wound penalty is an Ob 2 Health test and requires two actions in the exchange during Fight.

This head clearing lasts until the scene is over—the exact parameters of this are left to the GM's discretion and the flow of your individual story.

Shrugging off a superficial does not make the wound go away. It only temporarily reduces the pain modifier. If character shrugs off his first superficial, but then takes two more, he still suffers the -1D penalty.

Also, once three superficial wounds have been combined to -1D, the character may not use the Clearing the Cobwebs rule. Also, if a character shrugs one superficial and is then hit with another, he's back to +1 Ob. C'est la guerre.

Gritting Your Teeth

Through a supreme act of will and endurance, a character may temporarily shrug off -1D of pain modifiers (from any type of wound). Only -1D may be shrugged off from each wound. Shrugging off this much pain requires an Ob 4 Health test and four actions in the Fight rules, or one volley of Range and Cover or Duel of Wits.

A character who is incapacitated due to wounded dice may attempt to shrug off one die of his penalties and stagger back to his feet. He may only make one such attempt, period.

As with Clearing the Cobwebs, Gritting Your Teeth lasts until the scene is over—the exact parameters of this are left to the GM's discretion and the flow of your individual story.

Shrugging It Off Isn't Recovery

Shrugging off wound penalties is not the same as recovering and healing from an injury. Wound penalties reduced by shrugging them off return in full force as soon as the scene ends. They need to be tended to and a recovery Health test must be made.

Anatomy of Injury in Brief

Injury

- A wound from a weapon or spell is a coordinate on the PTGS. The letter tells what shade to place the wound in. The number indicates at which number the wound is placed. A B7 is placed seven steps into the black shade of the PTGS.
- Note the tolerance the wound is placed on or the nearest tolerance to the left. Consult the penalty for this wound. The character immediately suffers that penalty.
- Superficial wounds are special: One or two superficial wounds is +1 Ob. Three superficial wounds is -1D.
- Light wound, -1D. Midi, -2D. Severe, -3D. Traumatic, -4D. The penalties of these wounds are cumulative. Thus two light wounds equal -2D.
- Midis bleed to severe. Severe and traumatic can bleed to mortal.
- Ob 2 Health test shrugs off a +1 Ob penalty.
- Ob 4 Health test shrugs off -1D of penalty.
- Health and Emotional Attributes are not affected by wounds. Reflexes is affected directly by the wound penalty.

Treatment

- Superficials and lights can be recovered without treatment. Ob 1, Ob 2 Health test respectively.
- Midi through mortal require treatment in order to recover.
- Extra successes from treatment add dice to the recovery Health test.
- If a character doesn't have the skill to treat a wound, he may attempt to stop the bleeding until a better doctor is found.

Recovery

- Test Health vs the wound's obstacle. Add dice from extra successes from the treatment test.
- If successful, +1 Ob is negated or 1D is recovered immediately.
- Remaining wounded dice are recovered over time.

Sorcery

There are many types of magic in Burning Wheel. The kind that is written in arcane formulae, experimented with, and pronounced as an incantation or wrought through bizarre gesture is simply called sorcery. Sorcery is also a skill in the game. It describes both the written language of spellcraft and the act of casting the spells.

There are many other types of magic in Burning Wheel: Faith, Elven songs, Dwarven arts, Orc Hatred are all described in this book. Summoning, Spirit Binding and Enchanting (among many others) are described in the Magic Burner.

Sorcery Is a Skill

The Sorcery skill is used to cast spells, decipher wizardly texts and develop and research new spells. Sorcery is a language, both written and spoken. When properly used, it allows the sorcerer control over nearly anything.

Sorcery§ Perception

Sorcery is the skill that allows the character to understand written or spoken magical formulae. Should the character have the Gifted trait, he can then translate those formulae into spells and thereby cast magic. He may also use this skill to create new spells.

§This skill is always open-ended.

Obstacles: See the Sorcery chapter in the Burning Wheel.

Skill Type: Sorcerous **Tools:** No.

Restrictions: Men only in character burning

Sorcery Help

Sorcerers can help one another cast spells using the normal helping rules. However, helpers must test for tax at one less than the casting obstacle.

Sorcery FoRKs

Sorcery can benefit from fields of related knowledge such as Astrology, Aura Reading (if using Second Sight or Magesense) and Symbology. The FoRKs must be appropriate to the idiom, the spell and the situation.

Gifted

In order to be able to invoke the power of sorcery—in order to shape a spell—a character must have the Gifted trait or its equivalent. See the Character Burner for the description and cost of the Gifted trait.

Spell Casting and Idiom

Define your sorcerer's idiom. How does he cast spells? There are two main choices: He may gesture and gesticulate or he may clearly pronounce the incantation. Either way, it's up to the player, but the method of casting must be chosen before the game begins.

Spellcasting is not a subtle or concealed art. If speech is the chosen idiom, then the spell must be spoken clearly. If gesture is chosen, then the movements must be complex and florid.

The Facets of a Spell

The eight parts of a spell are obstacle, actions, origin, effect, area of effect, impetus, element and duration.

Arcane Kindness — Ob 4^ — 10 Actions

Soothing rhythms emanate from the sorcerer and make agreeable his desires. This incantation grants bonus dice to Seduction, Haggling, Oratory, Persuasion and Circles tests. Meeting the obstacle adds +1D to the listed abilities. Up to two more successes can be spent to add dice to a maximum bonus of +3D.

Origin: Personal
Element: Anima
Duration: Sustained
Area of Effect: Caster
Impetus: Enhance
Resource Points: 16

Spell Obstacle

There are three kinds of spell obstacle: those that are fixed, those that have a range and those with obstacles based on a stat.

What's This "^" Mean?

Some spells are listed with a caret (^) next to the obstacle. This indicates that extra successes on the casting roll increase the effectiveness of the spell. Be certain to count up extra successes; they determine how powerful the effect is. In Burning Wheel slang, the caret is called an "up." So an Ob 3^ spell is called a "3 up spell" at the table.

Spells without a caret are "flat" spells. Extra successes do not increase the effectiveness of the spell. Once the obstacle has been achieved, the spell has been successfully cast. The effect happens and that's it.

Actions = Casting Time

A spell's casting time is expressed in actions. In Fight, Duel of Wits, and Range and Cover, we use actions to measure who gets their spell off first and precisely when that is. Outside of that arena, casting time is more fluid.

Casting time may be modified by how the spell is cast. See Casting Time and Advanced Spell Casting in this chapter for different ways to cast a spell.

Origin

Origin indicates where the spell can start—how far away from the caster the spell can be thrown and still have its intended effect. There are three origins: Personal, Presence and Sight.

Personal Origin

Spells with Personal Origin can only begin at the caster.

Presence Origin

If the caster could speak to the recipient in a normal speaking voice and be understood (regardless of other ambient noise), then the recipient is in the Presence of the caster. (Thus the caster's Presence does not go through walls.)

Sight Origin

If the caster can see it, he can affect it. This "sight range" includes extrasensory sight extended by Magesense, Eye of the Eagle and such.

Element

A spell's element indicates what sphere of the world it affects: Air is the element of the wind; anima is the element of the bodies and minds of creatures; arcana is the sphere of arcane power—magic; earth is stone, wood and dirt; fire encompasses the sphere of the tool most useful—heat and flame; heaven invokes the sphere of light; water encompasses rivers, seas, ponds and streams; white is the dangerous sphere of heavenly fire, lightning and all her sisters.

Impetus

A spell's impetus indicates how it will affect its element: The control impetus dominates and commandeers the element, often forcing it into

unlikely or impossible positions and situations. The create impetus involves fabrication of materials or substance. The destroy impetus is one of the dark arts of sorcery. It combines with an element to destroy others. The enhance impetus grants a boon to its element: It fortifies and strengthens to an otherworldly degree. Think of a magnet against a compass; such is the effect of the influence impetus. The tax impetus is another black art designed to drain or weaken the strength of its target element.

Area of Effect (AoE)

Some spells affect a single target—either the caster or someone or something designated by the caster—some affect multiple targets or characters designated by the caster. Other spells affect a range, either predetermined or a variable area, such as the caster's presence. Still other areas of effect are governed by the natural forces unleashed by the caster, called the natural effect. Unless otherwise stated, everything within the area of the spell is affected equally.

Duration

There are four durations for spells in Burning Wheel. Spells that have an instantaneous effect; spells that have a continuing effect that rely on the caster to sustain them; spells that last for a predetermined time; and spells that have a permanent effect, completely separate from the caster. Duration is listed with each spell. See the Duration heading in this chapter for more.

Effect

Effect is a mixture of the impetus, element, the caster's intent and the luck of the dice. The effect describes the final outcome of the combination of all of the facets of the spell. Effect is described in its own heading in this chapter.

The Basic Spell Cast

To cast a spell, first declare your intent. Then announce what spell you'll cast to accomplish this intent. The spell is the task.

Basic Casting

Roll the Sorcery skill plus FoRKs and helping dice vs the obstacle listed with the spell. The sorcerer must meet the spell obstacle in order to avoid a Failed Casting.

For all spells, meeting the obstacle means the spell is completed successfully. For ^ spells, successes over and above the obstacle may be used to further the spell's effect, area of effect or duration.

After the spell is cast, go right to the Tax heading. If the spell was successfully cast, then go to Effect. If it was failed, check out the Failed Casting rules.

Casting Time

The casting time for a spell is listed as a number of actions. Actions are used so that spells can be used in Fight, Duel of Wits, and Range and Cover, but they can also be used outside of conflicts.

Casting Time in Conflicts

Using the Fight rules, the actions of the spell indicates number of actions it takes to cast the spell.

Han has Reflexes of B4, and he casts a 4-action spell. This spell takes him one exchange to cast. If he starts on his first action, he'll finish on his last action of the exchange. (1st action, third volley.) If he casts a 5-action spell, he'll finish on his first action of the next exchange.

In Range and Cover and the Duel of Wits, we don't count time so meticulously. If a spell can be cast in 20 or fewer actions, it can fit into one volley. In Range and Cover the an action must be spent to cast the spell.

Casting Time Outside of Conflicts

A sorcerer can cast a spell outside of a conflict, during regular play. To do so, he needs an uninterrupted moment. Use the following guideline for how much time is required:

- 1-2 Actions: These spells are as fast as a blow with a sword or other similar martial action.
- 3-20 Actions: These spells require a pause in the mayhem, a moment of privacy or peace to cast. Perhaps the length of time of a Fight exchange or Range and Cover volley.

- 21-100 Actions: Spells that take 21-100 actions take about a minute to cast. All sorts of things can go wrong in a minute.
- 100s of Actions: These spells take a few minutes to cast. Perhaps the length of an exchange of Range and Cover.
- 1000s of Actions: These spells require more than 10 minutes to cast. Roughly the length of a medicinal skill test.

Imagine the sorcerer standing unmolested for the time it takes to cast the spell. If you think he can do it, then cast the spell. If you think that he can't, then perhaps his enemies need to pass a test—Speed, Stealthy, Inconspicuous—to get to him and interrupt him.

x Actions

When a spell is listed with "x actions," multiply the actions by the obstacle to get the base casting time.

Tax

The caster must resist a tax put upon his body by the power he has invoked. After an incantation is cast, test the caster's Forte. His obstacle is the spell's obstacle.

If he passes the test, he suffers no ill effect. If he fails the tax test, temporarily subtract the margin of failure from his Forte.

Chris has his character, Han, cast Mage Light at Ob 4. He must now test his Forte at Ob 4 to resist the Tax of the spell. His Forte is B6, and he gets three successes—one less than the obstacle of the spell. Chris temporarily subtracts 1D from Han's Forte; he will recover it when he has had a chance to rest for a few hours.

If the sorcerer's Forte is reduced to zero, he is rendered unconscious.

Overtax

If a sorcerer's Forte is reduced below zero, he has overtaxed himself—his body is overloaded with the power of the spell. For each point his Forte drops below zero, he takes physical damage equal to the obstacle of the spell in "pips" on the Grayscale. If multiple dice are lost, the pips are cumulative.

A witch's Forte has been reduced from B5 to B3 by tax. If she then casts a spell and loses 4 Forte dice, her Forte drops to -1 and she takes a B4 wound (pips equal to the Obstacle 4 spell). If it dropped two below zero, then the damage would be B8 on the PTGS; if it dropped three below, she'd take a B12 wound.

The Sickness

Every mage suffers from the sickness at one time or another. It is the feeling of frailty that overcomes him after being taxed by spellcasting. Fortunately, this draining weakness is only temporary.

Recovering from the Sickness

A wizard with the sickness may test to recover his taxed Forte when he rests. Once the character is resting, test Health against an obstacle equal to the number of Forte dice lost to determine how long it takes to recover.

The full rest time is four hours per lost die. Meeting the obstacle reduces the required resting time to three hours per die. Exceeding the obstacle by one reduces the resting time to two hours per die. Exceeding the obstacle by two reduces the resting time required to one hour per die. Minimum recovery time is one hour per die of tax. Rest must be completed uninterrupted.

Han has been taxed by four. When he finally gets rest, he'll need 16 hours to recover completely. To shorten than time, Chris must pass an Ob 4 Health test. If he meets his obstacle, the time is reduced to three hours per die: 12 hours. If he exceeds his obstacle by one he needs 8 hours. If he exceeds by two he only needs four hours, the minimum.

Effect

If the spell does not have a ^ listed next to the obstacle, then the sorcerer need only meet the obstacle to gain the full effect. However, if the spell is listed with a ^, then the more successes a caster allocates into effect, the more potent the spell.

Turn Aside the Blade's effect is to add an obstacle penalty to attacks directed against the caster. Meeting the obstacle creates a +1 Ob penalty. Each success over the obstacle is an additional +1 Ob to all incoming attacks. Four successes over means +5 Ob.

Effect successes are allocated after the dice are rolled. If a spell has two potential effects, the player may divide his successes between them as he sees fit. A player should note how many successes were put into spell effect, area of effect and duration.

Effect and You

Unless the spell is a natural effect spell gone wild with successes, or unless he wishes it, a wizard is never in danger of being caught up in his own area of effect. But his friends are not exempt.

Destroy Impetus Effects and the Die of Fate

Spells with the destroy impetus inflict damage like a melee weapon. The wizard's Will stat is the base Power of the attack. The spell element is the weapon. Add spell element's power to the caster's Will to find the Mark result. (The Incidental is half Mark rounded up, Superb is 1.5x Mark rounded down.)

A wizard with a B5 Will has a base I: B3, M: B5, and S: B7 for destroy spells.

Exact destroy effects are described in the individual spell entries in the Character Burner. Some spells modify base Power, subtracting dice or use a fraction of the Power; some spells add to Power. If a spell uses half Will to factor power, then round down.

Han casts Shards at the feet of a charging Hound Assassin. Shards is half Will +3. Han has a B5 Will, so half rounded down is B2. Add three for a total of B5. His Incidental damage is B3. His Superb damage is B7.

Spell Die of Fate

Like bows and crossbows, spells use the Die of Fate to determine IMS. All spells have a DoF of: **I**: 1-2, **M**: 3-4, **S**: 5-6. Up to three extra successes may be spent to add to the Die of Fate.

Han got two extra successes when he cast the spell. He allocates both of them to the Die of Fate (instead of allocating them to duration or area of effect). He rolls the DoF and gets a 4. This makes the final result a 6, a Superb B7 wound to the assassin.

Area of Effect

Spells can affect a large area or multiple targets. When casting a spell, meeting the obstacle indicates that the base area is covered.

The Magesense (Ob 4) has an Area of "10s of Paces." This means that as long as the spell is successfully cast the sorcerer may "sense" for about 10 paces around himself

Spells with a presence, measured area or natural effect area of effect touch all things in their purview equally.

Increasing Area of Effect

When casting a spell with a measured or variable area of effect, the caster may spend extra successes to increase the area of effect. Spell area of effect is increased by increments listed with the spell.

Casting Magesense, Chris allocates three extra successes to his area of effect. That increases the area by three increments: 10 paces base plus three 10-pace increases, 40 paces total.

Be sure to read the Spells as Weapons section for more on using area of effect spells in Range and Cover, and Fight. Area of Effect is of prime importance in those rules.

Single Target Area of Effect and Personal Origin

Spells with the Single Target area of effect and the Personal origin are delivered by the touch of the caster.

Presence Area of Effect

Certain spells have an area of effect equal to the presence of the caster. If a measure is needed, presence is equal to the Will of the caster in paces. Otherwise, use the Area of Effect in Combat heading in Spells as Weapons.

Duration

Instantaneous

Instantaneous duration spells flicker into being for but a moment and are gone. Any effects they have on the environment remain and fade naturally over time.

Permanent

The magic of a permanent effect spell does not fade. It lasts eternally. The spells may only be stopped through other magical means like Faith, spirits or magic-eating sorcery.

Elapsed Time

Spells with an "elapsed time" exist for a predetermined measure of moments, seconds, minutes, hours, days, months or years. A spell with an elapsed time duration will say something like "seconds," "exchanges" or "hours." The spell's base duration is equal to one increment of that time. So successfully casting a "minutes" spell indicates the spell lasts for one minute. This duration may be increased by allocating successes over the obstacle into duration. Each success so allocated increases the duration by one increment of its measure.

Two successes allocated to minutes duration allows the spell to persist for three minutes—one base plus two more. Successes dedicated to duration may not be allocated to effect.

Sustained Spells

A sorcerer is rigorously trained in the art of concentration. He is able to slip into trance-like meditation almost instantly, and then, while maintaining the trance, come forward in his mind and interact normally with his surroundings. By dividing his concentration into separate compartments, a sorcerer can sustain one or more spells at a time.

To sustain a spell once it is cast, the player sets aside one Will die to represent the spell. This die is placed at the top of the character sheet. So long as the sorcerer is sustaining that spell, the Will die may not be used for any other Will function—body of argument in a Duel of Wits, sustaining spells or making tests. A sorcerer may maintain as many spells as his Will minus one—he must leave that last die in Will.

The spell list in the Character Burner indicates whether or not a spell can be sustained.

It requires one action in Fight to stop sustaining a spell. It does not cost an action in Range and Cover or Duel of Wits.

While Sustaining a Spell, a Sorcerer May:
Fight, jump, play, talk, argue, read, study, think and cast spells.

While Sustaining a Spell, a Sorcerer May Not:
Panic (i.e., fail a Steel test, even by one die), be hurt, fall down hard, fail a tax test (even by one die), completely lose an Eldritch Shield, go to sleep or otherwise lose consciousness.

If a sorcerer fails his tax test while casting a spell with sustained duration, the failed tax test only counts as a may not for spells that he was currently sustaining, not the spell he was raising.

***Sustaining Concentration After a* May Not**
If any of the above "may nots" happen to the sorcerer while he is sustaining a spell (or spells), then he must test his Will against the base obstacle of each spell currently being sustained. Make the Will tests in the order the spells were cast. If he fails his Will test, that spell is dropped. If the Will test is successful, the caster maintains his concentration and sustains the spell. Dropping a sustained spell due to distractions is not a Spell Interrupt or a Failed Casting, but it can be bad news if the spell you were sustaining was Philosopher's Perch....

The Color of Will Dice
At Burning Wheel headquarters we strongly recommend that wizard players keep a set of specially colored or styled dice to represent their

Will. Only keep as many as the Will exponent. That way it is very easy to keep track of how many spells you are sustaining. Each die represents a potential spell. It is much easier than taking notes—if the special Will dice are not in your hand, then one can safely assume they are being used to sustain an important spell and are thus unavailable for other actions.

The Power Still Flows Through Him.
While sustaining a spell a sorcerer must retest for tax. The time between tests is equal to his current Forte minus the spell obstacle in hours. If this results in zero or a negative number, the spell may not be sustained. The "Power Still Flows" tax test is at the spell obstacle. This test counts as a standard tax test for the "May Nots" of sustaining spells.

If Han (Forte B6) is sustaining Turn Aside the Blade (Ob 4), then he must retest for Tax every two hours (6-4=2). The obstacle for the test is 4 (the base spell obstacle). If he fails the test, then dice are subtracted from his Forte just as with a normal Tax test, but he doesn't lose the spell unless his Forte drops below 4.

Failed Casting

A sorcerer who botches a casting (does not meet the obstacle) is subject to three possible outcomes: Harmless dissipation, garbled transmission or unwanted summoning. The casting player should roll the Die of Fate for the failed spell:

1 Unwanted Summoning
2 Garbled Transmission
3-6 Harmless Dissipation

Harmless Dissipation

Harmless dissipation indicates that the sorcerer has gotten lucky this time. His spell has no further effects, harmful or otherwise.

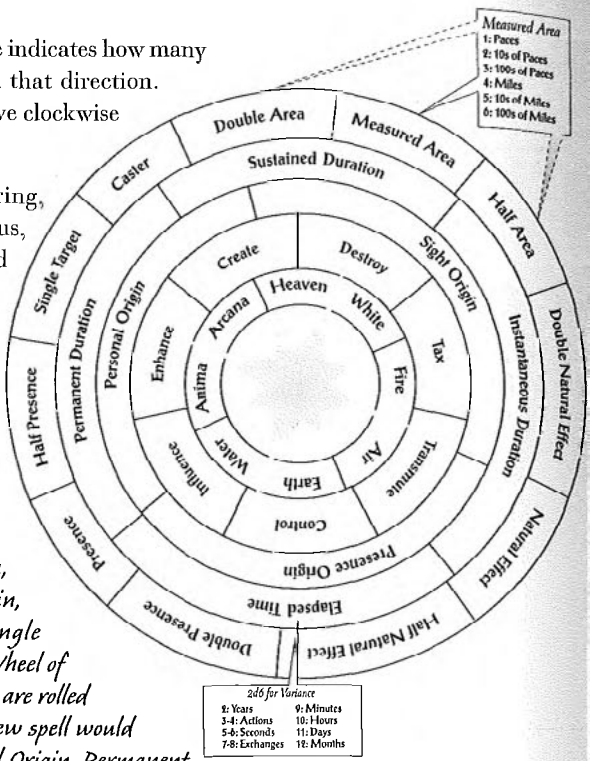
Garbled Transmission

Garbled Transmission indicates that the spell has misfired and has an unexpected effect. Consult the Wheel of Magic! In other words, "Wheel of Magic, turn, turn, turn. Tell me the lesson that I have learned!"

To use the Wheel of Magic, roll two differently colored dice. The darker die indicates direction on the wheel: Odd is counterclockwise, even is

clockwise. The lighter die indicates how many steps the wheel shifts in that direction. Thus if I roll a 2/3, I move clockwise three steps.

Starting in the center ring, find the Element, Impetus, Origin, Duration and Area of the attempted spell. These are the starting points when using the Wheel of Magic.



If Han gets a Garbled Transmission result when attempting to cast Eldritch Shield (Arcana, Control, Personal Origin, Sustained, Caster/Single Target), he consults the Wheel of Magic. Two six-sided dice are rolled With a 2/3 result, the new spell would be: Fire, Create, Personal Origin, Permanent, with a Half Measured Area.

For Half Measured Area variance, we roll a d6 on the handy Measured Area table and halve the result. If you rolled a 6, that'd be "50s of Miles," a 3 is "50s of paces."

But what does that all mean? The GM gets first crack at interpreting spell failure, but he may turn the honor over to the player if he desires.

I'd interpret it like this: The botched attempt at summoning the Eldritch Shield instead causes a vast circle of flame to spring up around the wizard. There's no need to harm him with it. A permanent sea of low, guttering flame is certainly a rather noticeable effect!

If the destroy facet result is produced on the Wheel, use the same mechanics described for Damaging Effects. When factoring the Power of the botched spell, add the margin of failure to the base Power.

Unwanted Summoning

This result indicates the sorcerer has torn a rift in the fabric of reality with his senseless prattle. Spellcasting is a dangerous game, and this is about as bad as it gets.

Consult the following table. Roll 2d6 to see what the summoner has pulled from the void:

2 Deity
3 Major Corporal Spirit (like a dæmon or greater querub)
4-5 Sanctified Dead (a spirit properly put to rest)
6-7 Restless Dead (the victim of murder, betrayal or war)
8-9 Minor Corporal Spirit (like a lesser imp or querub)
10 Corporal Spirit (like an imp or querub or lesser dæmon or seraph)
11 Minor Deity (like a saint or a greater seraph or dæmon)
12 Chief Deity

The GM can decide the exact form of the summoning within the category. It is traditional that the results be bad: if not a creature hell bent on destruction, then an angry avatar to chastise and command the wayward mage. Consult the Summoning chapter in the Magic Burner for more insight into the behavior of spirits in Burning Wheel.

On the other hand, if the GM had something else planned—something waiting in the wings—he can use his discretion rather than random determination.

Spell Interrupt

Spells must be completed uninterrupted. If a sorcerer is distracted while performing an incantation, the spell is ruined and a tax test is required. The obstacle of the test is based on the portion of the spell that was completed. If it was half done, the test is at half the spell obstacle. Also, the sorcerer is subject to the Failed Casting rule.

Casting Interruptions Include, but Are Not Limited to:

A spell is interrupted if the wizard: is hit in the mouth, physically (or magically) restrained, is locked, tackled, injured (with a wound penalty), blinded, falls asleep, fails a Steel test or has a sustained Eldritch Shield reduced to zero dice. Should one of these events occur while the spell is being cast, the spell is interrupted.

Advanced Spell Casting

A spell can be cast as described under the Basic Casting heading of this chapter, or you can modify the obstacle and actions by casting in three different ways: carefully, patiently and hastily. You can combine these methods as you see fit.

Carefully

The sorcerer meticulously speaks the words of the spell, enunciating slowly and deliberately. This grants bonus dice to cast the spell while increasing the time taken. For every +1D, the sorcerer increases the actions in multiples of two.

+1D = x2 actions
+2D = x4 actions
+3D = x6 actions, *etc...*

The maximum bonus dice from casting carefully is equal to the spell obstacle or the Sorcery skill exponent, whichever is lower.

Chris wants his character, Han, to cast Mage Light (Ob 4^, 12 actions). He has plenty of time, so he decides to minimize his risks and cast the spell carefully. Chris wants to give himself two extra dice to cast. +2D multiplies the actions by 4 to 48 actions.

His Sorcery is B5. He adds his two "carefully" dice to that and rolls 7 dice vs Ob 4 to cast.

Patiently

By focusing his will, the sorcerer reduces the strain of tax on his body. The sorcerer player can set aside dice from his Sorcery skill (including carefully dice) when he casts patiently. These dice are not used to cast the spell. Rather, they are used to resist tax. Add them to Forte when testing against tax.

Chris' sorcerer Han has a B5 skill and has taken +2D from casting carefully. He decides that he needs to cast patiently. So he allocates 1D from his skill to casting patiently. He'll roll his skill B5+1D to cast and Forte B6+1D to resist tax.

Hastily

Hurrying a spell can reduce time, but it increases the difficulty of the casting and the chance of making an error. Add +1 Ob to the casting for each action extracted from the incantation. A spell can never be reduced below half its original actions.

+1 Ob Cast/+0 Ob Tax = –1 action
+2 Ob Cast/+1 Ob Tax = –2 actions
+3 Ob Cast/+2 Ob Tax = –3 actions
+4 Ob Cast/+3 Ob Tax = –4 actions

If Han was in a bind and wanted to raise a fast Eldritch Shield, he could cast the spell hastily. The normal time for the spell is 9 actions. The young wizard wants that shield up pronto, so he casts at hastily, -3 actions. That reduces the time to 6 actions and raises the casting obstacle by 3 and tax by 2.

Coup de Magie

(Pronounced: *coo d' mahji.*) Spells yearn to be free, but a sorcerer may withhold the final syllables of an incantation until he deems them fit to be released. This requires the utmost concentration—the sorcerer must focus all his Will to maintain the pregnant spell.

Coup de Magie in Fight

A sorcerer may hold a spell for the remainder of the exchange in which the spell was cast. When positioning is next tested while the sorcerer is holding the spell, the sorcerer must test his Will against the spell obstacle. If successful, he may continue to hold the spell for the duration of this coming exchange. If failed, the spell dissipates.

Coup de Magie in Range and Cover and Duel of Wits

In Range and Cover and Duel of Wits, a sorcerer may only hold his spell for one volley before he must test his Will against the obstacle as described above.

Coup de Magie Outside of Conflict

Outside of conflict, a sorcerer may hold a spell for a few moments without any trouble. If he wants to hold the spell for longer, he must pass a Will test against the spell obstacle. If failed, he must let the spell out right now. If passed, he may hold the spell for the remainder of the scene until he's ready to let it go.

Coup de Magie and May Nots

If the wizard fails the Will test for Coup de Magie, then the spell is lost but no tax or Failed Casting test is taken. But if he is interrupted as described under Spell Interrupt, he must resist the spell's full tax.

Spells as Weapons

On occasion, you may find your sorcerer engaged in a duel of spells with an archrival, assaulting a castle wall or even being stalked by an unrelenting assassin through the cold woods. In these instances, spells are used to determine positioning in Fight and as the weapon for maneuver advantage in Range and Cover.

Casting in Fight

In melee, spells require a certain number of actions to cast. A spell is discharged on the action it is completed.

Advantage and Disadvantage

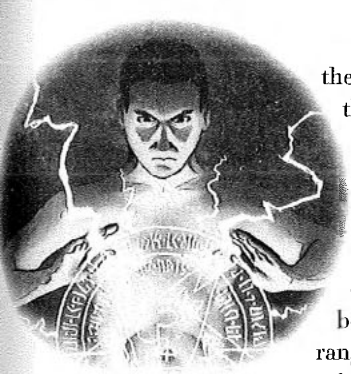
Certain spells count as weapons for the purposes of positioning. Spells that are weapons have weapon lengths listed with them in their spell descriptions. Spells can gain advantage and do suffer disadvantage based on their weapon length relative to their opponent. Disadvantage increases the casting obstacle.

Determine what spell you're casting at the start of the exchange, just as if you were declaring what weapon you are using. Use your spell's weapon length while casting the spell, not just on the action it's discharged.

Casting in Range and Cover

A player may spend an action (a success from his margin of success) in Range and Cover to have his sorcerer cast a spell. Or if you're a wizard leading your team, you must declare what spell you're casting at the top of the volley and use it as your weapon for maneuvering. In a contest solely between sorcerers, the mage casting the quicker spell gains +1D to his maneuver test. A tied result is the same as in missile combat—both parties may act to cast a spell if they so desire.

In Range and Cover field maneuvers, spell timing is a bit loose. Any spell of 20 actions or less may be cast in a single Range and Cover volley. If a spell requires more than 20 actions, the sorcerer must spend one volley casting before the spell is discharged. That requires two actions spent to cast that spell. They do not have to be in consecutive volleys, but the sorcerer may not perform any other action while preparing and holding



the spell. If a spell is more than 40 actions, then the spell requires two additional actions in two different volleys.

Spell Range

Spells that are capable of being used as weapons are listed with a range equivalence in their descriptions. Spells must be in range in order to be effectively cast. If a spell is cast from extreme range, increase the casting obstacle by one. If you're out of range, and forced to cast, don't roll for casting. The spell fails. Test for tax.

Spell Cover

If casting a spell at a target behind cover, increase the casting obstacle by the value of the cover as described in the Range and Cover chapter.

Non-Weapon Spells

Non-weapon spells may be cast during combat using the standard rules for casting, origin and area of effect.

Casting Patiently, Carefully and Hastily in Combat

Declare if you're casting carefully, patiently and hastily before any dice are rolled for maneuvering or casting. Refactor the casting time if casting carefully or hastily.

Area of Effect in Combat

Some spells are designed to destroy or harm an area. This heading provides information for using such spells to fight.

Area of Effect in Fight

Single target: You only hit one character. Paces: You hit one character, but you can hit another character with whom you are engaged each for two additional successes. Presence: You hit all enemy targets with whom you are engaged. 10s of Paces: You hit everyone in the fight (which might not be the smartest choice). Natural Effect: You hit one target. Roll a Die of Fate for each additional character in the melee, yourself included. On a 1, they're hit as well. Larger areas of effect are rarely used in close quarters. I'm confident you can extrapolate the results.

Area of Effect in Range and Cover

Single target: You only hit one character. Paces: one character. Presence: one character and one character helping that character.

10s of paces: one character plus an additional character for each additional success spent on area of effect. 100s of paces: a large group like a crowd or an army regiment, you can target additional groups by spending two extra successes on area of effect per group. Natural Effect: You hit one target. Roll a Die of Fate for each additional success spent on area of effect. On a 1, an additional character is hit.

Sorcery and Duel of Wits

You can cast spells as an action in the Duel of Wits. Actions used against you while casting use the following obstacles and interactions: Avoid, —; Dismiss, Ob 1; Feint, Ob 1; Incite, Ob=Will; Obfuscate, Ob 1; Point, Ob 1; Rebuttal, Ob —.

Rain of Fire Versus Breath of Wind

Master Qing completed his terrible incantation and summoned forth an apocalyptic Rain of Fire. Garn Huri was ready. As he saw the sulphurous clouds gathering over his companions, he hurled forth a howling Breath of Wind.

Like the art of alchemy, Sorcery has catalysts, reagents, sharp acids and cold bases—a chemistry of reactants that can be set against one another to return the source to a neutral state.

Counterspells

Certain elements and impetuses can be cast to cancel or diffuse opposing spells. The contest is much like the martial Strike and Block—the sorcerer with the most successes overcomes the defense. A spell's effect is lessened by the defense (or attack) of his opponent.

Roll for the counter-spell as a normal casting. The counter-spell's successes (over the obstacle) are subtracted from the target spell's successes. If this reduces the spell successes below the obstacle, then it is completely negated (but is not a Failed Casting). If the counter-spell generates more successes, then its effects overwhelm the opposing spell. The extra successes over the defeated spell go toward the counter-spell effect and area.

Some spells have obvious counters, some do not, and some do not have counters at all. Rainstorm is a counter-spell for Rain of Fire. Mage Light is always at war with Dark of Night. Persuasion has no real "counter." It can't be blocked or cancelled. However, the effects of Persuasion can be "countered" with Persuasion:

Bad Wizard to warrior: "Drop your sword."

Good Witch to warrior: "Ignore him."

The sword is dropped, but the swordsman should ignore Bad Wizard's further commands.

Elemental Opposites

Fire vs Water, White vs Earth, Air vs Fire, Heaven vs Heaven, Arcane vs Arcane, and Anima vs Anima: These are just some of the counter-spell possibilities. The effects of these combinations are not cut and dried or easily predicted.

Impetus Opposites

Destroy vs Create, Enhance vs Taxing, Control vs Influence, Influence vs Influence, and Control vs Control.

Many spells cannot be countered directly. They must be attacked obliquely, usually by distracting the wizard as he casts or sustains the spell. Philosopher's Perch, for example, has no counter-spell, but a hunting bow and a sturdy arrow make a fine substitute for one!

Timing is tricky

As long as the counter-wizard is casting a viable counter-spell, and finishes it in the same volley as the opposing spell, he may attempt to counter. To better time counter-spells, players may attempt to assess their opponents using Second Sight or Magesense, and the Aura Reading skill. See the Aura Reading skill description in the Character Burner for obstacles.

Spells like Rain of Fire, Breath of Wind and White Fire all have sudden and violent instantaneous effects. It is best to think ahead and defend yourself with an Eldritch Shield before engaging an enemy who can summon heaven's wrath and turn you to pile of ash.

The Eldritch Shield Spell

This spell grants the wizard the power to erect a magical barrier to block incoming Destroy and Tax impetuses. The shield deflects spells like White Fire, Breath of Fire, Rain of Fire, Shards, Choking Hand, Lights of Simplex, Emperor's Hand, Fire Fan and Storm of Lightning. Each die of the shield negates one die from the incoming spell's attack. The shield is reduced by one for each die it deflects.

The Shield Was Blasted Away

If the Eldritch Shield is knocked down completely (reduced to zero dice) by an opposing spell, the witch must test Will to maintain any spells she is currently sustaining. If the witch drops the Eldritch Shield voluntarily prior to its destruction, there is no additional negative effect.

Sorcerer Advances Will

It's easy to get Will tests as a wizard. Of course, they usually come at crucial times when failure means death—but at least you'll get a test!

Being distracted while sustaining a spell requires a Will test in order to maintain concentration. These tests are made at the basic spell obstacle. If a sorcerer with a Will of B5 is sustaining Turn Aside the Blade (Ob 4), and fails a tax test from another spell he cast, he must make an Ob 4 Will test to keep Turn Aside going. Pass or fail, that is a difficult test!

Sustaining spells occupies Will dice—for each spell sustained, the sorcerer sets aside one die to represent it. Those dice can't be used for *any tests* while the spell is sustained. This effectively, if temporarily, lowers the sorcerer's Will. Thus, if our sorcerer from the above example (Will B5) is sustaining Turn Aside the Blade, Chameleon and Magesense, his current Will is B2. If he suffers a "May Not" and is forced to test in order to keep Turn Aside up, he rolls two dice against an Obstacle of 4! That's a challenging Will test.

Of course, he is going to fail that test, but at least he'll benefit from it. As always in instances of multiple tests, only log the most difficult one of the lot. In the example above, our sorcerer is going to make three Will tests. In this case, note only the challenging test.

Learning New Spells

Learning a new spell is a long, difficult, dangerous and complicated process. In order to begin, a sorcerer must either have a written copy of the incantation, or be under direct instruction from another sorcerer. Once this condition is met, there are three steps to learning a new spell:

First Reading

Make a Sorcery test vs the spell's basic obstacle. This is a standard skill test—FoRKs, help and working methods are all viable—it is not open-ended. Time for the test is the obstacle in months. Extra successes (working quickly) subtract 10% of time per success. If the test is successful, the character now has a basic understanding of the spell and may move on to Practicals.

If the player fails the first reading test by a margin of up to three, he increases the obstacle of the spell he is learning by the margin of failure. He may proceed to practicals with this spell and its new obstacle. The increased obstacle is permanent for casting this spell.

Chris is trying to learn Breath of Wind (Ob 4) for his sorcerer Han. He fails the test by one. The Breath of Wind spell that he learns is Ob 5 to cast and resist tax.

If the player fails by more than three successes, the spell cannot be learned. Move on.

Practicals

Here is the dangerous part. The sorcerer's mastery is far from complete. He only has a basic grasp of the spell—he must cast it to fully understand it.

When casting the new spell, the sorcerer suffers an obstacle penalty equal to his Perception aptitude. Reduce this penalty by one for each time the spell is cast.

The sorcerer must cast the spell (pass or fail) as many times as his Perception aptitude. Like skill tests, these tests must be game-legitimate. No sitting around your tower setting the couch on fire. After he has fulfilled his aptitude requirement, he then moves on to Second Reading.

Han's Perception is B6. Therefore, his Perception aptitude is 4. During practicals, the first time Han casts Breath of Wind it's Ob 5 +4 Ob. This is a very scary, very dangerous spell for him to learn. Next time he casts, it'll be Ob 5 +3 Ob.

Second Reading

Second Reading is similar to First Reading, except now the sorcerer is trying to unlearn all the garbage and mistakes he made and get at the heart of the spell. This is the same procedure as First Reading, except the time for the test is the obstacle in weeks. If the casting obstacle for the spell was modified by the First Reading, be sure to use that obstacle for the Second Reading.

Extra successes (working quickly) subtract 10% of time per success. If the test is successful, the character now has mastered the spell and may cast it as a regular spell, not a practical spell.

If the player fails the Second Reading, he learns a sloppy, meandering version of the spell. He learns the spell, but his casting time is modified. His margin of failure for the test is added to the casting time of the spell in actions.

Learning Sorcerous Skills

To learn Sorcery—and all other skills of the sorcerous type—a character must be taught. He cannot pick it up on his own. It can be learned through written instructions (designed expressly for that purpose) or taught by another sorcerer. Any character may learn the Sorcery skill, but only those with the Gifted or equivalent trait may cast spells.

Natural Effect Scale

The Natural Effect area of effect is an interesting and quirky facet. It is meant to represent the range of possibilities present when unleashing the forces of nature via magic. A bolt of fire is one thing, but unleashing a howling, gale force wind is somewhat more unpredictable. Unless otherwise stated, a spell with the Natural Effect area of effect abides by the following parameters when it is cast:

Success—cosmetic, minor effects: a wind that kicks up dust, candlelight, a spark, ripples on water.

1 over—small, incidental effects: a breeze that douses a candle, torch light or flame, a wave that rocks the boat.

2 over—minor effects: a wind that breaks small branches from trees, a lantern light, a small fire, a wave that pitches small boats dangerously.

3 over—palpable effects: damage to trees and houses from wind, a campfire, a light bright enough to illuminate a room, dangerous and rough surf.

4 over—strong effects: a wind strong enough to toss people to the ground and damage houses, a bonfire, very bright light, a wave big enough to swamp small boats and knock people flat.

5 over—powerful effects: a wind strong enough to blow trees down and create twelve-foot surges, a bright beacon of light, a wave strong enough to shatter small boats.

6 over—forceful: a wind strong enough to strip houses bare, twilight, a raging fire, a wave large enough to swamp mid-sized craft.

7 over—disastrous: a wind strong enough to rip the roof off a large house, dawn light, a wave powerful enough to swamp large vessels or shatter lesser craft.

8 over—devastating: a wind strong enough to level sturdy wooden buildings, cloudy daylight, an inferno, a wave large enough to capsize ships.

9 over—catastrophic: a wind that topples most structures, hellfire, sunlight, a wave that destroys seaside towns.

Natural Effect and Control

When used with the control impetus, Natural Effect has a side effect. Depending on the spell concept, successes over the obstacle act as a Throw Opponent martial arts action. To resist, make a Power or Speed test at an obstacle equal to the successes over the spell obstacle. So, a Breath of Wind type spell with control impetus tosses people around, while a destroying Breath of Wind does damage via the DoF.

Sorcery in Brief

- To cast a spell: Announce intent; declare spell used to accomplish intent.
- Determine how long the spell will take to cast. Spell actions are the same as regular actions in Fight. Count 20 or fewer actions in one volley of Range and Cover or Duel of Wits.
- Test Sorcery skill. The test is open-ended. Obstacle is equal to the spell obstacle plus any area of effect added.
- Meeting the obstacle indicates the spell was successfully cast. Extra successes can often be spent on increasing the effect. See spell descriptions for details.
- If the player doesn't meet the casting obstacle, the spell is failed. Roll a Die of Fate to see if the spell goes awry: 1 is Unwanted Summoning, 2 is Garbled Transmission, and 3-6 is Harmless Dissipation.
- After the spell is cast, immediately roll for tax: Sorcerer's Forte vs the spell obstacle. This test is not open-ended. Margin of failure is temporarily subtracted from Forte. If Forte reaches zero, the sorcerer passes out.
- Taxed Forte dice (aka the Sickness) are recovered by testing Health.
- Spells may be cast Carefully, Patiently and Hastily:
  - —Carefully adds dice to casting and increases time: +1D = x2 actions. Maximum die bonus is equal to the caster's Sorcery exponent or the spell obstacle, whichever is lower.
  - —Patiently allows you to borrow dice from your Sorcery skill to add to your Forte test.
  - —Hastily reduces the casting time and increases the spell obstacle. +1 Ob = -1 action. The first hastily step only increases the casting obstacle. The second and subsequent steps reduce the time by one action and increase the casting and tax obstacles.

Emotional Magic

Emotional Attributes

Burning Wheel recognizes the mystical potential of deep and powerful emotion. Such emotions are given the status of an attribute—they become integral to the character and his development. They can be advanced like other abilities, though they do so under special conditions.

Emotional attributes give access to a potent range of abilities, but they come with a price—they can overwhelm the character if the player pushes too far.

There are four basic emotional attributes: Faith, Grief, Greed and Hatred. Faith is only available to Man and Roden. Grief is a symptom of the Elves and their immortality, Greed plagues the Dwarves, and Orcs are subjects of their own overpowering Hatred.

In this chapter, we'll take a look at the most fluid and perhaps most powerful of the emotional attributes and emotional magics, Faith. Grief, Greed and Hatred are discussed in the appropriate character sections of the Character Burner.

Faith

Faith is much more than simple belief. It is a profound relationship with the divine that grants the ability to work miracles.

Many characters will espouse beliefs about their faith, but not every devout character possesses the Faith emotional attribute.

Faith tests are, of course, open-ended.

Spare a Quarter for an Old Altar Boy, Father?

Throughout this section, I use the term "priest" to describe those with miraculous ability. This is simply a term of convenience and is not meant to limit the province of faith to only those invested with religious rank.

Faithful

In order to have access to the emotional magic of Faith, the character must possess the Faithful trait. It costs 5 trait points in character burning, unless purchased from a lifepath.

Belief

The player must write at least one of his character's three Beliefs as a statement of faith. This can be as simple as, "I serve the Will of God the Father" or as subtle as, "Fire is the breath of life; fire preserves; fire destroys."

Should the character ever lose or change this Belief away from his faith, his Faithful trait is changed to Lost Faith. You can change the content of the Belief, so long as it remains centered on your faith.

Pray

A Faithful character may pray for divine intervention. The prayer must be announced and spoken. He must chant his sutras or invoke his god in order for the power to be made manifest. The player creates the prayer on the fly and states his desired outcome. Then he tests his Faith. There is no tax and no "prayer failure" chart.

Remember to keep to the basic rules here: State the specific intent of the prayer, then state the task. The intent is the desired outcome, the nature of the prayer is the task.

Outlandish intents are a fine cause for massively increased obstacles and a little divine wrath.

Mystery of the Divine

If the player meets his obstacle (as described in the list below), he gains the favor he asked for. The GM is obligated to add to that result one attendant, mysterious and inexplicable effect—a flash of light, a shooting star, the rivers run red with blood, birds speak in tongues. The breadth of the inexplicable effect should be commensurate with the effects of the prayer.

Failed in Prayer

Miracles aren't that common, and Faith tests are more often failed than succeeded. Generally, the end result should be that the pleas of the faithful go unheard by the distant gods. However, the GM is welcome to intercede during a failed Faith test. The character has sent forth a powerful call, and perhaps another entity has heard and responded? Perhaps the character has actually angered the deity with his prattle, and the irate god lashes out with a hex or plague? These effects should be used sparingly, but I'm confident when I say that the average GM will have no trouble playing god now and again.

Believer vs Infidel

At the outset of the game, the priest player and the GM should determine if the prayers of the Faithful work on all characters in the game, or only those who carry a Belief, trait or superstition in the faith (or directly against the faith).

Allowing priests to affect all characters gives them great sway and power. This is fine for certain modes of play. Forcing priests to rely on only those who believe creates tremendous opportunity for dramatic conflict as the character attempts to convert others to his ways. Either way, the choice is yours.

Divine Intervention

What follows is a recommended list of prayer effects and their obstacles. Pick and choose those that are appropriate. For example, in one of my long running games only Major Miracles work. None of the lesser prayers have any effect whatsoever. Players and GMs should hammer out any guidelines before play.

Boon— Ob 2. The will divine can render the pure of spirit remarkable and potent. This prayer makes one ability open-ended until a scene is completed. Pronounce the ability and the task when the prayer is spoken.

Blessing— Ob 3. The priest may grant other devotees prowess and acumen. He may bless a person, beast, device or tool (depending on his religious idiom) and grant +1D to a stat, skill, Health or Steel for the duration of an intent.

Aid— Ob 4. When the physical body lacks, a priest calls upon his master to grant him the forbearance and ability to succeed in his name. Meeting the obstacle grants +1D to any skill, stat, Steel or Health test. Additional successes add +1D, up to a maximum of +3D. Choose what is aided at the time the prayer is spoken. The prayer can be cast in advance and will "wait" to release itself until the proper ability is tested.

Hindrance— Ob 4-6. (Obstacle varies depending on the number of foes. Ob 4 for one, Ob 5 for two, Ob 6 three.) When the enemies of the Faith rush forward in great mass to overwhelm the faithful, god may raise his hand against them and cause them to stumble, fall or cower. This prayer momentarily immobilizes its targets—their limbs become leaden and their muscles flaccid. The effect lasts for actions equal to half the priest's Faith exponent.

Guidance— Ob 5. When the way is lost, the priest may ask to know the right path. This prayer can be used in a more metaphorical sense as well.

Minor Miracle— Ob 5. When it is dark, we pray for light; when sorcerers chant, we pray their spells be broken; when the blade is snapped, we pray that it be made whole; when blood ebbs from the wound, we pray that it be closed.

Purification— Ob 5. With the touch of his hand, the priest may drive out rot and lesser evil spirits (Will or Strength of B5 and lower).

Consecration— Ob 6. A lengthy prayer can be offered to mark a place as holy and sacrosanct—protected from the ill will of spirits and demons. The consecration will bar spirits and demons whose Will is lower than the Faith attribute of the consecrating priest.

Inspiration— Ob 7. A priest may call upon his deity for a revelation or knowledge. This is a dangerous prayer because a divinity knows much and will often reveal that which the priest did not intend to learn.

Intercession— Ob 8. This mighty miracle brings the hand of god down to pluck the devotee from danger (or pluck the danger from the devotee).

A priest is about to be run down by a galloping knight. There is no hope of escape—but miraculously the knight falls from his saddle as he charges! Alternately, a priest is about to be shot down by an assassin—but the murderer's bow string snaps! Huzzah!

Miracle— Ob 10. When all hope is lost, when the cataclysm has come, we pray for the power divine to manifest and save us. This is the big one—the column of scourging fire, the parting of the seas, the raging storm that destroys the fleet.

Prayer Effects

Unlike Sorcery and nearly every other ability in the game, when Faith meets its obstacle, success is total. There aren't degrees of success here. (Except for Aid.) When rot is driven out, it's gone. All of it. When the path is found, there's no question for the priest that he's found the truth.

Prayer vs Sorcery

In many instances, Faith and the Gift of Sorcery are at odds. In my campaign, I allow a Minor Miracle to be used as a "spell-breaker" type prayer. If the obstacle is met, the Minor Miracle can strip a wizard of a sustained spell or interrupt/neutralize the casting of a spell in progress.

Pray and Fight

If a prayer is used in melee, it counts as speech and does not cost actions, per se. A short prayer usually takes about two volleys to invoke. Faith is not a weapon and cannot be used to directly gain advantage for positioning in Fight.

Prayer and Range and Cover

When using "battle" prayers in the Range and Cover rules, Faith cannot be used as a weapon. In order to say a prayer during Range and Cover, you must earn an action. If there is ever any question, Faith has the range of a thrown weapon.

Faith and Duel of Wits

You may use Prayer as an action in the Duel of Wits. Actions made against you while praying count as follows: Avoid, —; Dismiss, Ob 1; Feint, Ob 1; Incite, Ob=Will; Obfuscate, Ob 1; Point, Ob 1; Rebuttal, Ob —.

Join Us in Prayer

Faithful characters may help other Faithful characters using the standard helping rules. Usually the religion limits the number of priests who can be involved in a prayer. For example, only one priest says mass, but it takes two to perform an exorcism. Believers may also help. Those with a Belief in the faith grant +1D helping die for every 20 accumulated Will dice.

If five believers are present each with a Will of 4, they grant 1D of help total.

Stigmata

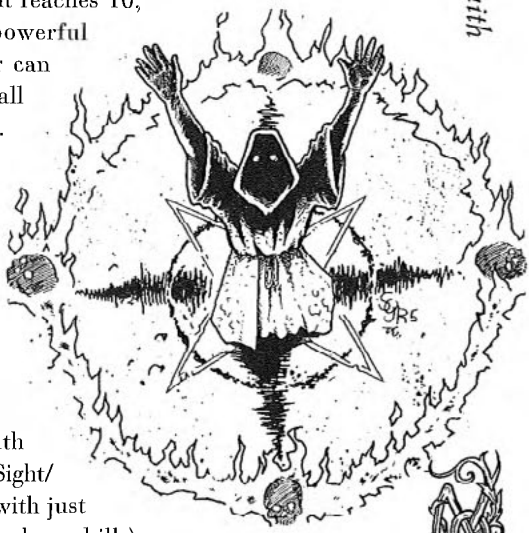
As the priest's Faith advances, he becomes more intertwined with the divine. His Faith begins to have physical manifestations, setting him apart from the common believer.

At exponent 6 and lower, the priest will occasionally exhibit some bizarre and miraculous telltales—stigmata, speaking in tongues, weeping uncontrollably or some other aspect of his god/religion.

At exponent 7, he develops physical markings or undeniable evidence on his body. At exponent 8, one physical feature is distorted or exaggerated—baldness, elongated ears, becoming a eunuch, etc. At exponent 9, an aura or halo manifests. The exact manifestations are up to the player and GM, taking into account the context of the game and the idiom of the deity in question.

Transcends, Ascends or Descends

When a priest's Faith exponent reaches 10, he's become too holy and powerful to walk this plane. No longer can he be concerned with the small struggles and toils of men. Suddenly, his eyes are forced open to a wonderful and awful panorama. It is into this divine spectacle he steps and forever leaves the world of the living, gone to join his god.



Aura and Faith

It is an Ob 1 test to detect Faith with Aura Reading and Second Sight/ Magesense. (Ob 2 Perception with just Magesense or Second Sight and no skill.) Faith effects can be detected just like spells: 10 minus Faith obstacle is the Perception obstacle for Second Sight or Magesense.

Advancing Faith

Only successful Faith tests count toward advancement.

Natural Magic

Natural magic encompasses subtle eldritch powers and enchantments. Characters who possess natural magic are tied to their environment and gain special benefits from these links.

Elves, for example, were the first born—shaped from pure earth and starlight. They were taught many secrets by their divine creator and hence possess an inherent understanding and control of their world. Their natural magic manifests in the form of their many Songs.

Dwarves, second born, interred in the earth for many ages, also were gifted with knowledge and secrets from their creator. They know the earth and its elemental fruits as well as they know themselves. Their Arts are considered a natural magic.

Lastly, natural magics can be tied into or rooted in emotional attributes. Orcs, for example, gain impetus for their natural magics from their very Hatred.

Natural Magic Rules

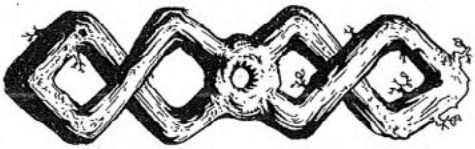
Natural magic abilities function in game exactly like a skill, except that all rolls with these abilities are open-ended. Advancement, artha, helping, FoRKing and injury all apply to these abilities as they would to any skill.

There is no tax and there is no "spell failure" rule.

Spell-Like Effects

Occasionally a natural magic ability will have an effect that is closer to a spell than that of a mundane skill. In game mechanical terms, these function as low-powered spells. A magical/wondrous effect is narrated as the result, and extra successes from the skill roll are divided between the applicable functions—effect, area, etc.

The individual natural magic abilities are described in the Character Burner. Dwarves, Elves and Orcs each have access to natural magic.



Example Natural Magic Abilities

Air of Gates — Ob: See Description

This is a special song an Elf sings to a door or gate. The singer may ask one gate in his Presence, "What lies beyond?" And he will be answered.

Obstacle: Fence gates, Ob 1. Cabin doors, Ob 2. House doors, Ob 3. Doors of a great hall, Ob 4. Fortress gate, Ob 5. Castle gate, Ob 6. City gates, Ob 7. Gates of the realm, Ob 8.

Actions: 25 x the obstacle

Air of Gates is very much like a sorcerous spell. However, to invoke this magical ability, the Elf player rolls only the skill dice for Air of Gates. He does not risk tax or any kind of spell failure. Note that the skill ability does have a pre-determined casting time.

or another example from the Dwarven lifepaths.

Black Metal Artifice — Will/Agility

This is the skill with which Dwarves create all their mundane and household metals. However, the Artificers know a secret or two and may imbue even their pots and horseshoes with intense quality. Using the obstacles listed below, a Dwarf can create various "tool kits." If he so desires, he may increase his obstacles to create by +2 Ob and grant the final product a special +1D bonus to all skill tests in which the tools are used.

Obstacles: Horseshoes, Ob 1. Mason, Stone Art, Cooking, Blacksmith, Black Metal Art tools: Ob 2. Armorer, Weaponsmith, War Art tools, Ob 3. Khirurgeon's tools, Ob 4.

FoRKs: White Metal Artifice, War Art

Skill Type: Craftsman **Tools:** Workshop.

Restrictions: Dwarves only

Black-Metal Artifice is a simple natural magic that turns a regular skill—Blacksmithing—into an open-ended and potent ability.

Distance and Movement

The Pace

The pace is the standard measure of distance in Burning Wheel. It represents the distance of one stride, heel to toe, for an average man. For our purposes, it's a standard measurement. All paces, whether for Dwarf or Troll, are the same distance.

Distance

Ranges, lengths, depths, distances and rates of movement are measured in paces.

A hunting bow has a maximum effective range of 100 paces in Burning Wheel. Dwarves are a pace and a half tall, Men are just under two paces, Elves are two paces tall, Trolls are three.

For equivalency's sake, we say that a pace contains three feet and that there are 1,760 paces to a mile. However, it's best not to get too precise with actual distance in Burning Wheel. Paces are only meant to be used as a rough measuring stick.

To cross distances quickly, we don't bust out the ruler. We make Speed tests. Set an obstacle for the journey—to get there early, to get there on time, to get there at all!—and test Speed against the obstacle. It's the simplest and best way to resolve travel.

Stride

Stride is a quality of a character's stock and body type. It notes who has an advantage if two characters are racing or maneuvering against one another due to their physiognomy, not just their Speed.

Dwarves have a stride of 6. Men, Orcs and Trolls have a stride of 7. Elves, Great Spiders and Roden have a stride of 8. Great Wolves have a stride of 11. Horses have a stride of 12. Nothing sharpens a wolf's hunger like a hoof on the run.

This rating isn't rolled. It doesn't advance like a stat or skill. It isn't affected by wounds. It simply tells us who has the natural advantage in terms of movement.

Stride and Positioning

As mentioned above, some creatures are simply built to run faster than others. The stride represents this. In the positioning rules for melee and missile combat, the character with the longer stride gets +1D to his positioning test. It doesn't matter how far the character could move if we measured it. What matters is that one character/creature is more mobile than the other.

If there are more than two strides in play, the highest should get +2D, the next highest +1D and the lowest gets no bonus. If one character's stride exceeds another's by four or more, the GM may grant him a +2D bonus to the positioning tests rather than the +1D bonus.

The Chase is On

If one character is pursuing another, make a versus Speed test. Do not measure Speed rate vs Speed rate. The chase is a single positioning test made to resolve an "I'm running away from him" conflict.

Advantages in the Chase

Grant +1D for each relevant advantage: Higher Reflexes, longer stride, higher Forte, and a head start. If there's nowhere to hide—like being chased on salt flats—then the pursuer gains +2D.

Other advantages are applicable as well—like being better suited to the terrain—but those are situational and up to the GM.

FoRKs in the Chase

Applicable FoRKs like Streetwise, Stealthy, Inconspicuous. Climbing, Rigging or other appropriate Wises are perfectly legitimate.

Pursuer Wins the Chase Test

This means that your character has caught up to his quarry—at full tilt—and is in position to do one thing/action. Take a shot, dive tackle him, shout a warning, whatever. This must be taken as a separate skill or stat test at a +2 Ob disadvantage. Use the appropriate mechanics to resolve that action/conflict. If this fails to stop the quarry, then the chase is on again. Another Speed test is made.

Pursued Wins the Chase Test

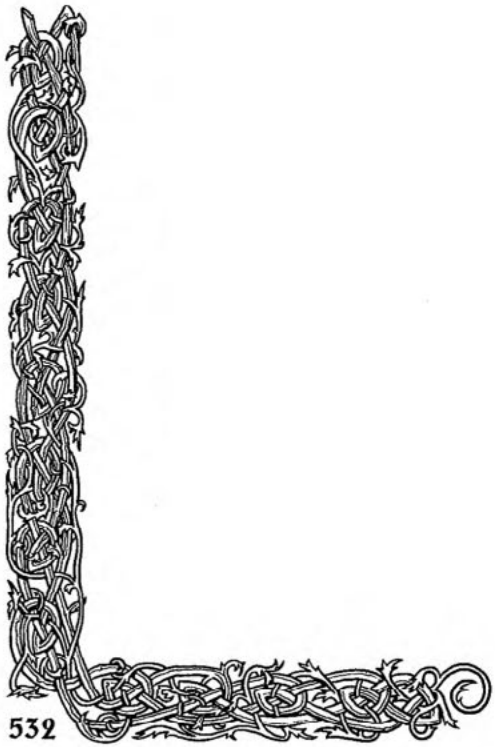
If the pursued wins the test, he gets away. Abiding by the Let it Ride rules, there's no retesting. So after a lengthy chase, the pursued pulls away, diving into a crowd or just running off. You're going to have to find him another way.

Tied Results

Unless the tie can be broken by a call-on trait, another length is run and another roll is made.

Linked Tests for Extended Chases

If a player wants to undertake an extended, multi-part chase/race, the GM should outline the number of tests required to participate. Winning a test gains +1D to the next test. In an extended chase, two consecutive wins puts the pursued out of reach of the chaser.



Riding and Mounted Combat

There are three reasons to ride: for travel, for combat and for pursuit.

Riding to Travel

When traveling, test your Riding skill against the obstacles listed below.

Travel Obstacles

Determine your obstacle to reach your destination by combining these factors (the base obstacle is zero):

Distance

Nearby (+1 Ob), a moderate journey (+2 Ob), a long trip (+3 Ob), an impossible expedition (+4 Ob).

Terrain

Roads (+1 Ob), fields (+2 Ob), countryside (+3 Ob), hills (+3 Ob), swamp (+3 Ob), desert (+3 Ob), mountains (+4 Ob).

Time

We'll get there when we get there (+0 Ob), as fast as possible (+1 Ob), got to be there yesterday (+2 Ob).

Beast

Riding horse, +1D; warhorse, +1 Ob; wolf, +2 Ob; spider, +3 Ob.

Riding in Fight

To urge your mount into combat, you must pass a Riding test. The obstacle is: riding horse Ob 5, warhorse Ob 1, wolf Ob 2, spider Ob 3.

Success indicates that you use your mount's Speed for positioning and Avoids, and its Power for the Charge action. You may use your Riding skill to help your mount for these tests. Also, use your mount's stride in place of your own.

If you fail, you must dismount and fight on foot.

Untrained Mounted Combat (for Fight)

If you and your mount do not have Mounted Combat Training, you both suffer +2 Ob to all actions and positioning in Fight. If you have Mounted Combat for bowmen, you're at +1 Ob to Strike and Great Strike. You may not use a lance.

Avoid Action While Riding

A mounted warrior presents a bigger target in Fight. Thus the Avoid action uses your mount's Speed but suffers a +1 Ob penalty.

Scripting for Mounts

If you're so inclined, you may script for your mount's actions in combat. Both rider and mount must engage the same target. If the rider and mount are engaged by multiple enemies, they may play their actions against different targets.

Horses may not Counterstrike or Throw and are at +2 Ob to Lock. Wolves and spiders suffer no such penalty.

Lances

A lance is a specially constructed spear that is held couched under the shoulder and against the torso while charging from horseback. In order to properly use one, the rider must be seated in saddle, harness and stirrups.

A lance only counts as a lance for the first Block & Strike, Strike or Great Strike of an engagement. Thereafter, it counts as a club. If the rider wishes to reset his lance charge, he must disengage and then reengage an opponent.

Unhorse Him!

When a character is hit by a lance, he must pass a Power test to stay seated (or on his feet). The obstacle is the margin of success of the lance hit. If the test is passed, the target remains seated in the saddle or on his feet. If the test is failed by one, the character suffers +1 Ob to all tests until he spends an action to right himself. If he fails the test by two or more, he is knocked down and suffers the appropriate penalties. If a character is knocked down while in the saddle, he is unhorsed and hits the ground. Roll the Die of Fate to see if the rider is hurt upon impact: 1-2, he suffers a B3; 3-5, he suffers a B6; on a 6 he suffers a B9.

Snap Crackle Break

After testing the Lance skill, pass or fail, roll a die of fate. On 1 your lance breaks or you drop it. Whichever is more dramatic.

The Weight of Cavalry

Downward-stroke hacking, slashing and crushing weapons gain a +1D advantage to their weapon skill due to their extra momentum and follow-through capability while mounted.

The Curved Blade

Swords built with curving blades maximize the height and full swing advantage granted by being mounted. Characters wielding a saber, scimitar or katana gain a +2D bonus to their weapon skill while mounted.

Spears

Spears are held over the shoulder and thrust into the target as the mount passes by at speed. The first Strike or Great Strike of an engagement gains +1D to skill, +1 Power and a +1 VA bonus. However, spears used in this manner to achieve this bonus are "dropped" after the Strike. They should rightly be lodged in your opponent's chest as you ride past!

It's Good to be King!

Attacks from horseback are directed at the head, shoulders, chest and arms of opponents on the ground. The legs *cannot* be chosen by the target as an available location against a mounted adversary. Choose arms, torso or head.

Beating the Horse and Horseman

A beast and rider count as one target for purposes of hit location with melee weapons. The rider may declare himself or his steed as the area to be hit—and he may specify which location. It costs the attacker one success to move from rider to mount. Moving a blow to the head of a mounted rider costs two successes. Moving a blow along the length of the mount costs two successes (from head to haunches, for example).

Riding in Range and Cover

To control your mount in ranged combat, you must pass a Riding test. The obstacle is: riding horse Ob 4, warhorse Ob 2, wolf Ob 3, spider Ob 4.

Success indicates that you use your Riding skill for Speed- and Stealthy-based maneuvers. When using Riding vs Speed, be sure to impose the skilled vs unskilled double obstacle penalty. Also, use your mount's stride in place of your own.

If you fail, you must make any Speed-based tests using your mount's Speed. You may not use Stealthy- or Steel-based maneuvers with this mount in this combat. Consider your mount's stride reduced by two for the duration of this combat.

Untrained Mounted Bowman

If you and your mount do not have Mounted Combat Training for bowmen, you and your mount suffer +2 Ob to all maneuvers in Range and Cover and shooting actions in Fight.

Actions for Mounts

If appropriate, you may assign actions to your mount as if he were a member of your team.

Shooting at the Mount or the Rider

It is up to the shooter to decide if he is targeting the rider or the mount. The chest/body is the main target for both rider and ridden. Moving the location costs one success as per the standard hit location rules.

Pursuit

When tailing, chasing or pursuing another ridden beast, make a versus test between the pursuer's and prey's Riding skills. Modify the skills as listed below:

Advantages in the Pursuit Test

+1D to the animal with the longer stride
+1D if the rider has Affinity for Animals or Low Speech
+1D to the animal with higher Reflexes
+1D to the rider with higher Reflexes

In urban and forested situations:
+1D if the mount has Stealth or Inconspicuous
+1D if the rider has the Stealth or Inconspicuous skills
+1D for the beastie with smaller body size

In rural and highway situations:
+1D to the mount with the highest Forte

Riding Gear

Bits, bridles, saddles and stirrups benefit Riding tests. This gear gives the rider an advantage die (+1D) when trying to control his mount.

Saddles and Stirrups in Combat

If you engage in combat with a mount not bearing a saddle and stirrups, all actions and positioning are made at a +1 Ob penalty.

Riding Failure Complications

This section describes two options for failed Riding or mount-based Speed tests: rolling or collision.

Rolling

It is an Ob 4 Riding test to stay mounted after a roll. If a horse rolls on soft ground, the rider is in little danger. To determine if any damage is done to the rider, use the Thrown Against the Wall rules in the Materials section. Use the horse's Power and the ground for the weapon. For these purposes: Soft earth and mud is -3 Power; plush grass is -1 Power; hard-packed dirt roads are Power 0, Rocks and pavement are Power 3.

Collision

Use the Thrown Against the Wall rules for collisions. The horse's Speed is the Power of the attack. The material collided with is the weapon. Other horses or animals have a 0 Strength for these purposes. So a collision with another animal essentially counts as a bare-fisted Strike. The successes by which the maneuver is failed count as the successes toward the Strike. One or two is Incidental, three or four is Mark, five or more is Superb.

Riding and Steel

When a mount fails his Steel test, he is free to react like any other character. However, the rider does have some say in the matter. A

successful Riding test at an obstacle equal to the beast's Will allows the *rider* to choose the Steel test result. It takes one action to make this Riding test. Thus, a rider can change a Steel result already in progress.

Bolting, Shying, Rolling and Rearing

Failed Steel tests for mounts are: bolt, shy, rear or roll. Bolting is "run screaming," shying and rearing are "stand and drool." Rolling is a "fall prone" action and mounts will often do this if wounded.

If a mount rears, the rider must make an Ob 2 Riding test to prevent being thrown.

Tending Your Mount

A day of riding is tiring for your mount. At the end of your journey, your mount must pass a Forte test equal to the travel obstacle plus the following: +1 Ob for riding gear, +1 Ob for carrying anything more than the rider, +1 Ob for each Fight, +2 Ob for each Range and Cover skirmish. Success indicates your mount is unfazed by the strenuous activity. Failure taxes your mount's Forte by margin of failure. If taxed to zero, the mount cannot be ridden and it cannot fight. If taxed below zero, your mount dies.

Resting Your Mount

Your mount must rest in order to recover his taxed Forte. It must make a Health test with the obstacle equal to the taxed dice from Forte. If passed, your mount is ready to ride after hours of rest equal to the obstacle. If failed, your mount is ready to ride after days of rest equal to the obstacle. You may make an Ob 2 linked Animal Husbandry test to aid in your mount's speedy recovery.

Horse Skills

Mounted Combat Training

Horses must be trained to fight. Untrained horses suffer +2 Ob to all positioning, actions and maneuvers except Withdraw and Disengage.

Rider Training

Horses must be broken before they can be ridden.

Armor Training

A horse must have armor training before it can wear any barding or armor at all.

Formation Fighting

Horses fighting in a formation without this training suffer a +1 Ob to all positioning, actions and maneuvers.

Horse Traits

Aggressive *Dt*

When this horse fails a Steel test he may replace one of his hesitation actions with the Charge action from Fight and Range and Cover.

Restrictions: Horse trait

Gelded *Dt*

This horse has been castrated. He is docile and easy to ride. +1D Steel. This horse may not breed.

Restrictions: Horse trait

Determined *Dt*

Reduce Hesitation by one.

Restrictions: Horse trait

Docile *Dt*

This horse is calm and obedient, the furthest extreme from aggressive. +1 Ob to all Brawling attacks. Also, the animal will not rear when hesitating.

Restrictions: Horse trait

Fearless *Dt*

Reduce Hesitation by two.

Restrictions: Horse trait

Fleet of Hoof *C-O*

Call-On for Speed.

Restrictions: Horse trait

Good Bone *Dt*

These horses are renowned for their strong bones—this quality allows them to carry more weight for their size and helps prevent lameness. This trait increases stride by one. Also, this trait may be used to buy off a trait earned from an injury. The benefit of Good Bone is lost after said trade.

Restrictions: Horse trait

Hooved *Dt*

Horses' hooves give +1 Power to all kicking attacks.

Restrictions: Horse common trait

Keen Hearing *Dt*

Horses have keen hearing—a trait held over from their days in the wild dodging wolves and cats. +1D to all auditory Perception tests (counts toward Reflexes). Also Perception counts as Observation for detecting Stealthy and Inconspicuous characters.

Restrictions: Horse common trait

Level-Headed *Dt*

While being ridden, the horse uses his master's Steel test results.

Restrictions: Horse trait

Long Limbed *Dt*

Horses typically have long, slender legs placing their bodies well off the ground. Due to their long limbs, horses can clear small obstacles like stones, hedges and shallow water with ease. However, their limbs are also relatively fragile and their joints have a tendency to break or sprain. This trait gives the horse a stride of 12.

Restrictions: Horse common trait

Loyal *Dt*

Beloved is this horse's master. Choose one master. Add +1D to his master's Riding skill when riding this horse.

Restrictions: Horse trait

Obedient *Dt*

This horse has been trained to accept riders. Add +1D to the rider's Riding skill.

Restrictions: Horse trait

Proud *Char*

Head held high, this horse carries itself in an imposing manner.

Restrictions: Horse trait

Ungulate *Dt*

This trait describes the horse's basic shape—long skull, short jaw, dark round eyes mounted to the side of the head, mane and fur, long barrel-like body, four long legs ending in hooves and a short, hairy tail. Horses have a maximum Perception and Will of 6, a maximum Agility of 4, Speed of 8 and Power of Forte of 9.

Restrictions: Horse common trait

Tough *Dt*

Round up when factoring mortal wound.

Restrictions: Horse trait

Materials

Want to knock down a door? Want to smash out a window? Throw your friend through a wall? These rules should help you out.

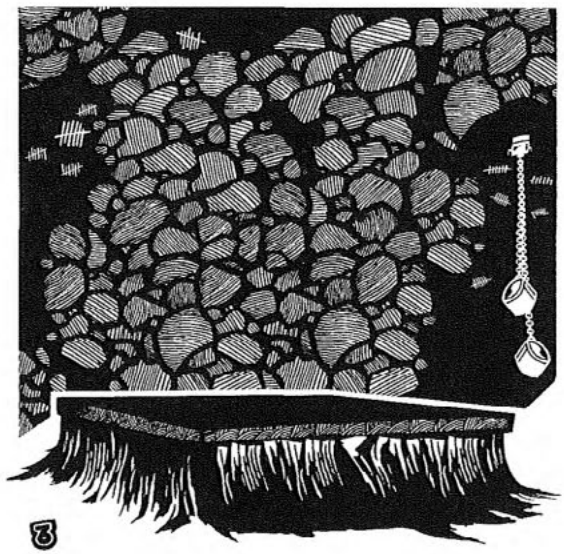
Knocking Down Doors

To bash through a door or to knock down a wall requires a standard test against an obstacle determined by the material.

Test Power against the obstacle of the material strength. Tools count as advantage dice towards Power.

The higher the obstacle of the test, the more time required. Lower obstacle tests take a few minutes. Midranged tests require a few hours. Higher obstacle tests require days, possibly weeks.

The crew and tools required is represented by the high obstacles that all but require advantage dice to tackle. If a player wishes to do something improbable—like knock down a wall with his bare hands—the GM is free to declare the task as inappropriate for the intent. The proper task is to get tools and a team and start battering.



Raw Power Obstacles Against Material Strength:

Ob 1—Rice paper wall, glass window

Ob 2—Thick hedge, fabric wall (tent, covered wagon)

Ob 3—Thin wooden plank interior wall, flimsy wooden door, straw exterior wall

Ob 4—Sturdy wooden interior door, thin plaster interior wall

Ob 5—Sturdy wooden exterior door, reinforced wooden interior door

Ob 6—Sturdy interior wooden wall, plaster exterior wall

Ob 7—Reinforced wooden exterior door, brick interior wall

Ob 8—Brick exterior wall

Ob 9—Iron gate, wooden fortress gate

Ob 10—Iron portcullis

Ob 11—Reinforced wooden fortress gate

Ob 12—Stone wall

Ob 15—Iron fortress gate

Ob 20—Stone fortress wall

Tools for Knocking Down Walls

Inadequate tools or weapons, +1D. Picks and sledges, +2D. Ram, +3D. Awl or metal capped ram, +4D. Housed, slung, capped ram, +6D.

Rams and Helping

Rams require a crew of two to 20 men. However, rams allow their crews to help one another knock down doors and walls. For example, a four-man log ram allows one person to test against a single door with three helpers. If they all have a Power B5, he'd roll 11D against an Ob 6.

Engineering Against Materials

Use these obstacles for the Artillerist, Engineer, Siege Engineer and War Engineer.

Ob 1—Fabric, paper, glass

Ob 2—Hedge, wooden plank interior wall, wooden door

Ob 3—Sturdy interior wooden wall, exterior wall, Sturdy wooden exterior door, reinforced wooden interior door, thatching

Ob 4—Reinforced wooden exterior door

Ob 5—Brick wall, wooden gate

Ob 6—Iron portcullis or gate, wooden bridge

Ob 7—Reinforced gate, stone wall

Ob 8—Donjon (interior castle wall), stone bridge

Ob 10—Sloping, reinforced castle wall

Engineering Tools and Weapons
Siege crossbow, +1D. Catapult, +2D. Traction trebuchet, +3D. Counterweight trebuchet, +4D.

Thrown Against the Wall

Using the Throw maneuver, a character can hurl his opponent to the ground and use the ground or wall as a weapon to do damage.

If you win the versus test by one or meet your obstacle in standard test, you successfully throw your opponent off his feet and suffers the appropriate penalties until he rights himself. You can choose how to spend additional successes: One additional success can be spent to do an Incidental bare-fisted hit or cause a Steel test. Two additional successes can be spent to cause a Mark hit or an Incidental and a Steel test. Four additional successes can be spent to deliver a Superb hit.

Damage of a throw usually counts as a bare-fisted Strike. If you want to be explicitly cruel, use the following rule: Use the surface of impact as the weapon. Matting is -2 weapon Power. Grass, turf, sand, dirt are -1 weapon Power. Wood flooring or walls are +0 weapon power. Metal sheeting is +1 weapon Power. Stone is +2 weapon Power.

The attack is VA 3.

Zhu Kwan throws Kyosho-Gin into the wall of the temple. Rick, Zhu's player, rolled one extra success on his Throw. Rick decided to throw his opponent down. Zhu's Power is 6, the wall of this temple is granite—+2 weapon Power. Power 6 plus 2 = Mark Throw result of B8, and an Incidental of B4. Zhu's one extra success is enough for an Incidental hit. That's a B4 wound to Kyosho-Gin. Ouch. Had Rick rolled two more successes, he could have give him a B8. If he'd rolled four successes, he would have killed him with a B12.

I state that Kyosho-Gin will fall on his ass (essentially taking the hit on his chest). If Rick had rolled an additional success, he could have spent it to move the blow just like a normal Strike.

Heroic and Supernatural

As mentioned way back in the beginning of the book, in Elements of Character, shade is an indicator of a particular ability's potential. There are three shades, left to right along a gray scale: black or *mundane* shade, gray or *heroic* shade and white or *supernatural* shade. When a character has a lighter shade, it does not mean he *is* better. Rather it shows he has the potential to do better.

Stats, attributes, skills and even equipment can be heroic or supernatural shade.

Why Black, Gray, White?

I work in black and white because it is an intuitive scale that almost everyone can easily grasp. I like to think of it as the shades of a flame or fire. The deeper hued flames are the cooler ones, but the hotter the flame, the clearer its hue.

What do the Shades Mean?

- Gray shade stuff has a difficulty number of 3.
- White shade stuff has a difficulty number of 2.

Obstacles for heroic and supernatural are the same as for mundane; the lighter shades just have a better chance of meeting those obstacles.

If a heroic knight has a G5 Sword skill, the player rolls five dice and needs 3s rather than 4s to get successes.

Some men have a heroic skill. Some Elves and Dwarves have heroic stats. Demons, dragons and giants have heroic stats and skills. Supernatural abilities are reserved for gods and great ancient entities.

Heroic and Supernatural Obstacles

If a black-shade ability uses the exponent of a gray-shade ability as its obstacle, add a +2 Ob disadvantage. If a black-shade ability uses the exponent of a white-shade ability as an obstacle, add a +3 Ob disadvantage. If a gray-shade ability uses the exponent of a white-shade ability as an obstacle, add a +2 Ob disadvantage.

Heroic and Supernatural Stats

Roots

When a stat acts as a root for a skill, *the skill takes on the shade of the stat.* If the root comes from the combination of two or more stats, the shade is the darker of the two. Also, for mismatched shades, add two to the total before dividing.

A character with a G5 Agility and a B5 Perception opens a Surgery skill. Surgery is a Perception/Agility root—the root is half of the average of those two stats. Normally, half of the average of 5 is 2.5. This rounds down to a root of 2. However, with a gray stat the math is different: Agility counts as two greater because of its shade. So the actual numbers to average are 7 and 5. Half of their average (6) is 3.

Aptitude

Gray and white shade stats reduce aptitude—the number of tests needed to learn a skill. Gray shade reduces aptitude for skills rooted from the stat by one. White shade reduces aptitude by two.

Will

Hesitation for gray shade Will is 8 minus the exponent. Hesitation for white shade Will is 7 minus the exponent.

Forte and Bleeding

Gray shade Forte doubles the bleeding times, white shade triples them.

Power and IMS

Gray shade Power adds +2 when determining the IMS for black-shade weapons. White shade adds +3. Gray and white shade Power do not give the characters gray and white shade damage. That requires an additional trait. If the character does have a trait to grant gray shade damage to his fists, no Power bonus is granted.

When characters with gray or white shade Power are using a mundane weapon, they may add their respective bonus. However, if the character

gets no successes on a melee action—even if he starts positive but his opponent defends and reduces his successes to zero—the weapon he is wielding shatters. It's broken, gone. Get a new one.

Heroic Mortal Wound

Gray Mortal Wound

A character has a gray mortal wound if both his Power and Forte are gray. If one is gray and the other is black, add 2 before averaging. If the character has a gray mortal wound, the superficial wound is placed in the black shade at the full Forte exponent. Add the Forte exponent to that again. That's the light wound tolerance. Traumatic goes to the left of mortal, then severe, skip a pip and then place the midi.

Heroic Reflexes

Gray shade Reflexes is very potent in Burning Wheel. To achieve this level, a character must have a gray Perception, Agility and Speed.

In the exchange, for each action that he would normally get due to his Reflexes, he gets a second that happens at the same time.

A Character with a G3 Reflexes gets one action per volley. However, he may perform two maneuvers on each of those actions. So if his opponent Strikes, the gray-Reflexed character may Block and then Strike before his opponent would get his second action. Very nasty.

Heroic and Supernatural Skills

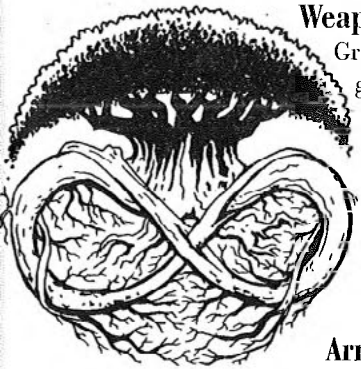
Having a reduced difficulty number is very useful and a potent benefit for skills. However, there is an additional benefit: Only gray and white shade abilities can create gray and white shade effects, whether the effect be a spell, a cabinet or a sword. If a lighter shade is desired, the character must have the skill shade to back it up.

An Aristeia or Minor Epiphany can be used to create this effect.

Heroic and Supernatural Gear

Equipment

Equipment that gives bonus dice, like balance dice, usually has its own shade. If it's the same shade as the wielder, it's no big deal—just roll all the dice together. If the equipment is a different shade, roll a different colored die to represent it.



Weapons

Gray and white shade weapons do damage in the gray and white shade on the PTGS. In fact, they are the only way to do gray and white shade damage. Need to kill that dragon? Better find a gray shade sword.

If a character wishes to do gray damage with his bare hands, he's got to find a way to turn his hands into gray shaded weapons.

Armor

All armor described in these books, except for Dwarven Mail and Masks, is black shade. Armor rolls its protection dice using its own shade.

Armor may only test against weapons of the same or darker shade. Standard armor, for example, won't protect against gray-shade weapons. Gray and white shade armor can't be damaged by darker shaded weapons. 1s don't count!

Pushing Pain into the Next Shade

As I just mentioned, you need gray shade weapons to do gray damage, and white to do white. However, it is possible for lesser beings to cross over briefly into the lighter shades. If, for example, an IMS from a Troll mattock ends up as B6, B12, B18, roll over any result higher than 16 into the next shade. So a B17 is a G1, a B18 is a G2. A G20 is a W4.

Pushing Past White

W16 is the final point on the scale. No character or creature can have a mortal wound higher than a W16; and W16 is a mortal wound for all.

Helping Dice and FoRKs

Unfortunately, once you hand your dice over to someone to help them out, those dice are rolled at the user's shade, not the helper's. There's only so much you can do for them!

This goes for FoRKs, too. FoRK dice are rolled at the shade of the skill being tested, not at the shade of the skill they are from.

Playing the Game

Concept, Concept, Concept

When setting up a Burning Wheel game, the GM and the players come to an agreement about what this story/scenario is going to be all about. Essentially, they decide what type of game they want to play. Get all the players and GM on board with this concept. Do you want to play a dark, urban criminal underworld game? Say it. Do you want to play a hardy band of adventures seeking fortune and fame in ancient ruins? Say it.

As a GM, I often come to the table with a bunch of possible scenarios on offer. We play in an existing campaign world with a long history and pretty fixed parameters. When we start a new game, I offer unresolved conflicts or stories with loose ends. Do we want to take care of the Oni in this city? Do we want to destroy the goblin capital? Do we want to explore the culture of the Purple Desert? Or should we hunt wizards? I let the group decide exactly which one they want to do. I'm just one vote in this process.

Get this game concept out in the open right off. Sometimes, a player will have a concept for a character he wants to play. His choice narrows the scope of the scenario concept. Pay attention to him.

Danny: "I'd like to play a lizardman priest."

Luke: "Faith isn't a big part of what I had in mind. If you play such a character, would you mind scaling back the Faith powers for this game?"

Danny: "Nah, that's cool."

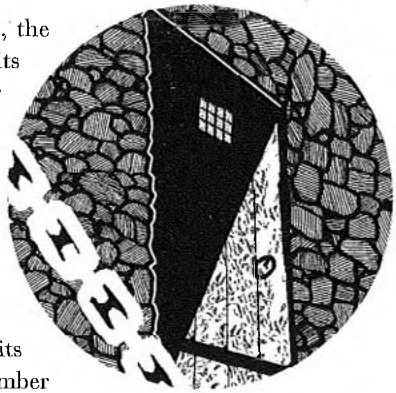
There wasn't any Faith in my original concept, but I immediately modified it so as to incorporate Danny's ideas.

Pick and Choose from the Mechanics

Once the concept for the game is determined, pick and choose elements from the overall game that are appropriate to it. The Burning Wheel rules are expansive. You don't have to include them all. If you want to play in a mundane world of hard knocks, then cut out Sorcery and Elves and all that. If you want to play in a magocracy, then magic is powerful and reserved for the elite. If you want a game of high-fantasy power politics, focus on Dwarves and Elves and the Duel of Wits. Toss out any skills, weapons, spells, etc. that are inappropriate to your concept. Save them for another game.

Set Up

Lifepath Limits



Once the concept is agreed upon, the GM's job is to set the lifepath limits and overall power level of the player characters. If the concept calls for a novice group, then the GM has the right and the obligation to set limits in the lifepaths so that everyone is on the same page. If the concept calls for twinked out munchkin power, then it is the GM's job to set the upper and *lower* limits of player characters. (I've had a number of players whom I've had to encourage to go further!)

Set Resources Cycle

The GM should set the time of the Resources Cycle. This determines how long it will take to recover taxed Resources dice. Setting this cycle most definitely influences the time patterns of the story to be. If the players are expecting a 24-hour scenario, then setting the cycle at a month ensures the players won't recover their Resources during the adventure. Setting the cycle at a year means characters are going to need a lot of time to have their goals and desires met. There'll be a lot of "seasons pass" narration.

Set Faith Idiom

If there are Faithful characters in the group, the GM and those players must decide upon the idiom of their faiths, whether it affects all creatures or just the believers, and any religious strictures placed on the characters.

They should also decide what stigmata traits the Faithful will earn as their Faith attribute advances.

Tying in Relationships

GMs: Don't let players buy useless relationships that won't have a bearing on the game. Force them to focus their relationships. Tie them into the concepts. Relationships don't have to always be at the forefront of play, but they must be part of the game. When in doubt, make it *personal.*

Nothing is more frustrating for a player than spending a load of points on a contact that never gets used. With his view of the big picture, the GM can and should advise players about which relationships are useful and which aren't.

On the flip side, if a player wants a relationship for his character that wasn't part of the initial game concept, expand the concept and work in this new relationship.

Tying in Beliefs, Instincts and Traits

If the game is about taking revenge on the wizards who tortured and scarred you, your character better damn well have Beliefs and Instincts that scream anger, hatred and vengeance (or even forgiveness, for extra drama).

Beliefs and Instincts that aren't tied into the concept are not only useless, they are a handicap. Isolated or irrelevant Beliefs limit the amount of fate and persona artha you're going to get for playing that character.

Focus those Beliefs. Charge them. Prime them. Set them to blow. Make your character's life hard. Make it complex, entangled and difficult. Sure you could sit outside the story, be safe and watch, but what the hell fun is that? This is your game. Own it, live it, bleed it.

Instincts should be set to get you in all kinds of trouble. When a player writes an Instinct, he's essentially saying one of two things about his character: Either, "I don't want to have to deal with this again" (usually for bits of game minutiae); or "I dare you to test me here, I want it and I'm ready." Use them. Test them. Force them to react. If a GM is creating situations where the Instinct alarm bells aren't going off, he's not doing his job.

Lastly, there's traits. With traits, a player is paying points to say, "my character is *this*." The other players and the GM better damn well include scenes and situations where those traits are prominent. They either get you into trouble or out of it. By writing the traits on the sheet—by spending the points—the player is committing to the trait. Use them, tweak them. Let them win and let them lose.

Role of the GM

Here is a short bullet list of my priorities when I sit down to GM Burning Wheel:

- To make sure the physical space of the game is comfortable and conducive to good play (no sleepy couches or TVs) and that folks arrive on time so we can get started promptly.
- To make sure the mechanics of the game run smoothly, make sense and gel with the story/actual play at hand.
- To get across *my* point/vision/idea (also known as the theme of the game).
- To challenge and engage the players.
- And to make sure that, whether the game is humorous or dramatic, everyone is involved and enjoys themselves.

In Burning Wheel, it is the GM's job to interpret all of the various intents of the players' actions and mesh them into a cohesive whole that fits within the context of the game. He's got to make sure that all the player wackiness abides by the rules. When it doesn't, he must guide wayward players gently back into the fold. Often this requires negotiating an action or intent until both player and GM are satisfied that it fits both with the concept and mood of the game.

Also, the GM is in a unique position. He can see the big picture—what the players are doing, as well as what the opposition is up to and plans to do. His perspective grants the power to hold off on one action, while another player moves forward so that the two pieces intersect dramatically at the table. More than any other player, the GM controls the flow and pacing of the game. He has the power to begin and end scenes, to present challenges and instigate conflicts. It's a heady responsibility, but utterly worthwhile.

Most important, the GM is responsible for introducing complications to the story and consequences to the players' choices. Burning Wheel is all about choices—from the minute you start creating a character, you are making hard choices. Once play begins, as players choose their path, it is the GM's job to meaningfully inject resonant ramifications into play. A character murders a guard. No big deal, right? Well, that's up to the GM to decide. Sure there's justice and revenge to consider—that's the obvious stuff—but there's also bigger picture elements to consider: whole provinces have risen in revolt due to one errant murder....

Role of the Players

Finally, there is the sacred and most holy role of the players. In Burning Wheel games, players have a number of duties:

- Prime among them is the responsibility to offer hooks to their GM and the other players in the form of Beliefs, Instincts and traits.
- Use the lifepaths to build skeletons of your characters' background, but don't fill in all the details. Let the character develop as play advances—certainly don't write a history in which all the adventure has already happened.
- Players in Burning Wheel must use their characters to drive the story forward—to resolve conflicts and create new ones. Players are *supposed* to push and risk their characters, so they grow and change in unforeseen ways.
- Use the mechanics! Players are *expected* to call for a Duel of Wits or a Circles test or to demand the Range and Cover rules in a shooting match with a Dark Elf assassin. Don't wait for the GM to invoke a rule—invoke the damn thing yourself and get the story moving!
- Participate. Help enhance your friends' scenes and step forward and make the most of your own. It doesn't matter if you "win," so long as the story spins in a new and interesting direction. If the story doesn't interest you, *it's your job to create interesting situations and involve yourself.* If a player's desires and priorities are disruptive for the group as a whole, then it's that player's job to excuse himself from the game and find another group.

Above all, have fun. It's easily said, but hard to enact. Listen to the other players, riff off of them; take their leads and run with them. Expand on their madness, but also rein them in when they get out of hand. Remember that you're playing in a group, and *everyone* has to have fun.

If you're all fired up, start reading the Character Burner. If you liked the ideas touched on here, that book is going to put you through the roof. Wait until you actually build Beliefs and Instincts!

Don't forget to call your GM. Start ranting like a mad imp! Or if you are the GM (like me) hopefully you're frothing at the mouth right now (like I am), bellowing, "Hell yeah!"

Appendices

Wealth may be yours, wisdom too, and you may have beauty, but if pride touch them, all will turn to dross

—Inscription in the Great Gallery of
Le Krak des Chevaliers

Weapons Appendix

Melee Weapons

Weapon	Pow	Add	WS	VA	WL	Handedness
Basic Weapons						
Bare Fist	—	2	3	–	Shortest	One handed
Stone	1	2	1	–	Shortest	One handed
Club	2	2	2	–	Short	One handed
Staff	2	2	2	–	Long	Two handed
Poor Quality Weapons						
Knife, Shiv	0	1	X	–	Shortest	One handed
Sword	3	2	2	–	Long	One handed
Axe	4	2	1	1	Long	Two handed
Spear	1	2	3	–	Longest	Two handed
Run of the Mill Weapons						
Dirk	1	1	X	–	Shortest	One handed
Hatchet	2	2	3	–	Short	One handed
Mace	2	2	2	2	Short	One handed
Short Sword	2	2	X	–	Short	One handed
Arming Sword	2	2	4	–	Long	One handed
Long Sword	3	2	3	–	Long	One handed
Light Axe	3	2	2	1	Long	One handed
Footman's Axe	4	2	1	1	Long	Two handed
Hammer	3	2	1	2	Long	Two handed
Polearm Axe Strike	4	2	1	–	Long	Two handed
Short Spear	2	2	3	–	Longer	One handed
Polearm Thrust	2	2	2	1	Longer	Two handed
Spear	2	2	2	1	Longest	Two handed
Lance	4	2	1	2	Longest	One handed*
Superior Quality Weapons						
Dagger	1	1	X	1	Shortest	One handed
Long Sword	3	2	3	1	Long	One handed
Great Mace	2	2	2	3	Long	Two handed
Sweet Axe	4	2	2	2	Long	Two handed
Polearm Axe Strike	4	2	1	1	Long	Two handed
Hammer	3	2	2	2	Longer	Two handed
Polearm Thrust	2	2	2	2	Longer	Two handed
Spear	2	2	2	2	Longest	Two handed

X These weapons can Strike consecutively any amount of times

*Must be mounted and have Mounted Combat Training

Weapon	Pow	Add	WS	VA	WL	Handedness
Miscellaneous Weapon Gear						
Hilt/Pommel/Butt	1	2	1	–	-1 WL	All weapons
Spiked Pommel	1	2	1	1	-1 WL	May be added to any weapon
Weighted Pommel	2	2	1	–	-1 WL	May be added to any weapon
Beak	1	2	1	3	As Weapon	May be added to polearm, axe or spear
Shield	1	2	1	—	Short	One Handed

Found Weapons

Weapon	Power	WS
Bed knob	1	1
Spike/Nail	1	2
Bottle	1	2
Mallet	2	1
Broom handle	1	2
Lantern	2	1
Chair	2	1
Pick	4	1
Branch	2	2

Note: All Found Weapons have an Add of 2.

Found weapons can really be anything you can get your hands around and smash your opponent with. Any character with Brawling may use found weapons. Characters with a weapon skill can use found weapons so long as they are an analog of their skill. Found weapons all have an Add 2 and no VA, except for the pick which as a VA 1.

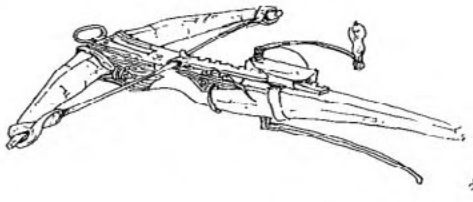
Missile Weapon Ranges

Weapon	Optimal	Extreme/OOR	Max. Range
Melee or None	—	—	7 paces
Pistol	2D	1D	10 paces
Thrown Weapon	1D	1D	30 paces
Arquebus	1D	1D	50 paces
Hunting Bow	2D	1D	100 paces
Crossbow	1D	3D	125 paces
Elven Bow	3D	3D	250 paces
Great Bow	2D	4D	300 paces
Heavy Crossbow	1D	5D	350 paces

Weapon Ranges and Dice

	Melee weapon is	Pistol is	Thrown is	Arquebus is	Hunting Bow is	Crossbow is	Elf Bow is	Great Bow is	Heavy Crossbow is
Melee or No Weapon at									
Optimal (–)	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt
Extreme (–)	Extr	Extr	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt
Out of Range (–)	*Out*	Extr	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt
Pistol at									
Optimal (2D)	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt
Extreme (1D)	Extr	Extr	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt
Out of Range (1D)	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt
Thrown Weapon at									
Optimal (1D)	Extr	Extr	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt
Extreme (1D)	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr	Extr	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt
Out of Range (1D)	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt
Arquebus at									
Optimal (1D)	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt
Extreme (1D)	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt
Out of Range (1D)	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr	Opt	Opt	Opt
Hunting Bow at									
Optimal (2D)	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt
Extreme (1D)	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt
Out of Range (1D)	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr	Extr	Extr
Crossbow at									
Optimal (1D)	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt	Opt
Extreme (3D)	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr	Opt	Opt
Out of Range (3D)	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr	Extr
Elven Bow at									
Optimal (3D)	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr	Opt	Opt	Opt
Extreme (3D)	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr	Extr
Out of Range (3D)	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr
Great Bow at									
Optimal (2D)	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr	Opt	Opt	Opt
Extreme (4D)	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr	Extr
Out of Range (4D)	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	Extr

	Melee weapon is	Pistol is	Thrown is	Arquebus is	Hunting Bow is	Crossbow is	Elf Bow is	Great Bow is	Heavy Crossbow is
Heavy Crossbow at									
Optimal (1D)	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr	Extr	Opt	Opt
Extreme (5D)	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	Extr	Extr
Out of Range (5D)	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*	*Out*



Missile Weapons IMS and DoF

Hunting Bow

DoF: 1-2 3-4 5-6

I: B4 M: B7 S: B10 VA 1

Actions: Nock and Draw: 5.

Great Bow

DoF: 1-2 3-4 5-6

I: B4 M: B8 S: B12 VA 2

Actions: Nock and Draw: 7.

Crossbow

DoF: 1-2 3-4 5-6

I: B4 M: B8 S: B11 VA 2

Actions: Fire Crossbow: 2.

Heavy Crossbow

DoF: 1-2 3-4 5-6

I: B5 M: B9 S: B13 VA 3

Actions: Fire Crossbow: 2.

Pistol

DoF: 1-4 5 6

I: B4 M: B8 S: B11 VA *

Actions: Fire Gun: 2.

Arquebus

DoF: 1-4 5 6

I: B4 M: B8 S: B12 VA *

Actions: Fire Gun: 2.

*VA by Range: Too close to shoot VA 4, optimal VA 3, extreme VA 1.

DoF Modifiers

- Exceed obstacle, +1 to the DoF
- Double obstacle, +2
- Triple obstacle, +3
- Extreme range, -1 to the DoF

Specialty Bolt and Arrowheads

Crossbow Bolt Heads

Helmeted	Standard IMS, VA, and DoF.
Mallet Head	+1 DoF, reduce ranges by 10 paces per category
Fisted Bolt	+1 IMS, +1 DoF, +1 Ob to hit
Spear Tip	+1 VA, -1 IMS

Arrowheads

Hunting Head	Standard IMS, VA and DoF
Bodkin Head	-1 IMS, +1 VA
Leaf Head	+1 IMS, -1 VA
Frog Crotch	+1 IMS, +1 DoF, +1 Ob to hit, -1 VA
Blunt Head	-1 IMS, -1 VA, -1 DoF
Barbed Tip	Same stats as hunting arrow, but the character takes an additional Mark result wound if the barbed arrow is improperly removed. It is an Ob 4 Field Dressing or Ob 3 Surgery test to remove a barbed arrow properly.

Thrown Weapons

Palm-sized Rock
DoF: I: 1-3 M: 4-5 S: 6
Weapon Power: +0 VA –

Large Rock, Brick
DoF: I: 1-3 M: 4-5 S: 6
Weapon Power: +1 VA –

Throwing Knife
DoF: I: 1-2 M: 3-5 S: 6
Weapon Power: +1 VA –

Darts, Barbs, Spikes
DoF: I: 1-2 M: 3-5 S: 6
Weapon Power: +0 VA –

Shuriken*
DoF: I: 1-2 M: 3-5 S: 6
Weapon Power: +1 VA –

**Javelin*
DoF: I: 1-2 M: 3-4 S: 5-6
Weapon Power: +2 VA 1

Thrown Hatchet
DoF: I: 1-4 M: 5 S: 6
Weapon Power: +2 VA –

Thrown Axe
DoF: I: 1-4 M: 5 S: 6
Weapon Power: +3 VA –

Roden Knives†
DoF: I: 1-2 M: 3-4 S: 5-6
Weapon Power: +1 VA 1

Ninja Only

†*Roden Only*

DoF Modifiers

- Exceed obstacle, +1 to the DoF
- Double obstacle, +2 to DoF
- Triple obstacle, +3
- Extreme range, -1 to the DoF

Bombs

Iron-Cased Bomb	DoF§	1-2	3-4	5-6	VA
		I: B3	M: B6	S: B9	4/2*

Fight Actions: Physical Action (light fuse), Throw Object.

Ranges Dice	Optimal	Extreme	Max. Range
	1D	1D	50 paces

§ -1 to the DoF when thrown at extreme range. *VA for indirect hits from failed tests.

The Die of Fate

In my game, my players know that there is a 1 in 6 chance of anything happening. Whenever an outlandish request comes up, or an out-of-character dispute erupts, we settle it with a throw of the Die of Fate (DoF).

On a 1, the player gets what he was asking for. No other result counts.

Now I realize that this seemingly goes against everything set out in this book. There are no random encounters in a Burning Wheel game—"encounters" have a point and drive the overall conflict of the game forward. However, I understand that play at the table can get a little complex, and even a little ugly. Sometimes players and GMs need a way to resolve disputes in a short, fair manner.

To this I say: Roll the Die of Fate.

Dispute and Disagreement

If the GM and a player are having a dispute or disagreement about a particular detail of the game, the result should be resolved with a throw of the DoF.

The dispute must be surrounding something reasonable and feasible within the game context. A player cannot make a stand for beam weaponry in the Duke's toilet and hope to get a DoF roll. Gear mongering for superior quality arms in a village is also an executable offense.

Arguments over distances, placement, roads, terrain or the various historical features of the age can safely be resolved with the DoF.

Abilities ≠ DoF!

Any roll that falls under the province of a stat, skill or attribute should be resolved with an appropriate test, not a Die of Fate roll.

For gear, material possessions and the contents of property, anything not covered by Resources, Beliefs, Instincts or traits can be resolved with a quick DoF roll.

Weird Random Events

If ever there is cause to see if some weird random event happens in your game—as the result of a player action—roll the Die of Fate. On a 1, it happens.

In a game I was running, one of the players caused this huge magical lightning storm. It was crazy—the apocalypse! As GM, I decided that when venturing outside, each player had a DoF thrown for his character. On a 1, he was struck by lightning. Egads, that was tense! And the players loved it.

If it was a regular old lightning storm, I would never have used the DoF to see if there was a lightning strike. That kind of stuff is irrelevant. But because the player had caused this weird random event, the DoF was perfectly appropriate. Suffer the consequences for your actions, meddling fool!

Falling from Great Heights

When a character falls from a great, and fatal, height. Roll the DoF. On a 1, he walks away miraculously unscathed—or at least alive. On anything else, he takes a nasty wound, of course!

Details and Embellishment

If a player or the GM wants to bring a previously unintroduced, and slightly out of place, embellishment or detail into the scene, roll the Die of Fate. On a 1, he gets what he's after.

For example: There's a riot going on! Ssaem runs into a third-story room of the Happy Long Life Guest House. His player asks, "Are there any flower pots on the window sill? Anything to throw down onto the guards in the crowd below?" Er, I dunno. Roll the Die of Fate!

Or my favorite: "We've got to sneak into this house. There wouldn't happen to be any unlocked doors, would there?" Roll the DoF! On a 1 a window or door has been left open and you can just waltz right in. If not, then you've got to bribe the guards, persuade the servants, break it down, etc.

I guess I use it when the players ask for an easier way out. They know what they have to do and it's hard, so they make a simpler, easier suggestion. I let the DoF decide.

Always in the Open

Die of Fate rolls are always made in the open, in front of all the players, with the conditions of the roll clearly stated for all to hear. This is a hard and fast rule.

Never a Roadblock

The Die of Fate should never be the last resort or the only option. I don't ever want to hear: "Unless you roll a 1, it's all over." That's just the wrong way to go in Burning Wheel. Any and all crucial game-moving tests need to be placed on the player's shoulders in the form of tests against abilities where traits can be called on, FoRKs can come into play, help can be offered and artha spent.

A roll on the Die of Fate can't substitute for a true resolution mechanic. It only serves as a simple dispute resolution for players and GMs. It is about creating twists and turns, not cutting off options.

Burning Rogues

Simple NPCs

Luke: I got 3 successes on my Observation, how many did you get on your Stealthy?

Danny: Two! I have a B6 Stealthy. I'm a bad player.

Luke: Nice. Well, they easily trail you back to where your group is hiding. As you begin to report what you saw, 10 murderers, thugs and assassins burst through the clearing. By their appearance and manner, these guys are not amateurs—these are hardened veterans of dozens of raids and battles. Test your Steel, you're all surprised.

"Ten murderers, thugs and assassins!?" That's going to be a big battle. And that's a lot of characters for the GM to handle. Did I spend seven and a half hours creating the stats, skills, attributes, Beliefs, Instincts and traits of these individuals? Hell no!

One-Off NPC Skills

Characters that will be used once—like a merchant to haggle with or a murderer to struggle against—are assigned an overall exponent based on their competence and expertise. Regular folks are exponent 3 in all skills, trained professionals are exponent 4, experts are exponent 5. For a character that requires more depth than a single skill, assign a hierarchy of three or four abilities: what they specialize in is at 5, their secondary and tertiary abilities fall at 4 and 3 respectively.

The assassins in the example above have B5s in their relevant weapon skills. A merchant at market is defined by his B4 Haggling and his B3 Falsehood.

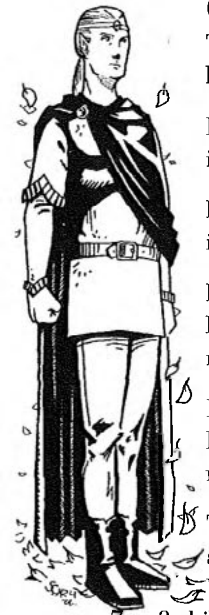
Use the lifepaths as a quick reference for what skills various character types have available to them.

One-Off NPC Stats

For stats, NPCs start at base 4s. If they are very old (50+) or very young (>15), then 3s may be assigned to applicable stats. If the character is experienced or particularly able, then certain stats are raised to 5s.

These numbers are assigned on the fly as the game progresses. Or at the most, sketched out in the GM's notes regarding the session.

I determined ahead of time that all the assassins and slavers guarding the wizard were very tough customers. They have straight 5s!



One-Off NPC Physical Tolerance Grayscales

This is a bit more tricky, but I follow some simple guidelines to keep things moving:

If the NPC has B3 stats: a B3 is superficial, a B5 is a light, a B6 is a midi, a B7 is severe, a B8 is traumatic, and a B9 is mortal.

If the NPC has B4 stats: a B3 is superficial, a B5 is a light, a B7 is a midi, a B8 is severe, a B9 is traumatic, and a B10 is mortal.

If the NPC has B5 stats: a B3 is superficial, a B6 is a light, a B8 is a midi, a B9 is severe, a B10 is traumatic, and a B11 is mortal.

If the NPC has B6 stats: a B4 is superficial, a B7 is a light, a B9 is a midi, a B10 is severe, a B11 is traumatic, and a B12 is mortal.

These can be tweaked to suit your taste. Unless you're playing a free-for-all with Troll Warlords, Elven Etharchs and Dwarven Wardens, I don't recommend using one-off NPCs with exponent 7 or 8 abilities.

One-Off NPC Gear

NPCs have whatever gear and weapons are appropriate to their station. As a rule, I've found it best to remain conservative when doling out NPC gear. Whatever you give them eventually makes its way into the players' hands. Giving a host of Elven Rangers Gray Mantles and Elven Bows means that eventually all of the players in your group mysteriously and accidentally acquire said cloaks and bows.

One-Off NPC Traits

Maybe, if the NPCs are important to the scene or story, part of some distinct group or all from a particular lifepath, I will assign them a trait. Otherwise, I don't worry about it.

He Who Bears the Lash must have Where There's a Whip, There's a Way; otherwise he wouldn't be the lash-bearer!

One-Off NPC Beliefs

One off NPCs get one simple, single Belief that is relevant to the scene at hand and that I can come up with off the top of my head. Nothing else matters.

The assassins believe: "Cross us and you're dead" Pretty simple; it drives the scene. The Dwarven gatekeeper believes, "No one crosses this threshold without my thorough inspection." That puts him directly in the players' path—they've got to confront him in order to move on—which is exactly what I want from that NPC.

The Belief is meant to be a guide and reminder to the GM to keep the scene focused and moving.

One-Off NPC Instincts

Ultra-simple Instincts are key here. They center around any assumptions surrounding the character's behavior—whatever detail is needed to make the character go. If you can't come up with anything on the fly, off the top of your head, then the NPC doesn't need an Instinct. Skip it and move on.

Assassins have the "Sleep with one eye open" Instinct. Guards have the "Shout when surprised" Instinct.

Deeper NPCs

All my NPCs start from the above guidelines. That evil sorcerer behind the throne? He's got a B6 Will and a B8 Sorcery and the Persuasion spell. I have no idea what his other skills are, nor do I care.

However, in case the character becomes a recurring presence in the game, I make note of him and start building off that base. I add traits and skills as needed as I go—whatever's relevant to the scene. Eventually, he'll get pretty near fleshed out.

Crucial Opposition

If there is a character whom the players must confront, and I know of his presence and motives beforehand, I give him a full burn. A player character's mentor turned evil or the horrid sorcerer nemesis, for example. He gets all the perks of traits, Beliefs and Instincts. He even gets fate and persona. This process is vital for those game moments where the whole group will be struggling to topple some monumental opposition. A high stat or skill is nice, but in order for an NPC to stand up to all the wild stunts players will pull, he's got to have the full benefit of traits, Beliefs and Instincts—not to mention spells and gear!

And if, after I'm done, I still feel my NPC is underpowered, I tweak him a bit. An extra spell or two, a pile of gold, a gray stat, whatever it takes. I'm the GM, it is one of my duties to present challenging opposition. Doing so does not require me to obey every single standard of character burning.

Monsters and Adversaries

Here are a collection of NPCs and monsters for you to use in your games. I've tried to provide the necessary information for using them, but more details on some of their traits can be found in the Monster Burner.

Bugbear											
Wi	**Pe**	**Ag**	**Sp**	**Po**	**Fo**	**He**	**Re**	**Ste**	**Mw**	**Res**	**Cir**
B3	B4(5)	B4	B4	B7	B7	B7	B4	B7	B10	B0	B3
		Stride	8					**Hesitation**		1/4	
Su	**Li**	**Mi**	**Se**	**Tr**	**Mo**	**Note**	These are character killers! Take care; beware!				
B4	B8	B9	B11	B12	B13						
Traits	**Char**	Bear-Headed, Hoarder									
	Dt	Massive Stature, Large Ears, Rending Claws, Heartless, Eye of the Hunter, Sight of the Owl									
	C-O	Fearsome Beast (Intimidation), Coat of Fur (Health for Wet/Cold), Soft Step (Climbing, Stealthy)									
Skills		Brawling B4, Mace B5, Stealthy B4, Climbing B4									
Armor		Poor Quality Reinforced Hides: (2D Chest. 1D Arms and Legs. No head armor due to ears.)									
Weapons and Damage		**Type/Name**	**I**	**M**	**S**	**Length**		**VA**	**Spd**		
		Mace	B5	B9	B13	Long		3	2		
		Rending Claws	B5	B9	B13	Short		2	X		

Duelist											
Wi	**Pe**	**Ag**	**Sp**	**Po**	**Fo**	**He**	**Re**	**Ste**	**Mw**	**Res**	**Cir**
B4	B4	B5	B4	B5	B4	B7	B4	B5	B10	B2	B2
		Stride	7					**Hesitation**		6/3	
Su	**Li**	**Mi**	**Se**	**Tr**	**Mo**	**Note**	Two-fisted Fighting training allows the duelist to perform the Block & Strike action.				
B3	B5	B7	B8	B9	B10						
Traits	**Char**	Stylish									
	Dt	Mark of Privilege, Bastard, Drunk, Fearless									
Skills		Family Secret-wise B4, Etiquette B2, Sword B5, Brawling B4, Persuasion B4, Haggling B3, Conspicuous B3, Gossip-wise B2, Two-Fisted Fighting Training									
Armor		Reinforced Leather Armor: Body, 3D. Head, Arms, Legs, 2D.									
Weapons and Damage		**Type/Name**	**I**	**M**	**S**	**Length**		**VA**	**Spd**		
		Arming Sword	B4	B7	B10	Long		—	4		
		Parrying Blade	B3	B6	B9	Shortest		—	X		
		Bare Fist	B3	B5	B7	Shortest		—	3		

Elven Bard

Wi	Pe	Ag	Sp	Po	Fo	He	Re	Ste	Mw	Res	Cir
B6	B6	B4	B5	B4	B4	B7	B5	B6	B10	B0	B3
		Stride	8					Hesitation		4	

Su	Li	Mi	Se	Tr	Mo	Note
B3	B5	B7	B8	B9	B10	Elven spell songs cause wonderment!

Traits	Char	Fair and Statuesque, Born Under Silver Stars, Learned
	Dt	Etharch, Essence of the Earth, First Born, Grief, Keen Sight
	C-O	Charismatic (Oratory)
Skills		Oratory B4, Etiquette B4, Conspicuous B4, Observation B3, Lyre B3, Bow B3, Spear B4, Elven Script B3, Ages of the Etharch B3, Lyric of Law B3, Ballad of History B4, Song of the Eldar B4, Song of Songs B3, Song of Soothing B4, Song of Merriment B4, Verse of Friendship B4, Tract of Enmity B3, Streetwise B3, Rumor-wise, B3

Weapons and Damage	Type/Name	I	M	S	Length	VA	Spd
	Spear	B4	B6	B9	Longest	1	2
	Bare Fist	B2	B4	B6	Shortest	—	3

Evil Wizard

Wi	Pe	Ag	Sp	Po	Fo	He	Re	Ste	Mw	Res	Cir
B6	B6	B3	B4	B3	B6	B5	B4	B8	B10	B0	B3
		Stride	7					Hesitation		4	

Su	Li	Mi	Se	Tr	Mo	Note
B3	B5	B7	B8	B9	B10	This guy will kill you, your friends and your puppies.

Traits	Char	Spooky, Inscrutable, Base Humility
	Dt	Mark of Privilege, Obscure Aura, Second Sight, Gifted
	C-O	Fortitude (Forte)
Skills		Sorcery B6, Symbology B5, Astrology B5, Aura Reading B4, Research B3, Write B2, Calligraphy B2, Bloodletting B4, Read B4, Oratory B5, Persuasion B3, Inconspicuous B5, Falsehood B6, Etiquette B5, Ugly Truth B6, Rule of Law B4, Stealthy B2, Knives B1, Sorcerer-wise B3, Graveyard-wise B3, Apocalypse-wise B3
Spells		Eldritch Shield (Ob 3^), Turn Aside the Blade (Ob 4^), Emperor's Hand (Ob 3^), White Fire (Ob 4^), The Fear (Ob 3), Wyrd Light (Ob 2), Binding (Ob 2), Cats Eye (Ob 3), Falcon Skin (Ob 4)

Weapons and Damage	Type/Name	I	M	S	Length	VA	Spd
	White Fire	B6	B11	B16	Missile	4	Spell
	Bare Fist	B2	B3	B4	Shortest	—	3

Goblin											
Wi	Pe	Ag	Sp	Po	Fo	He	Re	Ste	Mw	Res	Cir
B1	B4	B4	B5	B4	B4	B3	B4	B4	B10	B0	B0
		Stride	7					Hesitation		9/6	
Su	Li	Mi	Se	Tr	Mo	Note					
B3	B5	B7	B8	B9	B10	Goblins can see in complete darkness, but they suffer +2 Ob penalties in daylight. This goblin ignores +1 Ob from superficial wounds.					
Traits	Char	Cannibal, Breeder, Vile Language									
	Dt	Loathsome and Twisted, Cold Black Blood, Lynx-Eyed, Fanged and Clawed, Pack Hunter, Numb, Pain Life, Iron Will									
	C-O	Back-Breaking Labor (Power)									
Skills		Brawling B4, Ditch Digging B4,Cudgel B4, Driving B1									
Armor/Shield		PQ Reinforced Hides: Body, 3D. Head, Arms, Legs, 2D.									
Weapons and Damage		Type/Name		I	M	S	Length		VA	Spd	
		Spiked Staff		B3	B6	B9	Long		—	3	
		Claws		B3	B5	B7	Shortest		—	X	
		Fangs		B3	B5	B7	Shortest		1	1	

Great Hunting Spider											
Wi	Pe	Ag	Sp	Po	Fo	He	Re	Ste	Mw	Res	Cir
B4	B4(6)	B6	B6	B5	B5	B5	B5	B7	B11	B0	B2
		Stride	8					Hesitation		6	
Su	Li	Mi	Se	Tr	Mo	Note					
B3	B6	B8	B9	B10	B11	+2D to Close-type actions and Engage. Use Agility +1D to Lock. Locks are webs and don't need to be held.					
Traits	Char	Vile Language, Low Speech, Exoskeleton, Strand-Runner, Orb-Walker									
	Dt	Middling Stature, Alien, Arachnid Body, Eight-Eyed, Eight-Legged, Fangs, Keen Sense of Balance, Silk Spinner, Spider Sense, Virulent Venom, Wall-Crawler, Chitinous, Dark Sense									
	C-O	Single-Minded (Steel)									
Skills		Climbing B3(5), Cave-wise B2, Stealthy B4, Hunting B2, Burrowing B3, Snares B3, Spider-wise B2, Tracking B4, Brawling B5, Intimidation B3, Interrogation B3									
Armor		Chitin: Body and head, 4D. Legs, 3D.									
Weapons and Damage		Type/Name		I	M	S	Length		VA	Spd	
		Fangs		B3	B6	B9	Shortest		—	1	

Horned Troll

Wi	Pe	Ag	Sp	Po	Fo	He	Re	Ste	Mw	Res	Cir
B2	B2	B4	B5	B8	B7	B5	B3	B8	B14	B0	B1

Stride	7	Hesitation	6	

Su	Li	Mi	Sc	Tr	Mo	Note
B5	B9	B11	B12	B13	B14	*Mental stats don't count for incapacitation*

Traits	Char	*Voracious Carnivore*
	Dt	*Clawed, Fanged, Night Blooded, Night Eyed, Massive Stature, Stone's Age, Tough, Troll Skin, Horns, Hook Hand and Brute*
Skills		*Brawling B4, Forest-wise B1, Stealthy B2, Man-wise B1, Village-wise B1, Intimidation B2*
Armor		*Troll skin: Body, 3D. Arms, Head, Legs, 2D.*

Weapons and Damage	Type/Name	I	M	S	Length	VA	Spd
	Bite	B5	B9	B13	*Short*	2	1
	Hook Hand	B5	B10	B15	*Long*	2	2
	Headbutt	B5	B10	B15	*Short*	1	1
	Claws	B5	B9	B13	*Short*	1	X

Hoszrem (Lizard Man)

Wi	Pe	Ag	Sp	Po	Fo	He	Re	Ste	Mw	Res	Cir
B5	B5	B5	B4	B5	B6	B6	B4	B7	B11	B1	B2

Stride	7	Hesitation	5	

Su	Li	Mi	Se	Tr	Mo	Note
B4	B7	B8	B9	B10	B11	*Subtract 1 pip of damage from all incoming attacks. Add +1D to Brawling for tail.*

Traits	Char	*Resilient, Devout*
	Dt	*Anthropomorphic Lizard, Cold Blooded, Iron Scales, Prehensile Tail, Savage Bite*
Skills		*Sword B5, Two-Fisted Fighting Training, Bow B4, Brawling B5, Climbing B4, Stealth B4, Doctrine of Fire B3*
Shield		*Leather Cloak (1D)*

Weapons and Damage	Type/Name	I	M	S	Length	VA	Spd
	Bone Sword	B4	B8	B12	*Long*	—	3
	Savage Bite	B4	B7	B10	*Shortest*	1	1

Orc Warrior											
Wi	Pe	Ag	Sp	Po	Fo	He	Re	Ste	Mw	Res	Cir
B2	B3	B4	B4	B4	B4	B4	B3	B6	B10	B0	B1
		Stride	7					Hesitation		8/6	

Su	Li	Mi	Se	Tr	Mo	Note
B4	B7	B8	B9	B10	B11	Orcs can see in complete darkness, but they suffer +2 Ob penalties in daylight.

Traits	Char	Cannibal, Breeder, Vile Language
	Dt	Loathsome and Twisted, Cold Black Blood, Lynx-Eyed, Fanged and Clawed, Pack Hunter
	C-O	Show No Fear (Steel against impossible odds)
Skills		Brawling B4, Intimidation B4, Spear B4, Shield Training, Foraging B3
Armor/Shield		Reinforced Leather: Body, 3D. Head, Arms, Legs, 2D. Black Iron Shield, 3D.

Weapons and Damage	Type/Name	I	M	S	Length	VA	Spd
	Short Spear	B3	B6	B9	Longer	—	3
	Claws	B3	B5	B7	Shortest	—	X
	Fangs	B3	B5	B7	Shortest	1	1

Orc Wolf (Astride the Beast)											
Wi	Pe	Ag	Sp	Po	Fo	He	Re	Ste	Mw	Res	Cir
B2	B6(8)	B4	B6	B5	B4	B4	B6	B7	B11	B0	B1
		Stride	11					Hesitation		8	

Su	Li	Mi	Se	Tr	Mo	Note
B3	B5	B7	B8	B9	B10	The +4D to Intimidate only works when the wolf is about to attack.

Traits	Char	Lupine Intellect, Vile Language, Submissive
	Dt	Crushing Jaws, Great Lupine Form, Deep Fur, Wolf's Eyes, Woodland Ear, Wolf's Snout, Long Limbed, Tasting the Lash, Howl of Doom
Skills		Hunting B4, Rider Training, Stealthy B5, Howling B2, Mounted Combat, Savage Attack B4, Intimidation B3(7), Tracking B4, Scavenging B4, Escape Artist B3
Armor		Barding: Body, 2D; Spiked Collar: (+1 Ob to be Locked)

Weapons and Damage	Type/Name	I	M	S	Length	VA	Spd
	Crushing Jaws	B4	B8	B12	Shortest	2	2

Orc Wolf (Black Destroyer)

Wi	Pe	Ag	Sp	Po	Fo	He	Re	Ste	Mw	Res	Cir
B3	B6(8)	B3	B6	B5	B5	B4	B5	B7	B11	B0	B1
		Stride	11					Hesitation		7/4	

Su	Li	Mi	Se	Tr	Mo	Note
B3	B6	B8	B9	B10	B11	If successfully uses Charge action, extra successes do damage. +1=Incidental. +2=Mark. +4=Superb.

Traits	Char	Lupine Intellect, Vile Language, Submissive, Intense Hatred, Dominant
	Dt	Crushing Jaws, Great Lupine Form, Deep Fur, Wolf's Eyes, Woodland Ear, Wolf's Snout, Long Limbed, Fearless
Skills		Howling B2, Stealthy B4, Tracking B4(6), Intimidation B4, Savage Attack B4, Trail-wise B3, Rider Training, Mounted Combat Training
Armor		Barding: Body, 3D; Head, 2D. Spiked Nasal: Damage on Charge. +1D to be Locked

Weapons and Damage	Type/Name	I	M	S	Length	VA	Spd
	Charge/Spikes	B3	B5	B7	Shortest	—	Special
	Crushing Jaws	B4	B8	B12	Shortest	2	2

Roden Assassin

Wi	Pe	Ag	Sp	Po	Fo	He	Re	Ste	Mw	Res	Cir
B4	B4(5)	B4	B6	B4	B3	B3	B5	B6	B9	B1	B2
		Stride	8					Hesitation		6/5	

Su	Li	Mi	Se	Tr	Mo	Note
B3	B6	B8	B9	B10	B11	Can see in near darkness. Increased hesitation for surprise.

Traits	Char	Cautious, Secretive, Pack Rat, Communal, Murderous
	Dt	Aecer's Likeness, Enlarged Incisors, Quick-Blooded, Tail, Large Ears, Skittish, Tunnel Vision, Cold-Hearted, Broken
	C-O	Coat of Fur (Health Cold/Wet), Single-Minded (Steel), Fleet of Foot (Speed)
Skills		Stealthy B5, Observation B4, Climbing B4, Knives B4, Intimidation B3, Garrotte B5, Crossbow B4, Throwing B4
Gear		Black Cloak, Rope and Claws, Roden Throwing Blades (+1D), Garrote, Knife

Weapons and Damage	Type/Name	I	M	S	Length	VA	Spd
	Knife	B3	B5	B7	Shortest	—	X
	Bite	B3	B5	B7	Shortest	1	1

Walking Dead

Wi	Pe	Ag	Sp	Po	Fo	He	Re	Ste	Mw	Res	Cir
B9	B1	B3	B3	B5	B5	—	B2	B7	B11	—	—

Stride	7	Hesitation	1

Su	Li	Mi	Sc	Tr	Mo	Note
B3	B6	B8	B9	B10	B11	Doesn't take Steel tests from pain. Only incapacitated when Power reaches 0.

Traits	Char	Hungry Dead, Mute
	Dt	Reanimated Corpse, Hideous, Tough as Nails, Dead to Pain, Unfeeling, Clumsy Walker, Night Eyed
Skills		Savage Attack B3

Weapons and Damage	Type/Name	I	M	S	Length	VA	Spd
	Nails/Bite	B3	B5	B7	Shortest	—	3

Wyrm

Wi	Pe	Ag	Sp	Po	Fo	He	Re	Ste	Mw	Res	Cir
B5	B6	B4	B6	B9	B9	B8	B5	B10	B15	B4	B2

Stride	9	Hesitation	5

Su	Li	Mi	Sc	Tr	Mo	Note
B4	B7	B8	B9	B10	B11	A cave-dwelling, flightless dragon. Serpentine Neck increases the Jaws WL by one.

Traits	Char	Cunning, Reclusive, Patient, Hungry
	Dt	Massive Stature, Armor-Plated Skull, Dragon's Breath, Greed, Tunnel Vision, Serpentine Neck, Brass Skin
	C-O	The Story (Falsehood), Quiet (Stealthy)
Skills		Savage Attack B6, Persuasion B5, Falsehood B6, Intimidation B8, Observation B8, Stealthy B8
Armor		Armor-Plated Skull: G5. Brass skin: Body, 6D. Legs, Tail, 5D.

Weapons and Damage	Type/Name	I	M	S	Length	VA	Spd
	Dragon's Breath	B5	B9	B13	Missile	4	2 act.
	Talons	B6	B11	B16	Short	3	3
	Crushing Jaws	B6	B12	G2	Long	3	2

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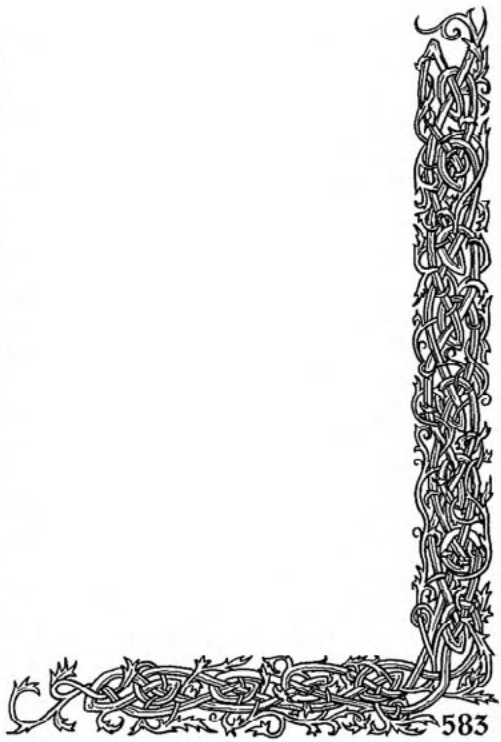

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Bellicose	*Char*	1 pt	315
Big Boned	*Char*	1 pt	315
The Bigger They Come...	*Char*	—	315
Bilge-Drinker	*Char*	1 pt	315
Birdie Talk	*Dt*	—	315
Bitter	*Char*	1 pt	315
Black Bile Poison	*Dt*	3 pts	315
Black Lung	*Dt*	—	315
Blank Stare	*Dt*	3 pts	315
Blasphemer	*Char*	1 pt	315
Blind	*Dt*	1 pt	315
Blisters	*Char*	1 pt	315
Bloviatic	*Char*	1 pt	315
Boaster	*Char*	1 pt	315
Bookworm	*Dt*	2 pts	316
Booming Voice	*C-O*	2 pts	316
Bored	*Char*	1 pt	316
Born to be King	*Char*	5 pt	199, 316
Born to Rule Them All	*Dt*	—	316
Born Under the Silver...	*Char*	—	139, 316
Bottomless Stomach	*Dt*	2 pts	316
Branded a Coward	*Dt*	—	120, 316
Brash	*Char*	1 pt	316
Brave	*Char*	1 pt	316
Breeder	*Char*	—	236, 316
Broken	*Dt*	—	316
Broken In	*Dt*	—	317
Broken Man	*Char*	1 pt	317
Brooding	*Dt*	—	317
Bruiser	*C-O*	—	317
Brusque	*Char*	1 pt	317
Brutal	*Char*	1 pt	317
Brutish Efficiency	*C-O*	—	317
Bulbous Nose	*Char*	1 pt	317
Bull's-eye Spitter	*Dt*	—	317
Burial at Sea	*Dt*	—	317
Burial Rites	*Dt*	—	317
Buxom	*Char*	1 pt	317
Cadaverous	*Char*	1 pt	317
Call of the Sea	*Char*	1 pt	318
Callous	*Char*	1 pt	318
Calloused	*Char*	1 pt	318
Callow	*Char*	1 pt	318
Calm Demeanor	*C-O*	—	317
Cannibal	*Char*	—	236. 318
Catamite	*Char*	1 pt	199, 318
Charging Blindly	*Dt*	—	318
Charismatic	*C-O*	2 pts	318
Charming	*C-O*	2 pts	318
Child Prodigy	*Dt*	2 pts	318
Chosen One	*Dt*	5 pt	200, 318
Chronologue	*Char*	1 pt	318
Chuffing	*Char*	1 pt	318
Chuntering	*Char*	1 pt	318
Cipher	*Dt*	5 pts	318
Circumspect	*Char*	1 pt	318
Claustrophobic	*Dt*	1 pt	318
Clumsy	*Dt*	1 pt	319
Cold Black Blood	*Dt*	—	236, 319
Cold Blooded	*Dt*	2 pts	319
Cold Hearted	*Dt*	—	319
Collector	*Char*	1 pt	319

Trait	Type	Cost	Pg
Color Blind	*Char*	1 pt	319
Colorful	*Char*	1 pt	319
Comely	*Char*	1 pt	319
Comfortable Shoes	*Char*	1 pt	319
Commanding Aura	*Dt*	6 pts	319
Complaining	*Char*	1 pt	319
Compulsive Liar	*Char*	1 pt	319
Condescending	*Char*	1 pt	319
Confident	*Char*	1 pt	319
Connected	*Dt*	4 pts	319
Contortionist	*C-O*	2 pts	319
Cookie	*Char*	1 pt	319
Cool Headed	*Dt*	2 pts	320
Corrupt	*Char*	1 pt	320
Cowardly	*Dt*	1 pt	320
Cramped Hands	*Char*	1 pt	320
Crippled	*Dt*	—	320
Crotchety	*Char*	1 pt	320
Cruel	*Char*	1 pt	320
Cry of Doom	*Dt*	—	320
Cryptic	*Char*	1 pt	320
Cry Wolf	*Char*	1 pt	320
Curious	*Char*	1 pt	320
Curses like a Sailor	*Char*	1 pt	320
Cursing	*Char*	1 pt	320
Cynical	*Char*	1 pt	320
Dangerous	*Char*	1 pt	320
Dangerous Obsession	*Dt*	—	320
Daring	*Char*	1 pt	320
Darling of the Court	*Dt*	3 pts	320
Deadly Precision	*Dt*	5 pts	320
Deaf	*Dt*	4 pts	321
Debauched	*Char*	1 pt	321
Deep Sense	*Dt*	—	321
Deep Sleeper	*Dt*	3 pts	321
Deferential	*Char*	1 pt	321
Demagogue	*Char*	1 pt	321
Denouncer	*Char*	1 pt	321
Desperate	*Char*	1 pt	321
Despondent	*Char*	1 pt	321
Determined	*Char*	1 pt	321
Devout	*Char*	1 pt	321
Dexterity of the Cat	*C-O*	2 pts	321
Diligent	*Char*	1 pt	321
Diminutive Hands	*Char*	1 pt	321
Diminutive Stature	*Char*	1 pt	321
Disciplined	*Char*	1 pt	321
Diseased	*Dt*	—	321
Dismissive	*Char*	1 pt	321
Dispute-Settler	*C-O*	—	321
Distracted	*Char*	1 pt	321
Disturbed	*Char*	1 pt	321
Disturbingly Confident	*Char*	1 pt	321
Disturbingly Large Mouth	*Char*	1 pt	321
Dog-Faced Boy	*Char*	1 pt	321
Dog Lover	*Char*	1 pt	321
Domineering	*Char*	1 pt	322
Domineering Presence	*Dt*	—	322
Dour	*Char*	1 pt	322
Down to Earth	*C-O*	—	322
Downtrodden	*Char*	1 pt	322
Dramatic	*C-O*	2 pts	322
Dreadful	*C-O*	2 pts	322
Dreamer	*Dt*	3 pts	322
Driven	*C-O*	2 pts	322
Drop-Dead Gorgeous	*Char*	1 pt	322
Drunk	*Char*	1 pt	322
Dusty	*Char*	1 pt	322
Dutiful	*Char*	1 pt	322
Dvergar	*Dt*	—	322
Eagle Eye	*Dt*	4 pts	323
Ear for Voices	*Dt*	3 pts	323
Early Riser	*Char*	1 pt	323
Earthen	*Char*	1 pt	323
Earthy Smell	*Char*	1 pt	323
Ear to the Ground	*Dt*	—	323
Eating Maggots	*Char*	1 pt	323
Ebullient	*Char*	1 pt	323
Educated	*Char*	1 pt	323
Effete	*Char*	1 pt	323
Eidetic Memory	*Dt*	4 pts	323
Eldritch Sink	*Dt*	8 pts	323
Emotional	*Char*	1 pt	323
Enemy of the Sun	*Dt*	3 pts	237
Enemy of the Sun	*Dt*	3 pts	323
Entropic	*Dt*	5 pts	323
Erudite	*Char*	1 pt	323
Esoteric	*Char*	1 pt	323
Essence of the Earth	*Dt*	—	139, 324
Estimation	*Dt*	2 pts	324
Etharchal	*Dt*	—	324
Eunuch	*Char*	1 pt	324
Evasive	*Char*	1 pt	324
Exasperated	*Char*	1 pt	324
Exhausted	*Dt*	—	324
Exile	*Dt*	2 pts	141
Exile	*Dt*	2 pts	324
Exorcism Ritualist	*Dt*	—	324
Extra Digit	*Char*	1 pt	324
Extremely Bitter	*Char*	1 pt	324
Extremely Respectful of One's Betters	*Char*	1 pt	324
Extrovert	*Dt*	3 pts	324
Eye of the Hunter	*Dt*	3 pts	325
Faded	*Char*	1 pt	325
Fair and Statuesque	*Char*	—	139, 325
Faithful	*Dt*	5 pt	200, 325
Familiar Face	*Dt*	2 pts	325
Family Heirloom	*Dt*	5 pts	325
Fanatical Devotion	*Char*	1 pt	325
Fanged and Clawed	*Dt*	—	236, 325
Fastidious	*Char*	1 pt	325
Fateful	*Char*	1 pt	325
Fëa	*Char*	—	325
Fealty to the Fëa	*Char*	—	325
Fearful Respect of the...	*Char*	1 pt	325
Fearless	*Dt*	3 pts	326
Fear of Cheese	*Char*	1 pt	325
Fear of Wet Noises	*Char*	1 pt	325
Feral	*Char*	1 pt	326
Fervent Believer	*Char*	1 pt	326
Fey Blood	*Dt*	4 pts	326
Firm	*Char*	1 pt	326
First Born	*Dt*	—	140
First Born	*Dt*	—	326
Fixed Smile	*Char*	1 pt	326

Trait	Type	Cost	Pg
Flamboyant	*Char*	1 pt	326
Flatterer	*Char*	1 pt	326
Flea-Bitten	*Char*	1 pt	326
Fleet of Foot	*C-O*	2 pts	326
Flights of Murderous...	*Dt*	—	326
Flip	*Char*	1 pt	326
Floury	*Char*	1 pt	326
Folksy Wisdom	*Char*	1 pt	326
Following the Beat	*Char*	1 pt	326
Fondness for Elven Blood	*Char*	1 pt	326
Forked Tongue	*C-O*	—	326
Formalist	*Char*	1 pt	327
Fortitude	*C-O*	2 pts	327
Foul Smelling	*Char*	1 pt	327
Frail	*Dt*	4 pts	327
Frippery	*Char*	1 pt	327
Frustrated	*Char*	1 pt	327
Galvanizing Presence	*C-O*	—	327
Garrulous	*Char*	1 pt	327
Gelid	*Char*	1 pt	327
Generous	*Char*	1 pt	327
Genial	*Char*	1 pt	327
Gentle but Firm	*Char*	1 pt	327
Geometric	*Dt*	3 pts	327
Gerbil Brain	*Char*	1 pt	327
Gifted	*Dt*	5 pt	200, 327
Glib	*C-O*	2 pts	327
Gloryhound	*Dt*	3 pts	327
Gluttonous	*Char*	1 pt	328
Gnawing Hunger	*Char*	1 pt	328
Good for Nothing	*Char*	1 pt	328
Gossip	*Char*	1 pt	328
Graceful	*C-O*	4 pts	328
Grand	*Char*	1 pt	328
Greasy	*Char*	1 pt	328
Greater Muse	*Dt*	6 pts	328
Greed	*Dt*	—	118, 328
Greedy	*Char*	1 pt	328
Grey Mantle	*Char*	1 pt	328
Grief	*Dt*	—	140, 328
Grim	*Char*	1 pt	328
Grudgekeeper	*Dt*	1 pt	120, 328
Grumbling	*Char*	1 pt	328
Guarded	*Char*	1 pt	328
Hacking Cough	*Char*	1 pt	328
Hairy	*Char*	1 pt	328
Half-Elf	*Char*	1 pt	328
Halitosis	*Char*	1 pt	328
Hand-Eye Coordination	*Dt*	3 pts	329
Hands of Iron	*Dt*	4 pts	329
Handsome	*Char*	1 pt	329
Happy-Go-Lucky	*Char*	1 pt	329
Hard as Nails	*Dt*	—	329
Hardened	*Dt*	—	329
Hard-Hearted	*Dt*	—	329
Hard Work	*Char*	1 pt	329
Hatred of Forests	*Char*	1 pt	329
Haunted	*Char*	1 pt	329
Healthy	*C-O*	2 pts	329
He's a Jonah, That One.	*Char*	1 pt	329
Hide Before Battle	*Char*	1 pt	329
Hiding	*Dt*	—	329
Hoarding	*Char*	1 pt	329
Holier	*Char*	1 pt	329

Trait	Type	Cost	Pg
Hollow Bones	*Char*	1 pt	329
Homesick	*Char*	1 pt	329
Honored	*Char*	1 pt	329
Hope	*Char*	1 pt	329
Horsefriend	*Char*	1 pt	329
Humble Before My Master	*Char*	1 pt	329
Humility	*Char*	1 pt	329
Humility in the Face...	*Char*	1 pt	329
Hungry	*Char*	1 pt	329
Hurt	*Char*	1 pt	329
Hypochondriac	*Char*	1 pt	329
Idealistic	*Char*	1 pt	330
Ideologue	*Char*	1 pt	330
I Know This Ship Like...	*C-O*	—	330
Impecunious	*Char*	1 pt	330
Imperious	*Char*	1 pt	330
Imperious Demeanor	*C-O*	—	330
Impulsive	*Char*	1 pt	330
Incessant Tapping	*Char*	1 pt	330
Incomprehensible Diagnosis	*C-O*	—	330
Inconsiderate	*Char*	1 pt	330
Indecisive	*Char*	1 pt	330
Ineffable Feature	*Char*	1 pt	330
Infallible Religious Logic	*Char*	1 pt	330
Ink-Stained Hands	*Char*	1 pt	330
Inscrutable	*Char*	1 pt	330
Insightful	*Char*	1 pt	330
Insomniac	*Char*	1 pt	330
Inspirational	*C-O*	2 pts	330
Intense Hatred	*Char*	1 pt	330
Intractable	*Char*	1 pt	330
Inured	*Char*	1 pt	330
Invisible Friend	*Char*	1 pt	330
Involuntary Shudders	*Char*	1 pt	330
Iron Memory	*Dt*	—	330
Iron Nails	*Char*	1 pt	330
Iron Nose	*Dt*	—	330
Iron Stomach	*C-O*	2 pts	331
Iron Will	*Dt*	3 pts	331
It Just Might Work!	*Char*	1 pt	331
Jaded	*Dt*	4 pts	331
Jaunty	*Char*	1 pt	331
Jealous	*Char*	1 pt	331
Joan of Arc	*Char*	1 pt	331
Keen Sense of Humor	*Char*	1 pt	331
Keen Sight	*Dt*	—	140, 331
Keen Taste	*Dt/C-O*	5 pts	331
Keys to the Church	*Dt*	—	331
Kicking the Beast	*Dt*	—	332
The Killer	*Dt*	5 pts	332
Know It All	*Char*	1 pt	332
Laconic	*Char*	1 pt	332
Lame	*Dt*	1 pt	332
Landlubber	*Dt*	1 pt	332
Lavish Taste	*Char*	1 pt	332
Lazy	*Char*	1 pt	332
Learned	*Char*	1 pt	332
Leprosy	*Char*	1 pt	332
Lesser Muse	*Dt*	5 pts	332
Lesson of One	*Dt*	—	332
Life Is Death	*Dt*	—	333
Lifting Heavy Things	*C-O*	—	333
Light Sleeper	*Dt*	2 pts	333
Linguist	*Dt/C-O*	3 pts	333

Trait	Type	Cost	Pg
Lithe	*C-O*	2 pts	333
Loathsome and Twisted	*Dt*	—	237, 333
Loner	*Char*	1 pt	333
Lonesome	*Char*	1 pt	333
Long Fingered	*Char*	1 pt	333
Long of Limb	*Dt*	4 pts	333
Lord of Ages	*Dt*	—	333
Lord's Favorite	*Char*	1 pt	333
Lost	*Dt*	1 pt	333
Lost Faith	*Dt*	—	334
Louis Wu	*Dt*	2 pts	334
Love of the Horse	*Char*	1 pt	334
Low Cunning	*C-O*	4 pts	334
Low Speech	*Dt*	3 pts	334
Loyal	*Dt*	3 pts	334
Lucky	*Dt*	—	334
Lunatic	*Char*	1 pt	334
Lustrous	*Char*	1 pt	334
Lynx-Eyed, Like...	*Dt*	—	237, 344
Mad	*Char*	1 pt	335
Made Man	*Dt*	—	335
Maggot Connoisseur	*Char*	1 pt	335
Maimed	*Dt*	—	335
Manhunter	*Dt*	3 pts	335
Manly	*Char*	1 pt	335
Man of Few Words	*Char*	1 pt	335
Marching	*Dt*	—	335
Mark of Privilege	*Dt*	—	335
Mark of the Beast	*Char*	1 pt	335
Massive Stature	*Dt*	4 pts	335
Maternal	*Char*	1 pt	335
Matriarchal	*Char*	1 pt	335
Maudlin	*Char*	1 pt	335
Mean	*Char*	1 pt	335
Melodramatic Family	*Char*	1 pt	335
Mercenary	*Char*	1 pt	335
Merciful	*Char*	1 pt	335
Merciless	*Char*	1 pt	335
Metal Plate in the Skull	*Char*	1 pt	335
Meticulous	*C-O*	2 pts	335
Mind for Small Details	*Char*	1 pt	336
Mind-Numbing Work	*C-O*	—	336
Mind over Matter	*Dt*	3 pts	336
Misanthropic	*Char*	1 pt	336
Misplaced Aura	*Dt*	3 pts	336
Missing Digit	*Char*	1 pt	336
Missing Eye	*Dt*	3 pts	336
Missing Limb	*Dt*	1 pt	336
Monastic	*Dt*	—	336
Mourner	*Dt*	3 pt	141, 336
Murderous	*Char*	1 pt	336
Mute	*Char*	1 pt	336
Muttering	*Char*	1 pt	336
Myopic	*Dt*	—	336
Naked Hatred	*Char*	1 pt	336
Narcoleptic	*Char*	1 pt	336
Near-Sighted	*Dt*	—	337
Never Cry Wolf	*Char*	1 pt	337
Night Owl	*Char*	1 pt	337
Nihilistic	*Char*	1 pt	337
Nimble	*C-O*	2 pts	337
Noblesse Oblige	*Dt*	—	337
No Nonsense	*Char*	1 pt	337
Nose for Trouble	*Char*	1 pt	337
Nose of the Bloodhound	*Dt*	4 pts	337
Numb	*Dt*	—	337
Oathbreaker	*Dt*	—	337
Oathswearer	*Dt*	—	338
Oathsworn	*Dt*	—	119, 338
Obedient	*Char*	1 pt	338
Obliging	*Char*	1 pt	338
Obscure Aura	*Dt*	3 pts	338
Obsessed	*Char*	1 pt	338
Obsessive	*Dt*	—	338
Obstinate	*Char*	1 pt	338
Odd	*Char*	1 pt	338
Oddly Likeable	*Char*	—	339
Odious	*Char*	1 pt	339
Off-Kilter	*Char*	1 pt	339
Oikofugic	*Char*	1 pt	339
Organized	*C-O*	—	339
Ornery	*Char*	1 pt	339
Other Life	*Char*	1 pt	339
Outlaw	*Dt*	3 pt	200, 339
Overbite	*Char*	1 pt	339
Overworked	*Char*	1 pt	339
Pack Hunter	*Dt*	—	339
Pain Life	*Dt*	—	339
Palsy	*Dt*	2 pts	339
Paranoid About the Ship	*Char*	1 pt	339
Paranoid	*Char*	1 pt	339
Paranoid Ear	*Dt*	3 pts	340
Pardoner	*Dt*	—	340
Pariah	*Char*	1 pt	340
Passionate	*Char*	1 pt	340
Patient	*Char*	1 pt	340
Patriarchal	*Char*	1 pt	340
Pegboy	*Char*	1 pt	340
Penetrating Gaze	*Dt*	4 pts	340
Penny-Wise	*C-O*	—	340
Perfectionist	*Char*	1 pt	340
Perfect Pitch	*C-O*	2 pts	340
Peripatetic	*Char*	1 pt	340
Perspective	*C-O*	—	340
Phobia	*Dt*	3 pts	340
Pickled	*Dt*	3 pts	340
Pigpen	*Char*	1 pt	340
Plain Faced	*C-O*	2 pts	340
Pointed Ears	*Char*	1 pt	341
Poised	*C-O*	3 pts	341
Poisonous Ambition	*Char*	1 pt	341
Poker Face	*C-O*	2 pts	341
Pompous	*Char*	1 pt	341
Possessed	*Dt*	—	341
Power Behind the Throne	*Dt*	5 pts	341
Practical	*Char*	1 pt	341
Practiced Precision	*Dt*	2 pts	341
Pragmatic Outlook	*Char*	1 pt	341
Predatory	*Char*	1 pt	341
Prince of the Blood	*Dt*	—	342
Problems	*Dt*	—	342
Profuse Sweat	*Char*	1 pt	342
Prominent Scar	*Char*	1 pt	342
Prone to Exaggeration	*Char*	1 pt	342
Proud	*Char*	1 pt	342
Psychotic	*Char*	1 pt	342

Trait	Type	Cost	Pg
Querulous	*Char*	1 pt	342
Quickened Pulse	*Dt*	3 pts	342
Quick-Step	*C-O*	—	342
Quick Study	*Dt*	3 pts	342
Quick-Witted	*Dt*	4 pts	342
Quiescent	*Dt*	2 pts	342
Quiet	*C-O*	2 pts	342
Quirky	*Char*	1 pt	342
Rabble-Rouser	*Char*	1 pt	343
Rainman	*Dt*	2 pts	343
Rapier Wit	*Dt*	—	343
Rare Talent	*C-O*	—	343
Rarified	*Char*	1 pt	343
Rash	*Char*	1 pt	343
Rat-Speak	*Dt*	—	343
Reckless	*Char*	1 pt	343
Recondite	*Char*	1 pt	343
Red-Blooded	*Char*	1 pt	343
Red Cheeks	*Char*	1 pt	343
Reeks of Alcohol	*Char*	1 pt	343
Regal Bearing	*Char*	1 pt	343
Reincarnated	*Char*	1 pt	343
Remarkable Flatulence	*Char*	1 pt	343
Remote	*Char*	1 pt	343
Resigned (to Death)	*C-O*	2 pts	343
Resigned to Fate	*Char*	1 pt	343
Resolute	*Char*	1 pt	343
Restless	*Char*	1 pt	343
Reviled	*Char*	1 pt	343
Rhetorical	*Char*	1 pt	343
Righteous	*Char*	1 pt	343
Road Weary	*Char*	1 pt	343
Robust	*Dt*	3 pts	344
Romantic	*Char*	1 pt	344
Rough Hands	*Char*	1 pt	344
Rower	*Dt*	2 pts	344
Royal Favorite	*Char*	1 pt	344
Ruddy Complexion	*Char*	1 pt	344
Running (Away)	*Dt*	—	344
Sadistic	*Char*	1 pt	344
Sailor's Oath	*Char*	1 pt	344
Salt of the Earth	*Char*	1 pt	344
Sane	*Char*	1 pt	344
Savage Consequences	*Char*	—	344
Savvy	*C-O*	—	344
Scapegoat	*Char*	1 pt	344
Scarred	*Char*	1 pt	344
Scavenger	*C-O*	2 pts	344
Scheming	*Dt*	2 pts	344
Screaming	*Char*	1 pt	344
Sea Legs	*C-O*	2 pts	344
Seasoned	*Char*	1 pt	344
Second Sight	*Dt*	4 pts	344
Secretive	*Char*	1 pt	345
Secretly Worships...	*Char*	1 pt	345
Seemingly Concerned	*Char*	1 pt	345
Seen It All	*Char*	1 pt	345
Seen Not Heard	*Char*	1 pt	345
Self-Confident	*Char*	1 pt	345
Self-Satisfied	*Char*	1 pt	345
Sense of Direction	*C-O*	2 pts	345
Sense of Distance	*Dt*	—	345
Sense of Entitlement	*Char*	1 pt	345
Servant of the Citadel	*Dt*	—	345
Shaped from Earth and...	*Dt*	—	119, 345
Sharp Dresser	*Char*	1 pt	346
Shouting	*Char*	1 pt	346
Show No Fear	*C-O*	4 pts	346
Shrewd	*Char*	1 pt	346
Sick	*Char*	1 pt	346
Sickly	*Dt*	2 pts	346
Sight of the Bat	*Dt*	6 pts	346
Silent Hatred	*Char*	1 pt	346
Singed	*Char*	1 pt	346
Sixth Sense	*Dt*	3 pts	346
Skeptical	*Char*	1 pt	346
Skinny	*Char*	1 pt	346
Skin of an Apple	*Char*	1 pt	346
Slave to Fate	*Char*	—	346
Slayer	*Dt*	4 pt	141, 346
Sleek	*Char*	1 pt	346
Sleep-Talker	*Char*	1 pt	346
Slippery	*Dt*	3 pts	347
Slow	*Dt*	2 pts	347
Smells Like a Horse	*Char*	1 pt	347
Solipsistic	*Char*	1 pt	347
Somnambulist	*Char*	1 pt	347
Sonorous Voice	*C-O*	2 pts	347
Spartacus	*Dt*	3 pts	347
Spectacular	*Char*	1 pt	347
Spitting	*Char*	1 pt	347
Sprinter	*Dt*	4 pts	347
Squinty	*Char*	1 pt	347
Stalker	*Char*	1 pt	347
Stark Madness	*Char*	—	347
Starved	*Char*	1 pt	347
Stealing	*C-O/Dt*	—	347
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Stern Demeanor	*Char*	1 pt	347
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Taskmaster-wise	*Perception*	304
Tavern Tales-wise	*Perception*	304
Taxidermy	*Perception*	304
Terroir-wise	*Perception*	304
Theatrics	*Will/Per*	304
Threading Chant§	*Per/Agi*	304
Throwing	*Agility*	304
Torture	*Will/Per*	304
Tracking	*Perception*	305
Tragic End-wise	*Perception*	305
Trails-wise	*Perception*	305
Trapper	*Per/Agi*	305
Treasure-wise	*Perception*	305
Tree Cutting	*Perception/Power*	305
Tree Pulling§	*Hatred*	305
Troll Etiquette	*Will/Per*	305
Troll-wise	*Perception*	305
Tune-wise	*Perception*	305
Tunnel-wise	*Perception*	306
Two-Fisted Fighting Tr...	*Agility**	306
Ugly Truth	*Perception*	306
Vein-wise	*Perception*	306
Vile Poisoner§	*Per/Agi*	306
Village Secret-wise	*Perception*	306
Vine-wise	*Perception*	306
Vintage-wise	*Perception*	306
Vintner	*Will/Per*	307
Visage-wise	*Perception*	307
Voice of Thunder§	*Will/Forte*	307
Wagon-wise	*Perception*	307
Waiting Tables	*Will*	307
War Art§	*Will/Agi*	307
War Engineer§	*Will/Per*	307
Weaponsmith	*Per/Agi*	308
Weaving	*Per/Agi*	308
Weaving Way§	*Will/Agility*	308
Web-wise	*Perception*	308
Well-wise	*Perception*	308
Whip-Wise	*Perception*	308
Whispered Secrets-wise	*Perception*	308
White Metal Artifice§	*Will/Agi*	308
Whitesmith	*Per/Agi*	308
Windage-wise	*Perception*	308
Wine Tasting	*Perception*	309
Wises	*Perception*	309
Wolf-wise	*Perception*	309
Woodcraft§	*Will/Agility*	309
Wood-wise	*Perception*	309
Write	*Per/Agi*	309

§These skills are magical and open-ended.
*These are training skills. Roots are for practice times only.

⊛ Character Index ⊛

Name **Stock** **Age** **Lifepaths**

Alias *Homeland* *Features*

⊛ Beliefs ⊛

Belief 1
(F: ○ P: ○ D: ○)

Belief 2
(F: ○ P: ○ D: ○)

Belief 3
(F: ○ P: ○ D: ○)

Belief Special
(F: ○ P: ○ D: ○)

⊛ Instincts ⊛

Instinct 1
(F: ○ P: ○ D: ○)

Instinct 2
(F: ○ P: ○ D: ○)

Instinct 3
(F: ○ P: ○ D: ○)

⊛ Traits ⊛

Character Traits

Die Traits

Call-On Traits
(Describe trait and the skill it affects)

⊛ Relationships ⊛

Relationships Circles Named Circles Enemy Circles

⊛ Gear, Possessions and Property ⊛

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Artha and Epiphanies

Fate (F) Open-end 6s

Persona (P) +1D per point

Deeds (D) Double dice or reroll a failed dice

Epiphany (permanent shade shift)
3 Deeds points, 10 Persona points and 20 Fate points

Aristeia (temporary shade shift)
1 Deeds points, 3 Persona points and 5 Fate points

Skill _____	***Skill*** _____	***Skill*** _____	***Skill*** _____
Total Artha Spent (F) (P) (D)	*Total Artha Spent* (F) (P) (D)	*Total Artha Spent* (F) (P) (D)	*Total Artha Spent* (F) (P) (D)
Skill _____	***Skill*** _____	***Skill*** _____	***Skill*** _____
Total Artha Spent (F) (P) (D)	*Total Artha Spent* (F) (P) (D)	*Total Artha Spent* (F) (P) (D)	*Total Artha Spent* (F) (P) (D)

Notes, Spells and Other Miscellanea

Skills Being Learned

Aptitude *equals* 10 *minus Stat:*

Perception Aptitude ___ | *Will Aptitude* ___ | *Agility Aptitude* ___ | *Speed Aptitude* ___ | *Power Aptitude* ___ | *Forte Aptitude* ___

Skill Name	Aptitude	*Tests toward Aptitude*	Skill Name	Aptitude	*Tests toward Aptitude*
_____	( )	○○○○ ○○○○ ○○○●	_____	( )	○○○○ ○○○○ ○○○●
_____	( )	○○○○ ○○○○ ○○○●	_____	( )	○○○○ ○○○○ ○○○●
_____	( )	○○○○ ○○○○ ○○○●	_____	( )	○○○○ ○○○○ ○○○●
_____	( )	○○○○ ○○○○ ○○○●	_____	( )	○○○○ ○○○○ ○○○●
_____	( )	○○○○ ○○○○ ○○○●	_____	( )	○○○○ ○○○○ ○○○●

Practice Log

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⊛ Stats ⊛

Will ☐ __
tests for advancement
__ Difficult: ○○○○ __
__ Challenge: ○○○● __
F / D / P

Power ☐ __
__ Difficult: ○○○○ __
__ Challenge: ○○○● __
F / D / P

Agility ☐ __
__ Difficult: ○○○○ __
__ Challenge: ○○○● __
F / D / P

Perception ☐ __
__ Difficult: ○○○○ __
__ Challenge: ○○○● __
F / D / P

Forte ☐ __
__ Difficult: ○○○○ __
__ Challenge: ○○○● __
F / D / P

Speed ☐ __
__ Difficult: ○○○○ __
__ Challenge: ○○○● __
F / D / P

Stride: ____ *Mounted Stride:* ____

⊛ Attributes ⊛

Health ☐ __
tests for advancement
__ Routine: ○○○○ __
__ Difficult: ○○○○ __
__ Challenge: ○○○● __
F / D / P

_____ ☐ __
__ Routine: ○○○○ __
__ Difficult: ○○○○ __
__ Challenge: ○○○● __
F / D / P

Reflexes ☐ __
Average of Per, Agl, Spd. Round down.
Reflexes advances as the stats do.

Steel ☐ __
__ Routine: ○○○○ __
__ Difficult: ○○○○ __
__ Challenge: ○○○● __
F / D / P

Hesitation ____
(Hesitation = 10 - Will exp)

_____ ☐ __
__ Routine: ○○○○ __
__ Difficult: ○○○○ __
__ Challenge: ○○○● __
F / D / P

Mortal Wound ☐ __
Average of Power and Forte (plus 6), round down. MW advances as the stats do.

Circles ☐ __
tests for advancement
__ Routine: ○○○○ __
__ Difficult: ○○○○ __
__ Challenge: ○○○● __
F / D / P

Reputation *Affiliation*
Reputation *Affiliation*
Reputation *Affiliation*

Resources ☐ __
tests for advancement
__ Routine: ○○○○ __
__ Difficult: ○○○○ __
__ Challenge: ○○○● __

Tax
F / D / P

Cash
Funds/Property
Loans/Debt

PHYSICAL TOLERANCES GRAYSCALE

Tolerance																
Coordinate	**B1**	**B2**	**B3**	**B4**	**B5**	**B6**	**B7**	**B8**	**B9**	**B10**	**B11**	**B12**	**B13**	**B14**	**B15**	**B16**
Injury	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○

Wound	Penalty	Obstacle Penalties	Wounded Dice	Injury Recovery	Injury Recovery	Injury Recovery
Superficial	+1 Ob/2, -1D/3*					
Light	-1D					
Midi	-2D					
Severe	-3D					
Traumatic	-4D					
Mortal	Incapacitated					

*The first Superficial wound gives a +1 Ob penalty. The second does not give another +1 Ob. If a third Superficial wound is suffered, the obstacle penalty is replaced with a -1D penalty.

Worksheets and other play-aids are available

⊛ Skills ⊛

	☐	R○○○○○ D○○○○○ C○○○○●			☐	R○○○○○ D○○○○○ C○○○○●	
	☐	R○○○○○ D○○○○○ C○○○○●			☐	R○○○○○ D○○○○○ C○○○○●	
	☐	R○○○○○ D○○○○○ C○○○○●			☐	R○○○○○ D○○○○○ C○○○○●	
	☐	R○○○○○ D○○○○○ C○○○○●			☐	R○○○○○ D○○○○○ C○○○○●	
	☐	R○○○○○ D○○○○○ C○○○○●			☐	R○○○○○ D○○○○○ C○○○○●	
	☐	R○○○○○ D○○○○○ C○○○○●			☐	R○○○○○ D○○○○○ C○○○○●	
	☐	R○○○○○ D○○○○○ C○○○○●			☐	R○○○○○ D○○○○○ C○○○○●	
	☐	R○○○○○ D○○○○○ C○○○○●			☐	R○○○○○ D○○○○○ C○○○○●	
	☐	R○○○○○ D○○○○○ C○○○○●			☐	R○○○○○ D○○○○○ C○○○○●	
	☐	R○○○○○ D○○○○○ C○○○○●			☐	R○○○○○ D○○○○○ C○○○○●	
	☐	R○○○○○ D○○○○○ C○○○○●			☐	R○○○○○ D○○○○○ C○○○○●	
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	☐	R○○○○○ D○○○○○ C○○○○●			☐	R○○○○○ D○○○○○ C○○○○●	

⊛ Weapons and Armor ⊛

Incidental— *1/2 Mark (round up)* **Mark**— *Power stat exponent + Weapon Power exponent.*
Superb— *1.5x Mark (round down)*

MELEE	I	M	S	Add	VA	WS	Length
Bare fist	☐	☐	☐	2	-	6	*Shortest*
	☐	☐	☐				
	☐	☐	☐				
	☐	☐	☐				
	☐	☐	☐				

MISSILE WEAPONS

I	M	S	VA	*ammunition*
☐	☐	☐		

*Range Dice: Optimal*___ *Extreme* ___ | **DOF:** I___ M___ S___

I	M	S	VA	*ammunition*
☐	☐	☐		

*Range Dice: Optimal*___ *Extreme* ___ | **DOF:** I___ M___ S___

ARMOR

Dice	Location	Type
○○○○○○	Head	
○○○○○○○	Torso	
○○○○○○	Right Arm	
○○○○○○	Left Arm	
○○○○○○	Right Leg	
○○○○○○	Left Leg	
○○○○○	Shield	

Clumsy Weight

STEALTHY: ____ SPEED: ____

PERCEPTION: ____ AGILITY: ____

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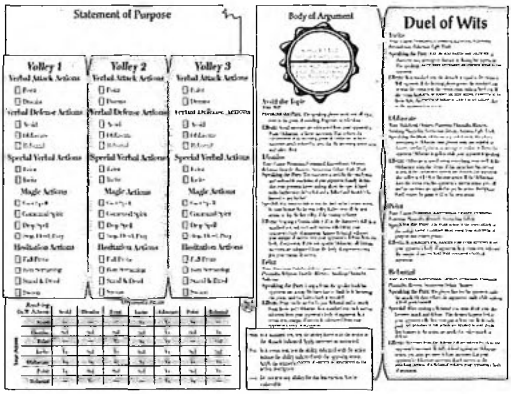

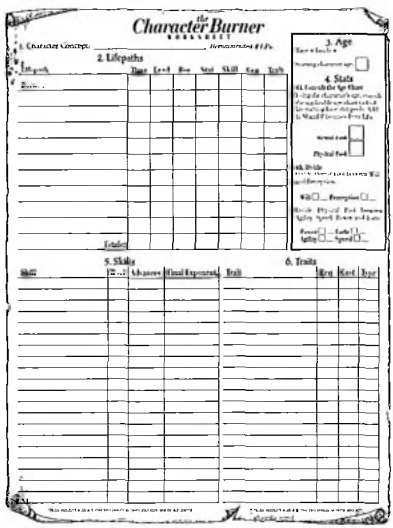

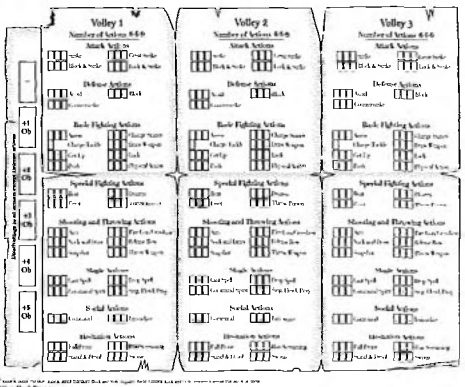

Worksheets and other play-aids are available as PDFs for download from www.burningwheel.org

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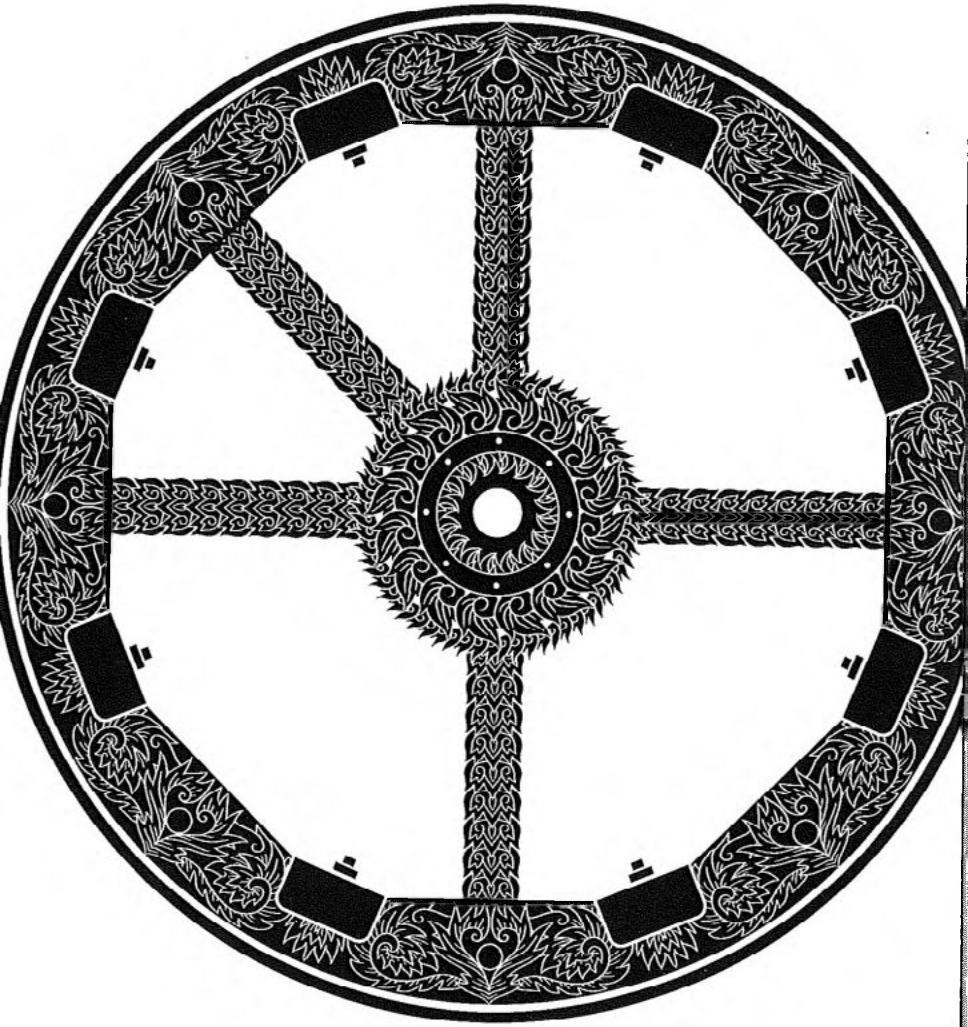
Sephiroth, *Cathedron.*

Slayer, *Reign in Blood, South of Heaven.*

This book was created using a Macintosh 3.6ghz Intel Core i5 running OS 10.6.6 and the Adobe Creative Suite 5 (specifically, InDesign CS 5).

The typefaces, **Bauer Bodoni**, *Caliban*, Post Medieval and **Post Antiqua** are used throughout.



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