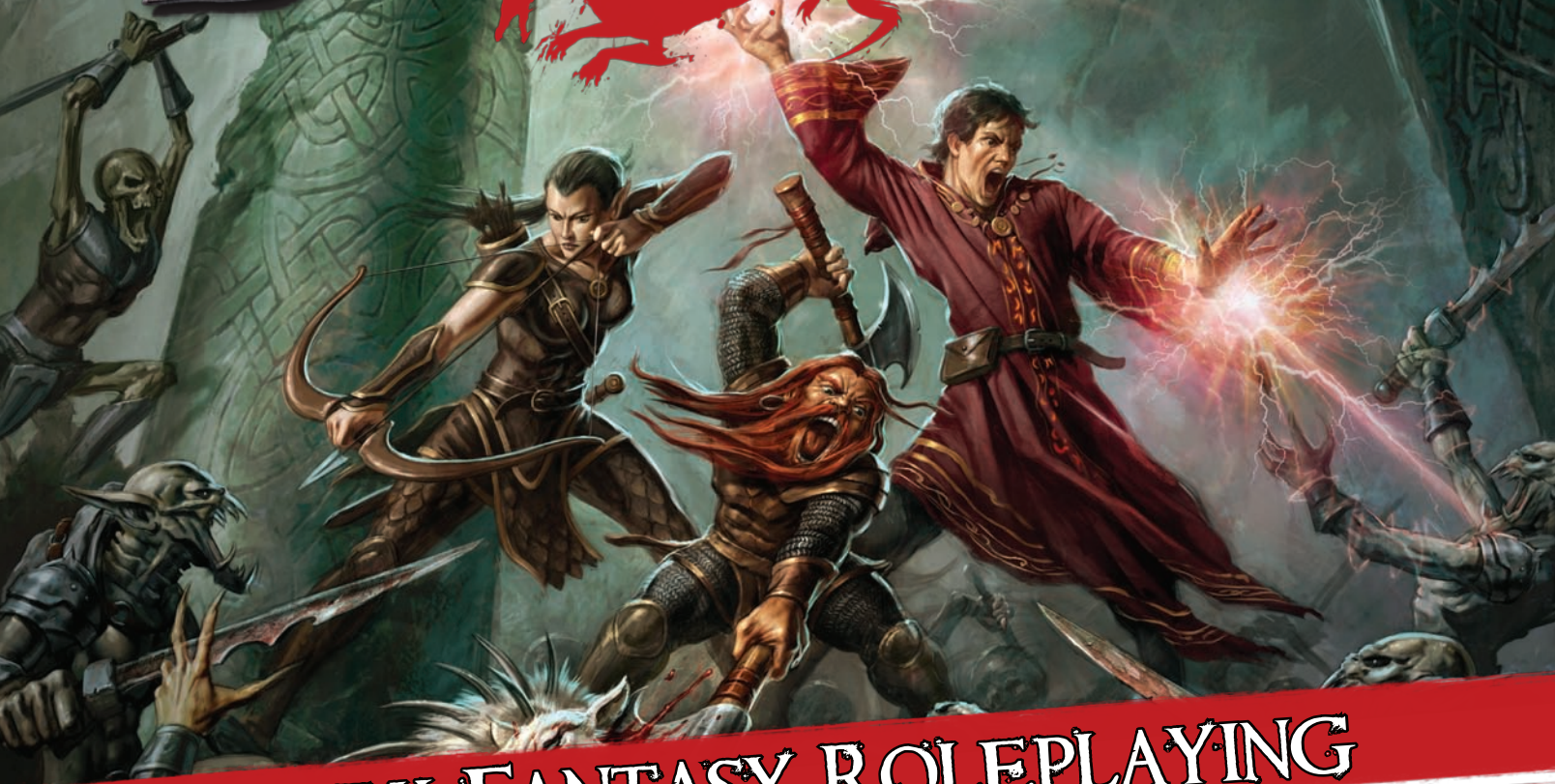


PLAYER'S GUIDE



DRAGON AGE

DRAGON AGE™



DARK FANTASY ROLEPLAYING

LEAD DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT BY CHRIS PRAMAS

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INTRODUCTION



Welcome to *Dragon Age*, a roleplaying game of dark fantasy adventure. In *Dragon Age* you and your friends take on the personas of warriors, mages, and rogues in the land of Thedas and try to make your names by overcoming sinister foes and deadly challenges. You may face down one of the vile darkspawn in ancient dwarven ruins, engage in a duel of wits with an Orlesian noble, or uncover the secrets of the Fade. You may win renown or you may die alone in the trackless wilderness. Whatever your fate, your story is your own to tell. In *Dragon Age* you make the choices and try to survive the consequences.

WHAT IS A ROLE-PLAYING GAME?

Dragon Age is what's known as a tabletop roleplaying game, so named because you usually play while sitting around a table with your friends. The action is similar to computer roleplaying games. You will play a character who goes on exciting and dangerous adventures in a fantasy world. The difference is that you do it all with your imagination instead of a computer. One person must be the Game Master (GM). The GM presents the story and acts a referee. Those remaining are the play-

THIS IS DRAGON AGE!

ers. Each player makes a character and roleplays him or her in the ensuing adventures.

If you don't grasp how this works, don't worry. Keep reading and by the time you finish the introduction, you should understand the basics of tabletop roleplaying and the *Dragon Age RPG*.

The game is set in the land of Thedas and the nation of Ferelden. You'll learn more about the setting in **CHAPTER 1: WELCOME TO FERELDEN**.

WHAT'S IN THE BOX?

The *Dragon Age RPG* comes in a series of boxed sets. This is Set 1 and it contains a *Player's Guide* (the book you hold in your hands), a *Game Master's Guide*, a poster map of the nation of Ferelden, and three 6-sided dice (often referred to as 3d6). This is all you need to get started with the game.

GETTING STARTED

The first thing you need is a group of friends to play with, and one of you must take on the role of Game Master, or GM. While you can play with as small a group as one

GM and one player, the game works best with one GM and three to five players. It is possible to play with more players, but that can slow down the pace of the game.

The GM has a key position, so try to make sure that he or she really wants the job. Running a game is fun, but it's a different experience than playing. Book 2 of this set, the *Game Master's Guide*, explains the GM's role in detail. The GM (and only the GM) should read that book.

Once you've settled on a GM, everyone else needs to make characters, known as PCs or Player Characters. In *Dragon Age* your character has the potential to become a great hero of Thedas, but begins as just another hungry adventurer scrabbling for glory. You do not get to start play as a knight or a grey warden. Those are positions that must be earned, and that's what playing the game is all about.

Your character is your primary responsibility as a player in an RPG. This is your alter ego in the game world. Over the course of many game sessions, your character will grow and change, but every hero needs a starting point. That is exactly what **CHAPTER 2: CHARACTER CREATION** provides, giving you not only game stats—the abilities and corresponding numbers that tell you what your character is good at—but also a character concept, starting goals, and ties to other Player Characters. Once play begins the portrayal and development of your character is all up to you. Playing your character, achieving goals, and navigating the perils of a fantasy world—this is the fun of playing an RPG.

PLAYING YOUR CHARACTER

"WHAT DO YOU DO?"

When playing an RPG, that's the question you must ask yourself all the time. The Game Master will describe a situation, framing a scene for one or more of the Player Characters. It is then up to you to decide what your character does and why. You tell the GM what you want to do, as do the other players, and then you all work out what happens. Sometimes, you use dice to resolve actions. Other times, you simply interact with the other players and the characters portrayed by the GM, which are known as Non-Player Characters, or NPCs.

"WHO ARE YOU?"

This is the question to keep in mind when making decisions. When you create your character, you will decide on some traits and goals as a starting point. You can then flesh out your PC; there are two basic approaches to this. The first is to paint your character in a few broad strokes and then jump right in to playing. The intention here is to come up with details about your character during play, often by using the springboard of the current adventure to create touchstones to your character's past. This is a common storytelling technique and a perfectly valid ap-

DRAGON AGE: ORIGINS

Dragon Age: Origins is a computer game by BioWare, the gaming juggernaut behind such titles as *Baldur's Gate*, *Knights of the Old Republic*, and *Mass Effect*. With *Dragon Age: Origins* BioWare returns to its roots, offering a dark heroic fantasy game that combines original storytelling techniques with classic roleplaying. The game introduces the land of Thedas and tells the type of immersive and epic story that gamers have come to expect from BioWare. But there are more heroes and so many more stories in Ferelden and Thedas, and creating them is what the game you hold in your hands is all about. If you haven't played *Dragon Age: Origins*, never fear. No previous knowledge is required to play and enjoy the *Dragon Age* RPG.

For an additional taste of *Dragon Age* and the land of Thedas, also check out *Dragon Age: Journeys*, a web browser-based adventure game from BioWare. You can find it at www.dragonagejourneys.com.

proach if you don't want to spend a lot of time working on your character before starting play. The second approach is to come up with a lot of details and roleplaying ideas before the first session. If you can come to the table with a good idea of who your character is before the first die is rolled, that can help get the game going.

However you approach your character, playing the game will help you refine your ideas. After you have played your character for a while, you should have a strong sense of personality and an intuitive sense of what your character would do in a particular situation. Of course, not all situations present easy choices. It is from difficult choices that tension and drama emerge.

ADVENTURE & CAMPAIGN

An adventure is a discrete story and scenario in an RPG. You can think of it as a single novel or an episode of a TV show. There may be several plot threads, but in the end it tells one story. The difference between a roleplaying adventure and a book or show is that you have authorship. It is the decisions of you and your fellow players that will drive the story to its conclusion.

A campaign is a series of interlinked adventures. If an adventure is a novel or TV show, a campaign is a series or a season. Some adventures may have self-contained plots, while others will tie together to tell a larger story. During a campaign the characters of the adventuring group earn experience points and gain levels. Over time they will gain more powers and abilities, face greater challenges, and perhaps gain renown for their deeds. A full *Dragon Age* campaign will take characters from levels 1 through 20, and provide hundreds of hours of entertainment.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY

What follows is an example of play with three characters. This should give you an idea of what a game of *Dragon Age* is like. You'll note various points where the example refers to dice rolling and its results. You don't need to worry about the particulars of that right now. Just follow along with the action and see how the GM uses the rolls to test the skill of the characters.

In this example Peter is the Game Master (GM). Kate is playing a city elf rogue, Troy is playing a Fereldan freeman mage, and Jess is playing an Avvarian hillman warrior.

PETER (GM): You've been traveling for several hours under the hot midday sun. The road passes through a small forest and for a few minutes at least you find some respite in the shade the trees provide. As you emerge on the other side of the forest, you see a caravan up ahead. It is not moving, but neither has it set up camp.

KATE (ROGUE): Do I see any guards around the caravan?

PETER (GM): Make a **PERCEPTION (SEEING)** test and tell me your result.

KATE (ROGUE): [Rolls dice] I got a 13.

PETER (GM): Good roll. Your eyes quickly adjust to the sunlight and you scan the caravan. You see many carts and wagons but no people. The only things moving are the draft animals and they seem restless.

JESS (WARRIOR): This doesn't look good. I want to take a closer look.

PETER (GM): Just you, or are you all going?

TROY (MAGE): Let's all go. If this is a trap, better to be together than separated.

KATE (ROGUE): Why don't you two go straight up the road and I'll swing around the right side and approach from there. I'll try to move quietly, crouched down with my bow out.

JESS (WARRIOR): My sword and shield are out and I'm heading straight up the road.

TROY (MAGE): I stay behind the warrior and keep an eye on the woods as we advance. We don't need any surprises from that direction.

PETER (GM): You approach the caravan and no threats emerge. When you get close, you start seeing the bodies. You can see at least six corpses spread out around the carts. They look like dwarves.

JESS (WARRIOR): That seems strange.

TROY (MAGE): Not really. The surface dwarves are great merchants. They buy and sell from almost everyone.

KATE (ROGUE): How did they die? Do I see any arrows sticking from the corpses?

PETER (GM): You can try to figure that out with a **PERCEPTION (SEEING)** test or a **CUNNING (HEALING)** test.

KATE (ROGUE): I'm better at Perception so I'll stick with that. [Rolls dice] Ha, I got a 15 this time.

PETER (GM): You approach one of the corpses and look it over. The wounds were not made by weapons. The way the clothing and armor are torn, you'd guess claws. Big claws.

TROY (MAGE): Do the corpses smell?

PETER (GM): Now that you are closer, yes, they do. The hot sun is making it worse by the minute, too.

TROY (MAGE): So they've been dead for a while, which probably means the attack ended some time ago. I don't see any creatures with claws in the area, so I'm going to move into the caravan and search for survivors.

JESS (WARRIOR): I'm going to climb on the one of the carts and use the vantage point to keep an eye on things.

PETER (GM): Roll a **PERCEPTION (SEARCHING)** test, Troy.

TROY (MAGE): [Rolls dice] I got a 9. Not a great roll.

PETER (GM): No, not great. You find more bodies but no survivors.

JESS (WARRIOR): Maybe some of the dwarves ran away. If I watched my friends get torn open like that, I might hoof it.

KATE (ROGUE): You might be right. I'll look for tracks. That's a **PERCEPTION (TRACKING)** roll, right?

PETER (GM): That's correct.

KATE (ROGUE): I rolled an 11.

PETER (GM): The tracks are confusing around the caravan. You can see many sets of prints, some dwarf and some from larger bipeds.

TROY (MAGE): Bipeds with large claws. I don't like the sound of that.

PETER (GM): You do find one set of dwarf prints leaving the scene though. Whoever it was seems to have been wounded, as there are drops of blood every few feet. The trail leads off the road and back towards the forest.

TROY (MAGE): Let's follow it.

KATE (ROGUE): Agreed. I will lead the way.

PETER (GM): You follow the trail back into the woods. Maybe 30 feet from the edge you find a dwarf under a fallen log. He looks unconscious and wounded, but alive.

TROY (MAGE): No time to mess around. I approach the dwarf and cast my heal spell. I'm using 2 mana points.

PETER (GM): Make your casting roll. As I recall, Heal has a target number of 10.

TROY (MAGE): It does indeed. [Rolls dice] And I got a 12. [Rolls dice again] He gets back 7 Health from the spell.

PETER (GM): You touch the prone dwarf and the healing magic spreads from your hands. He's lost a lot of blood but the spell revitalizes him and he wakes up with a start.

TROY (MAGE): Easy, friend. You're safe now.

PETER (GM): The dwarf relaxes a bit and regards the three of you. "Thank you for helping me. Where are the rest of my kin?"

KATE (ROGUE): You are the first dwarf we've found alive I'm afraid.

JESS (WARRIOR): Can you tell us what happened?

PETER (GM): "It was the damn caravan master," says the dwarf. "He thought we could save time if we pulled up camp in the middle of the night. I argued with him but he wouldn't listen. I was worried when we passed into those woods but thought we were all right once we made it through. Then they came at us from the shadows—big brutes with claws as big as my head. After I saw three of the guards go down, I made a run for it. One of them caught me in the shoulder with a claw but I kept running. I made it to the woods and hid. After some time the screams and sounds of battle faded, then I passed out. Next thing I saw was you."

JESS (WARRIOR): Are you thinking what I'm thinking?

TROY (MAGE): I am: darkspawn.

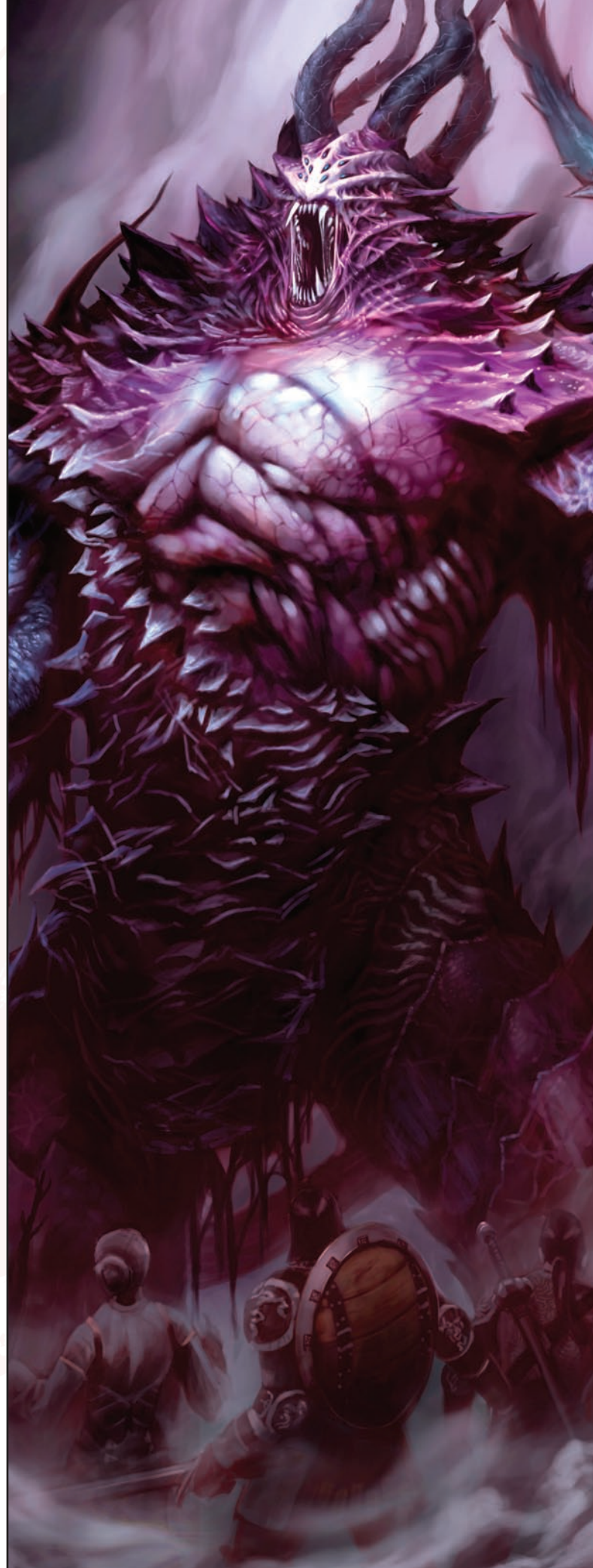
KATE (ROGUE): Darkspawn. So much for a sunny day of leisurely travel.

THE GROUP DYNAMIC

Much of this book is focused on teaching you the rules and how to make a character. It is important to remember that roleplaying is a group activity. There are two aspects to this: the adventuring group and the player group.

Your character is one member of the adventuring group (also known as a party). Each character in the group has individual goals, but there are also larger group goals. The characters may have their disagreements and even feuds, but for the game to go on they must remain together. The adventures themselves often assure this by their plot and structure, but a good group dynamic can help. This can start during character creation when everyone is settling on what they want to play. It's a smart idea, for example, to make sure you have at least one character of each class in the group. When working out ties and goals amongst the PCs, you can build in reasons for the characters to adventure together.

The people gaming with you make up the player group and that too has a dynamic. You and your friends are going to be spending a lot of time together, so you want a group of people who fundamentally get along. Roleplaying is meant to be fun for everyone, so be aware of tension around the table. Some players try to make the





game all about them, hogging the spotlight and trying to insert themselves in every scene. Don't act that way; it just makes other players angry. Everyone deserves a chance to shine, so be ready to take a step back when someone has a good idea or is pursuing something important for his or her character.

If a game session didn't go well for some reason, talk it about it afterwards. It won't do any good if everyone goes home to stew. Try to figure out where things went wrong and see if you can come up with solutions so it doesn't happen again.

A common problem is a player who is unhappy with his character. Maybe the character doesn't fit into the group well, or maybe the player finds another class preferable after some play experience. This doesn't have to be a problem. It's perfectly fine for a player to make a new character of the same level and retire the old character. It is preferable to do that than to make a player continue to play a character he isn't having fun with.

BASIC GAME CONCEPTS

Before you delve into the rest of the *Player's Guide*, here's a brief overview of the basic concepts of the game. You'll learn more about all of these things as you read on.

In the *Dragon Age RPG* you will make a character. You can play a human, an elf, or a dwarf of various backgrounds. You then pick one of three classes: mage, rogue, or warrior. Your class defines the core of your character and determines the powers at your command. Your character begins at level 1 as an inexperienced adventurer. By surviving encounters and overcoming challenges, your PC gains experience points and rises in level. Your character may eventually make it to level 20 and become one of the mightiest heroes of Thedas. It won't be easy, though.

Your character has eight abilities, such as Strength and Cunning, and each one has a numeric rating, with 1 being average. When your character wants to do something, the GM may call for an ability test. This is a dice roll to determine success or failure, and it's the most common roll in the game. To make an ability test, you simple roll three six-sided dice (3d6), add the results together, and add the appropriate ability. This generates a test result, which you want to be as high as possible.

$$\text{TEST RESULT} = 3\text{D}6 + \text{ABILITY}$$

You may have to apply other bonuses or penalties, most commonly ability focuses that represent areas of special expertise. Once you determine your test result, you tell the GM what you got and he'll let you know if it's a success or a failure and what happens.

Your character also has a Health score. When damage is inflicted, this reduces Health. If it reaches 0, your character may die.

In combat your character can perform stunts. When doubles are rolled on an attack roll, this generates “stunt points.” You can then use these points to pull off a number of special maneuvers. Stunts help keep combat dynamic and fun. There are also spell stunts, which let mages enhance their spells.

GAME DICE

Dragon Age only uses one type of dice: the six-sided die, also known as the d6. This is the most common die and it can be found in many classic boardgames if you need more than come in this set. In general dice are rolled four different ways in *Dragon Age*:

- **1D3:** Sometimes you need to generate a number from 1-3. In that case you roll a d6 but halve the result, so a roll of 1-2 = 1, a roll of 3-4 = 2, and a roll of 5-6 = 3.
- **1D6:** You roll a single die and simply read the result. Sometimes there is a modifier attached, for example 1d6+3,. In that case, just add the modifier to the die roll. If you rolled a 2, for example, you’d add the modifier of 3 to get a result of 5.
- **2D6:** As above, but you roll two dice and add them together. If you rolled a 3 and a 6, for example, your result would be 9.
- **3D6:** As above, but you roll three dice and add them together. If you are making an ability test, you must ensure that two of the dice are one color and the third a different color. That third die is known as the Dragon Die, and it’s important. The result of the Dragon Die can determine your level of success and allow you to perform stunts.

WHERE NEXT?

The *Player’s Guide* has six chapters. They are:

CHAPTER 1: WELCOME TO FERELDEN

Here you can learn about the setting of *Dragon Age*. You don’t have to read this right away, but it helps to have at least skimmed it before making a character. This will help you understand your character’s place in Ferelden and give you ideas for your background and motivation.

CHAPTER 2: CHARACTER CREATION

You can’t play without a character, and this chapter explains how to make one. It’ll take you from concept to completed character in eight easy steps. You will run across rules and terms that are not familiar to you on your first read through, but don’t worry. They are explained in other chapters of the book.

CHAPTER 3: FOCUSES AND TALENTS

Focuses and talents are two ways to customize your character. Their concepts are introduced in **Chapter 2**,

THE GREY WARDENS

As players of *Dragon Age: Origins* know, the Grey Wardens are an organization of elite heroes dedicated to battling the darkspawn and ending the Blights. Once their numbers were great and they rode into battle on majestic white griffons. In the centuries since the last Blight, their numbers have dwindled as many in Thedas came to believe they were no longer needed. In Ferelden the Grey Wardens were forced out entirely and only returned a few decades ago; still their numbers are small. Characters in the *Dragon Age RPG* do not start play as Grey Wardens. It is an honor that must be earned. You’ll learn more about Grey Wardens and how to join their ranks in **Set 2**.



but this chapter explains them in full and provides full details on their use.

CHAPTER 4: WEAPONS AND GEAR

Your character starts with a small amount of equipment and a bit of silver. You’ll be able to spend some of that coin here adding to your gear, and find key info on items like armor and weapons.

CHAPTER 5: MAGIC

This chapter explains the nature of magic and details the spells available to low-level mages. If you aren’t playing a mage, you can skip this chapter if you like.

CHAPTER 6: PLAYING THE GAME

The final chapter has the core of the rules system. Here you’ll find a full explanation of ability tests, as well as rules for combat and stunts.

At the end of the *Player’s Guide*, you’ll also find a glossary of terms and an index. You’ll find both useful as you learn the game and when you need to find something quickly during play. There’s also a character sheet you can photocopy that’s used to record the details of your character.

Right now your next stop should be **CHAPTER 1: WELCOME TO FERELDEN**, so you can find out more about the setting of *Dragon Age*. If you just can’t wait to make a character, you can skip to **CHAPTER 2: CHARACTER CREATION**, but be sure to read about the *Dragon Age* setting before you play your first session.

GAME ON!

That’s *Dragon Age* in brief. Now it’s time for you to make a character and give it a try. Game on!

CHAPTER ONE



WELCOME TO FERELDEN

The country of Ferelden rests far to the southeast of the continent of Thedas. It is a wide and barbarous nation, populated by a fiercely proud folk who've only just begun to "civilize" within the last few centuries. The Fereldens are a martial people who value loyalty and honor far more than mere material goods. They are the descendants of the Alamarri, a warlike culture of fractious barbarian tribes that lived for battle. The Alamarri followed powerful warlords known as "banns" into near constant struggle with their fellow tribes, as each bann sought to widen his territory and influence. The history of the Alamarri is written with the blood of great champions who rose to immense power and wide dominion, only to have their legacies and tribes torn apart with their deaths.

The Alamarri were an animistic people, who worshipped a wide variety of nature deities. Most sacred of all creatures was the wolf, which they believed was created by the gods to be both a guide and protector for mankind. Promising young Alamarri warriors were paired off with cubs, and wolves were afforded as much honor as the greatest fighters when they fell in battle. There is a dark side to the old tales, though. One legend states that a wolf betrayed his master to evil gods in exchange for the power to walk in the man's shape. The resulting creature could not hide the beast in his

heart when he dwelt among men, nor the man within when he tried to find a place amidst animals. Thus was the first werewolf born, scorned by all creatures, hating both men and wolves alike. Regardless of the truth of the old tales, the Alamarri were indeed long plagued by werewolves till at last all the tribes joined in battle against their hated common foe. They were victorious, slaughtering their shape changing foes and driving the last of them deep into the forests where a few folk whisper they lurk still.

In modern times, the Fereldans still face two enemies born of the Alamarri. Several centuries after their ancestors first came into Ferelden, a great civil war rose among the tribes that caused one large faction to break away from the Alamarri. The rebels eventually became known as the Avvarian hillsmen, a bloodthirsty offshoot of an already fierce people. Despite their brutality, the Avvars were gradually pushed high into the Frostback Mountains where they dwell still, nursing their ancient bitter grudge against their kin. They cling to the old ways, worshipping the nature gods that they once shared with the Alamarri and despising "lowlanders" as blasphemous weaklings softened by the trappings of civilization. While the Avvars are comparatively few in

number, they are fell warriors, hardened by their harsh lives. Their winter raids, though rare, are still greatly feared by all Ferelden.

When the Alamarri first passed into Ferelden from the distant west, some moved into the swampy forest vastness and the tundra beyond it to the south now known as the Korcari Wilds. These folk became known as the Chasind wilders, a strange twisted people plagued by dark desires. The old tales state that after "countless winters" had passed since they parted from the other tribes of the Alamarri, the Chasind invaded the lands to the north accompanied by "white shadows" and twisted swamp creatures. They conquered the Alamarri for a time, though many of the tales dispute just how long this period lasted or even if the valley tribes were ever truly subjugated, before the Alamarri slaughtered the Chasind shamans who had called up the shadows with their magic, and drove their warriors back to the south. Over a millennia later, the legendary witch Flemeth rose as a terrible power amidst the Chasind. Her daughters, the Korcari witches, led an army of wilders and other, more terrible things, against the north. They were all but unopposed until the hero Cormac led an army of Alamarri fighters and Orzammar dwarves against Flemeth's army. After a long series of dreadful battles, the Chasind were all but destroyed, and the witches burned. To this day the Ferelden eye the south warily, regarding the Chasind with suspicion and hatred.

Arguably, the Alamarri's most impressive achievement was withstanding the invading armies of the Tevinter Imperium. The Imperium was once considered the greatest power in Thedas and all nations save one were forced to bow before its sorcerous might. Even as the Imperium was reaching the very height of its supremacy, for close to two centuries the Alamarri and their allies thwarted its campaigns across the Frostback range to conquer the barbarians of Ferelden.

Three times the Tevinter nearly succeeded, pressing farther and farther into Ferelden's interior before being pushed back beyond the mountains. All three times the Alamarri united with the Avvars and the Chasind to drive the Imperium back, the only points in their long histories that the three peoples stood together against a common enemy. On the fourth, and what was destined to be final, push of their advance into Ferelden, the Tevinter successfully held the western half of the valley long enough to build several fortresses and extend the Imperial Highway, which was designed to allow for quick deployment of troops and supplies. The renowned fortress Ostagar was built in the far south to watch for the coming of the Chasind and its mortar was so reinforced with magic that legend holds nothing will ever tear it down completely.

The Tevinter's success came at a high price. While they remained entrenched, they were subject to near constant raids, their supplies eternally rationed. Rumors slipped

THE NINE AGES

There have been nine ages since the ancient era when the Tevinter Imperium dominated Thedas. Each age is 100 years. Dates are noted with the number of the age, a colon, and then the year. The current year in the game is 9:30, which means the thirtieth year of the Dragon Age. The nine ages are:

I. DIVINE: This was the age of the Second Blight.

II. GLORY: In this age Teyrn Caedmon became the first king of Ferelden, but the kingdom did not survive his death. The Chantry also declared an Exalted March against the Dales, and troops from Orlais and Ferelden destroyed the elven homeland.

III. TOWERS: This was the age of the Third Blight. Ferelden also faced the threat of the Chasinds, led by the abomination Flemeth and her daughters the Korcari witches.

IV. BLACK: Ferelden fought a great war against the werewolves, driving them to extinction. Orlais tried to take advantage and invaded Ferelden for the first time but was defeated after a three-year war.

V. EXALTED: This was the age of the Fourth Blight. Calenhad claimed the kingship of Ferelden and succeeded in uniting the tribes into a true nation at last. The Grey Wardens also established a permanent presence in Ferelden.

VI. STEEL: The Avvars invaded Ferelden, causing widespread devastation and famine. They were eventually pushed back, but bad blood between Fereldans and Avvars continues to the present day.

VII. STORM: The Grey Wardens were forced out of Ferelden. In the north new Exalted Marches were fought against the Qunari, strange invaders from across the sea.

VIII. BLESSED: Orlais invaded Ferelden a second time. Civil war wracked the country as the usurper King Meghren fought the forces of the Rebel Queen.

IX. DRAGON: Maric, son of the murdered Rebel Queen, defeated the Orlesians and claimed the throne of Ferelden. Shortly before the decisive Battle of the River Dane, a dragon appeared and ravaged the Orlesian countryside. Dragons were thought to have been hunted to extinction, so there was no doubt that its appearance heralded the Dragon Age.

back into the Imperium of the fierce and unrelenting blood thirst of the southern barbarians. Being posted to Ferelden was soon looked upon as punishment, exile, and likely a death sentence.



The Tevinter managed to maintain a presence in Ferelden for well over a century, but their hold was ever tenuous. At last, a cunning barbarian hero figured out a way to defeat the supposedly impregnable defenses of Ostagar. His name and identity have been lost, so that even today, the Avvars, Chasind and Ferelden (as the descendants of the Alamarri) all claim him as one of theirs; the histories, oral and written, simply refer to him as the Bane of Ostagar. With the fall of their greatest fortress in Ferelden, the will of the Tevinter to stay was broken. Though many bloody battles were fought before they were sped on their way, they retreated beyond the Frostbacks at last, never to return...

For the First Blight had come to Thedas.

The Chantry, the Church of the Prophetess, teaches that the hubris of men brought the Blights and darkspawn upon the world. A group of mages sought to "breach Heaven itself" and were cast forth from the higher realms, twisted by the foulness in their own hearts into terrible creatures, the first of the darkspawn. These

monsters crept into the deep places of the world, taking some of the tunnels of the dwarven kingdoms as their own. Drawn by whispers in the dark, they found Dumat, one of the Old Gods—an ancient dragon slumbering in the depths. By unholy rituals they released him, now transformed into a terrible creature known as an archdemon, to make war upon the world. It has been thus, ever since. During a Blight, the world itself seems poisoned by the advance of massive numbers of darkspawn, which come in many forms, each more terrible than the last. The earth withers, rivers foul, and the sky itself turns an ashen hue as a Blight advances. Each Blight is caused by the rise of an archdemon to lead the usually fractious hordes of the darkspawn.

The First Blight arose beneath the Tevinter Imperium and laid it waste, but the Ferelden valley was all but untouched by the devastation. It was almost two centuries before members of the order known as the Grey Wardens slew Dumat at the Battle of the Silent Plains in southern Tevinter. The First Blight was ended, but the Tevinter Imperium lay in near ruins.

In Ferelden, the Prophetess Andraste beheld the Maker, who charged her with bringing his teachings to his children. Mankind was to turn away from false gods, corruption, and dark magic. Andraste's most passionate supporter and her husband, the Alamarri chieftain Maferath, united all the tribes under his rule and his wife's spiritual leadership. The two convinced their people that the time had come to topple the Tevinter and they set out across the Waking Sea with an army great enough to do so. The Tevinter gathered all of their remaining forces to stop the Alamarri horde and it was almost enough to destroy the barbarians, but for a slave revolt amidst the Imperium's underclass and slaves—elves for the most part—who had heard of Andraste's teachings. At the Battle of Valarian Fields, the Tevinter's greatest force was routed and Maferath conquered southern Tevinter. The Prophetess, however, was captured by Imperial agents and executed. Ten years to the day after Andraste's execution, the Archon of Tevinter declared his conversion to her beliefs and announced that her husband, in his jealousy of her growing stature, was the instrument of the Prophetess's betrayal. Maferath had arranged for a truce with the Tevinter in exchange for Andraste's death. The Alamarri abandoned Maferath en masse to return to Ferelden and the south fell once more into centuries of martial chaos.

It was many long years before the legendary Hafter, the first Teyrn of Ferelden, brought any measure of peace to the Alamarri. He led his people in many battles against the darkspawn during the Second Blight and secured a long period of relative peace. Hafter's grandson Caedmon was the original warlord who attempted to declare himself King of Ferelden. Though he did not succeed, he did establish the Andrastian Chantry as the official religion of Ferelden. After another three centuries of bloodshed and many bleak times, the great warrior Calenhad finally defeated all other claimants to the throne and was crowned King of Ferelden by the Chantry. King Calenhad opened Denerim, the capital city, to trade with other nations.

Several strife-filled centuries passed before the Empire of Orlais succeeded in invading Ferelden. While Denerim was eventually sacked, King Brandel waged a guerilla war against the usurpers for decades before falling. His daughter, the Rebel Queen, spent her entire life fighting the Orlesian occupiers. It is her son, Maric, who at last retook the throne and drove the Orlesians from Ferelden entirely. King Maric's rule is considered the beginning of a golden age for Ferelden. Showing that he held no grudges, Maric signed a peace treaty with the young Empress Celene of Orlais when she visited Denerim.

It has been ten years since the treaty. King Maric has died, leaving the throne to Cailan, his only son. Ferelden is reckoned an up-and-coming power on the

world stage, but many believe that after long centuries with nary a darkspawn seen, a Fifth Blight has now begun, for the dark ones have seemingly returned in force to Ferelden.

FERELDEN

Ferelden is a temperate and fertile country, though its winters are unforgiving. Ferelden boasts a wide variety of terrain, and large portions are still untamed, which can prove hard on the unprepared. To the immediate north of the region known as the Coastlands is the Waking Sea, which parts Ferelden from the Free Marches, a collective name given to a series of wealthy city-states that control the central portion of the continent. Denerim, the capital city of Ferelden and home of the King, rests in the east. A large portion of the east to southeast of Ferelden is a feral wilderness, dominated by the hoary Brecilian Forest. The forest is said to be a cursed place, an abode of thieves, murderers, and werewolves. The trees themselves are rumored to move and slay the unwary. Only the strange folk known as the Dalish elves dare to enter Brecilian regularly, leading many to believe that they may have had a hand in whatever cursed the place. Those Fereldans who are willing to brave the forest generally live in the city of Gwaren, a city port on the Amaranthine Ocean. The Amaranthine forms Ferelden's eastern border. It is a massive body of water, stretching beyond the horizon, and remains uncharted.

The south of Ferelden is mostly hilly grasslands, in many parts covered with wide tracts of untamed forest. The region is unofficially split by the remains of the ancient Imperial Highway which still snakes its way down from the west, all the way to the ruins of Ostagar. The area east of the highway is known as the Southron Hills, to the west lie the Hinterlands. The Southron Hills are rocky highlands that stretch into the southern portions of the Brecilian Forest and edge the Korcari Wilds. The Hinterlands run from the massive inland Lake Calenhad out to the first peaks of the Frostback Mountains. A long stretch of the Hinterlands borders also borders the Korcari Wilds. With the Avvars to the west and the Chasind to the immediate south, the folk of southern Ferelden are justly famed for their stoicism in the face of danger. Whatever lies south beyond the Korcari Wilds, if there is more than just endless plains of tundra, the Chasind do not speak of.

To the west Ferelden is bordered by the Frostback mountain range, home to the tribes of the Avvarian hillsmen. The Frostbacks hold numerous high peaks, many of which are snow covered year round. Strange ice formations form regularly before quickly shattering, including "ice bridges" that run between peaks, which the daring can cross. The yearly runoff from the Frostbacks feeds the cold waters of Lake Calenhad. The Lake is a magnificent clear blue and is said to have



mystical properties. That is not surprising, though, as the Circle Tower, home to Ferelden's Circle of Magi, is situated on an island located in the northern portion of the lake. The tower is a landmark, visible for many miles across the entire countryside. Orzammar, the last kingdom of the dwarves, is carved beneath the northern end of the Frostbacks. The dwarves deal cautiously with all folk, though they are always wary when dealing with the Avvars. Beyond the Frostbacks lies the Empire of Orlais, center of the Chantry and presently considered by scholars to be the most powerful country in all of Thedas. Since the Orlesians occupied portions of Ferelden well within living memory, peace treaty or no, relations between the two countries remain tense.

At the central heart of Ferelden, both geographically and politically, lies the Bannorn. This great valley hosts the majority of farming within Ferelden. While freeholders own their land, political and military control over the Bannorn is split between many different banns, a title taken from the ancient Alamarri word for "chieftain" — hence the region's name.

SO, WHAT EXACTLY DO I KNOW?

That's Ferelden at a glance, and it's the opening setting for the *Dragon Age RPG*. It is from this region that your first characters will come and where your initial adventures will occur. Later expansions will detail the surrounding countries, allowing characters from "further afield" to come into play and the setting of your game to roam as well. What's important now, though, is what your character is likely to know about their people and their homeland.

OUTLOOK

Fereldans are famous for their fiercely independent nature, and this is reflected throughout all levels of their culture. Neither blood nor birthright automatically entitles one to respect, and the nobles of Ferelden must earn their people's esteem. There has never been a serf class in Ferelden, and the selling of slaves is illegal, though both are very common in other countries.

Fereldans value courage and martial prowess over wealth and famous ancestors. While they are not free of prejudice, they are remarkably open minded for a supposedly “barbarian” people. Fereldans appreciate fair speech, though they like it better when it is followed by action. They are sparing in their insults, unless they are prepared to follow them up with blows. Many Fereldans hold their personal honor beyond price, and they would rather die than betray their given word. Correspondingly, they are often cautious about entering into any agreement that they are not absolutely certain they can fulfill.

The Alamarri were the only people to reject the “benefits” of Tevinter Imperium rule. To them, the Imperial government, along with its magic and culture, was a corrupt decadence that would have destroyed all that it meant to be Alamarri. Since the rest of Thedas eventually succumbed to the Tevinter, their cultures were overlaid and irrevocably changed by Imperial values. While in many cases this greatly advanced their arts and sciences, it also radically skewed their viewpoints. Correspondingly, foreigners tend to view modern Fereldan arts and entertainments as somewhat crude, though occasionally undeniably powerful in a “barbaric” sort of way. The Fereldans, for their part, are exceedingly proud of their accomplishments, as they feel little need to compare them to other cultures that they quietly regard as merely attempting to emulate the feats of the Tevinter.

THE NOBILITY

All folk belong to a social class, and each class has its own rights and responsibilities. However, in Ferelden, unlike nearly all other countries in Thedas, members of the nobility are not considered to be intrinsically better or afforded more rights than any other class; they just have different ones. It is true that nobles are generally treated with deference, but this is often due more to the (correct) assumption of martial ability than social status. Nobles from other lands frequently find Ferelden commoners to be phenomenally insolent in comparison to the fawning treatment that they are used to.

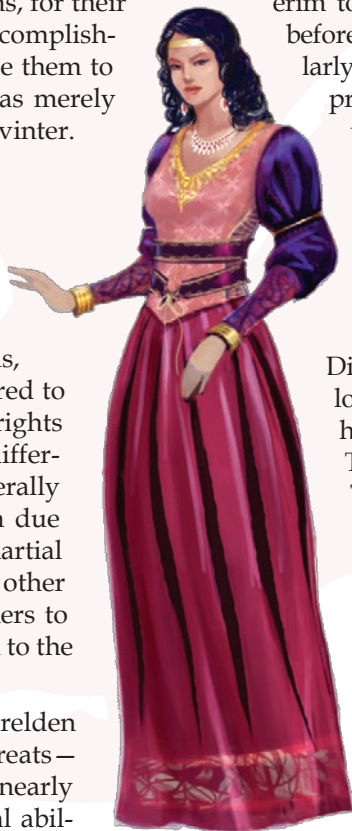
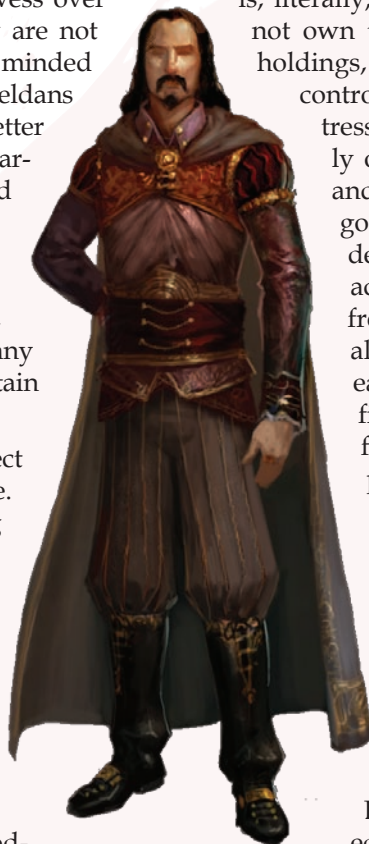
The primary purpose of the nobility of Ferelden is to fight for their people against all threats—human, darkspawn, or otherwise. While nearly all Fereldans boast some level of martial ability, nobles are expected to excel at warfare—it

is, literally, their “job.” The nobles of Ferelden do not own the land. They likely have some small holdings, with more powerful or influential lords controlling progressively greater keeps or fortresses, but it is the freeholders that actually own the farms, the crops they produce, and the profits that come from selling their goods. In Ferelden this matters a great deal, because it is the commoners who are actually the patrons of the nobility. Each freehold chooses which bann or arl it gives allegiance to and the decision is renewed each year. A group of freeholders dissatisfied with the protection they are getting from their local bann can remove their patronage and give it to another bann—though likely one within a fairly short riding distance.

At the top of the noble structure sits the King of Ferelden, whose court is in the capital city, Denerim. The King is entrusted with advancing the interests of all the people of Ferelden in both war and trade. While the King can suggest new laws for the land, the “King’s Law” is in fact generally dictated by precedent and voted on by the Landsmeet, a legislative body made up of all the nobles of Ferelden that meets once a season within Denerim to deliberate on issues and bring grievances before the King. Not all of the nobility can regularly make the trip to Denerim, so many send a proxy, either a younger family member or a trusted commoner, to vote in their place. The present King of Ferelden is Cailan, son of the near-legendary Maric, who ended the long occupation of the Orlesian Empire. Most believe King Cailan must feel the weight of his father’s legacy keenly. Time will tell if he can bear it up, or if it will crush him.

Directly beneath the King are the teyrn, warlords of such power and influence that they have multiple banns sworn directly to them. There are two teyrn in Ferelden at present, Teyrn Bryce Cousland of Highever and Teyrn Loghain Mac Tir of Gwaren. Teyrn Loghain was once a commoner whose brilliant tactical skills eventually elevated him to become King Maric’s favored general, and his daughter Anora is Cailan’s wife, Queen of Ferelden. Loghain is widely regarded as a living example that anyone can rise as far as their abilities allow in Ferelden.

Beneath the teyrn are the arls, powerful banns who control critical fortifications or regions of land along the borders of



Ferelden. Banns make up the bulk of Ferelden's nobility. There are a great many banns with widely varying levels of power throughout the kingdom. When the banns speak with one voice, they are the greatest power in Ferelden, but this is rare, for they're a quarrelsome lot. Trivial feuds, which occasionally give rise to petty wars, are far from unknown among the bann.

The least of the nobility is the Fereldan knight, a heavy infantry soldier sworn to serve a greater noble. The prestige of a given knight is greatly influenced by whom he is sworn to serve. They have no particular code of conduct, valuing fighting skills and leadership abilities before all else. While some knights do control land, it is never very significant, as anything more would mean they would be regarded as a bann. In Ferelden, commoner soldiers of exceptional fighting skill have a very real chance of being knighted and joining the ranks of the nobility. Fereldans are proud of this "social mobility," which is rare in Thedas.

THE COMMONERS

Because Ferelden's social system developed directly from the Alamarri tribes, it carries their barbarian values within it. A hunter is certainly a valued member of his tribe, but there are many other hunters. A man who can craft a fine weapon, on the other hand, has a rare skill and is thus more respected. The craftsmen of the Ala-

marri tribes, the woodworkers, the smiths, the builders, and so forth, organized themselves over the years into semi-formal groups known as "crafthouses" that shared knowledge and trade secrets with one another.

They truly became a power unto themselves, though, when they made their members swear to put crafthouse before tribe. While the crafthouses have no formal political power, only a fool ignores them as they have total power over their particular craft in Ferelden.

Beneath the crafters are the freemen, who make up the bulk of the common classes. Scholars split the freemen into "High Freeman"—freeholders, soldiers, innkeepers, and other employed persons; and "Low Freeman"—criminals, prostitutes, elves, and other riffraff. Freeman are exactly that in Ferelden—they have the right to go where they will, live where they choose, and earn such a living as they may. There are no serfs in Ferelden; all are paid in coin or barter for their work.



THE CALENDAR

The yearly calendar has been in use since the early days of the Tevinter Imperium. There are 12 months of 30 days each, and then five annums (annual holidays). The annums mark the transitions between the four seasons and the first day of the year. Each month has a high name in the language of Ancient Tevene, but in Ferelden almost everyone uses the low names, which follow.

Annum: First Day

First Month: Wintermarch

Annum: Wintersend

Second Month: Guardian

Third Month: Drakonis

Fourth Month: Cloudreach

Annum: Summerday

Fifth Month: Bloomingtide

Sixth Month: Justinian

Seventh Month: Solace

Annum: Funalis

Eighth Month: August

Ninth Month: Kingsway

Tenth Month: Harvestmere

Annum: Satinalia

Eleventh Month: Firstfall

Twelfth Month: Haring

THE CHANTRY

In the Tevinter Imperium, humans worshipped the Old Gods, ancient dragons said to have challenged the might of the Maker and been punished for their insolence. It was from the whisperings of the Old Gods, imprisoned deep in the bowels of the earth, that man learned the secrets of magic. The hubris of the Imperium led to the creation of the darkspawn and the first Blight, which left Tevinter in ruins.

At this time, it is said, a young Alamarri slave named Andraste was visited by the Maker. He charged her with carrying his teaching to his children and urging them to turn their backs on corruption and false gods. Andraste proclaimed that magic must exist to serve humanity rather than rule over them. She and her husband Maferath led an Almarri alliance into the Imperium and brought it to its knees. She was betrayed by her husband and martyred and soon her legend grew.

A cult of Andraste was not long in forming. Her followers claimed that Andraste's Chant of Light must be sung from every corner of the earth until the Maker would forgive humanity for the death of his prophethess and turn the world into paradise. During the Second Blight Emperor Drakon of Orlais embraced these teachings and helped found the Chantry. It quickly became

"When the Maker returned to the world, He chose for Himself a bride who would be His prophet. He could have looked to the great Imperium, with its wealth and its powerful mages. He could have looked to the civilized lands of the west, or the cities of the northern coasts. But instead He looked to a barbarian people on the very edge of Thedas. And thus fell the eye of the Maker on Andraste, she who could be raised up from outcast to become His bride. From her lips would fall the Chant of Light, at her command would the legions of righteousness fall upon the world."

—from the Chant of Light

the dominant religion of humanity, even in the lands of the Tevinter Imperium.

Today the Chantry remains a potent force in Thedas. Its power emanates out from the Grand Cathedral in the Orlesian capital of Val Royeaux. While priests of the Chantry are honored in Ferelden, they do not have the political influence that they enjoy in the Empire of Orlais and other nations. Fereldan priests are considered part of the crafting class and are expected to focus their attentions on spiritual matters. The Chantry has been trying to increase its political influence for a long time, but they have not been very successful. That the Revered Mother Bronarch, Grand Cleric of Ferelden, put the Orlesian usurper Meghren on the throne did not help their cause.

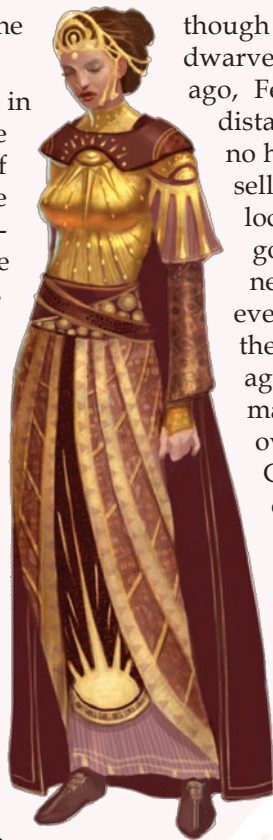
MAGES AND MAGIC

The Fereldans, as a people, tend to be highly superstitious and extremely distrustful of magic. It is no accident that the Circle Tower of Ferelden is situated on a remote island far from the more populous cities. Long ago it was in Denerim, but an angry mob burned it down. Magic use outside of a restrictive set of rules is forbidden.

Mages are required to join the Circle of Magi. Those who do not are called apostates and hunted down by Chantry templars. Apostates who practice forbidden blood magic are known as maleficar and they are feared above all. To guard against the use of proscribed magic and demonic possession, templars are stationed in every Circle tower. The Chantry admits that mages can be useful against foes like darkspawn, but their trust of mages only goes so far.

DWARVES

The Fereldans don't know a great deal about their dwarven neighbors in Orzammar, other than that they're a stout folk whose troubles are many and whose craftsmanship is exquisite. Neither, in fact, do the dwarves living in Ferelden. Long estranged from their kin, the bulk of Ferelden's dwarves belong to a dwarf caste known as the "Surfacers" and they are regarded with barely concealed contempt by their kind,



though this apparently doesn't prevent Orzammar dwarves from doing business with them. Long years ago, Fereldan crafters regarded merchants with distaste, as they profited from goods they had no hand in creating. When dwarves first started selling their wares within Ferelden's cities, the locals thought they were the crafters of the goods in question, and the dwarves saw no need to educate them otherwise. The dwarves eventually offered to move the merchandise of the various crafthouses for them, which was agreed to, so long as they didn't undercut human goods with their own. This accord grew over the years into the creation of the Trader's Crafthouse, which now handles the selling of goods throughout Ferelden and beyond, even as far as Orlais and the Free Marches.

ELVES

Old stories relate that there was once an elven empire in the north, but the Tevinter Imperium destroyed it long ago and enslaved its people. The words of the Prophetess were instrumental in convincing the elves to rebel against the Tevinter and after the fall of the Imperium, the elves were granted a country of their own south of Orlais called the Dales, in return for their help. For several centuries, all was well, until the elves were found to have accepted Andraste's words, but not her faith. The Chantry called for an Exalted March against the people of the Dales for daring to adhere to their old gods. The Dales were sacked and their people scattered, now a nation without a home. The elves that still cling to their old beliefs are known as the Dalish elves, an insular people who travel the wilds in massive wagons drawn by huge white stags and have as little truck with humans as possible. The rest of the elves now live in human settlements, but inevitably apart in an area sectioned off for their use called an "alienage." Some alienages are walled off, but this is as much for the safety of the elven families as it is to protect humans from the "thieving knife-ears." Elves are a graceful people with fair features. They are usually servants or laborers in Ferelden. While their lot is not easy, they are paid for their work and have rights, which is seldom the case elsewhere. Many Fereldan elves hold that they have far better lives than their people in other countries, as they would rather be poor freemen than rich slaves.

DOGS

Since the days of the Alamarri when wolves fought alongside warriors, canines have been highly regarded in Ferelden. In modern times, dogs have taken the place of wolves. Many communities allow dogs to roam freely, and “own” them collectively. Breeding is an ancient tradition and a wide variety of dogs exist. One of the most famous breeds in Ferelden and beyond is the “mabari” — a huge, mastiff-like war hound of incredible intelligence, capable of responding to complex orders.

LIVING IN FERELDEN

Fereldan cities radiate outward in a haphazard fashion from a central keep or fortress. The inner city is the domain of the rich with elegant mansions, manicured parks, and affluent chantries. The streets will be paved with cobblestones and boast a proper sewage system. As you move away from the city center, you’ll find only loosely packed dirt for roads and buildings set about with no particular plan in mind. Taverns sit alongside craftshouses next to food markets beside brothels. The streets twist along on bewildering paths, with countless slanting and narrow alleyways between them. In poorer quarters, the roads can quickly become a nightmarish labyrinth for an unsuspecting traveler. The closer one lives to the city center, the higher one’s social status tends to be. Most goods are readily available; other than slaves very little is illegal to sell in Ferelden so there isn’t really much of a “black market” to speak of. The majority of Fereldans believe in the Maker’s Chantry, following the words of the Prophetess Andraste. Those who do not believe generally hold their tongues.

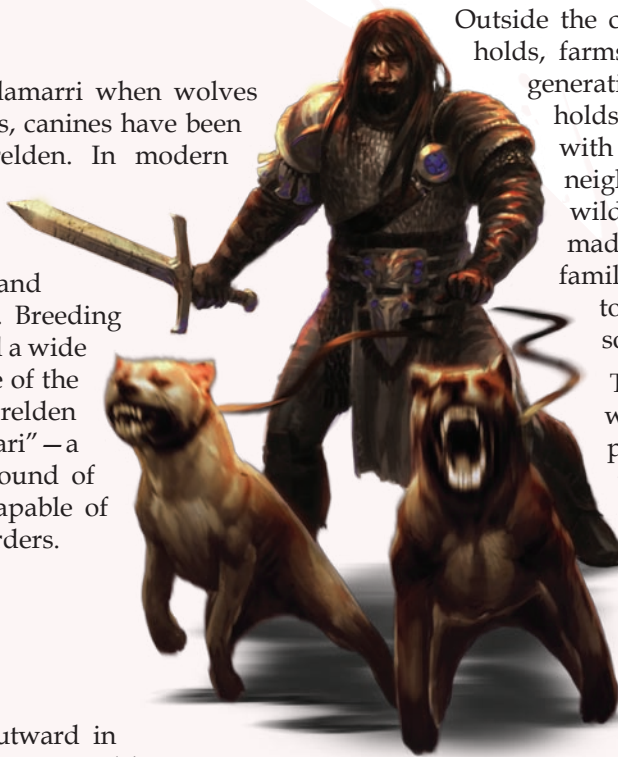
Outside the cities, people typically live on freeholds, farms that may have been worked for generations by one or more families. Freeholds are highly social and communal with everyone pitching in to help their neighbors. Freehold governance varies wildly, but generally involves a council made up of representatives from each family that decide on what to plant, what to build, which bann to support, and so forth.

The law in Ferelden is supplemented with a good sword arm, so don’t expect a lot of help from the authorities unless major property damage or murder is involved. Petty theft is ignored and most guardsmen are expected to protect their posts more than to enforce laws. Laws regulating behavior are almost non-existent in Ferelden. The carrying of arms and armor is unregulated, as are gambling, prostitution, drinking, and so forth. Arbiters appointed by the king’s seneschal hear disputes. Known as “blackhalls” due to the seneschal’s hall in Denerim being constructed of black granite, arbiters often have busy schedules. Out in the countryside, a sheriff appointed by the local bann will maintain the peace and keep track of the cases that the next scheduled arbiter will hear. Since this can take some time, a tradition has arisen where a suspect, in order to get out of prison, will give up something of great value to the sheriff and be released “on his bond.” The property will be returned to the suspect if he shows up to be judged by the arbiter. Otherwise, the sheriff retains the bond and the crime of fleeing justice is added to his original offense. Imprisonment is frowned on in Ferelden as more than a temporary measure. Punishment tends to be quick: whipping, disfigurement, fines, or execution. Public humiliation is often thrown in for good measure.

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“Know this: above all things, we Fereldans value our freedom. Other folk say we revere loyalty before all else, but loyalty is meaningless when forced at blade point. I tell you this so that you all can begin to understand the sacrifice I undertook in agreeing to tutor you lot, for I’m a traveling man by nature. Such sights our world has to see—more than you pups dare to dream of. I have gazed upon the twin juggernauts that stand guard before the gates of Minrathous, capital of what’s left of the Tevinter Imperium. I’ve thrown dice in Antiva with ‘Lords’ from the House of Crows and lived to collect my winnings. With these eyes, I have beheld the fabled domes of Qunandar itself. I did not look to see a Blight in my lifetime, yet here one clearly is... And now I see your fear. Do not be afraid. You are the sons and daughters of a people who have never been broken, who have never faltered. Let the Orlesians sneer at us through their gaudy masks of paint and porcelain. Let our cursed once-kin, the blasphemous ice-hugging Avvars, deride us from their wretched mountain peaks. It is our blood that ran in the Prophetess’s veins. Our ancestors toppled the greatest nation this world has ever known with nothing but dogs and determination. Of all the wondrous places I have seen, Ferelden is still the fairest to gaze upon.”

—Ser Howel, World Traveler, Knight of Ferelden, and Reluctant Tutor





CHARACTER CREATION

To play in a game of *Dragon Age*, you must first make a character. This is your alter ego in the land of Thedas, the persona you'll be taking on as you experience exciting and perilous adventures. Since your character is the focus of your play experience, making the right character for you is quite important. If you end up with a character you find unappealing or who isn't fun to play, your enjoyment of the game will diminish. So don't be afraid to take some time and put some thought into creating your character. This chapter explains the whole process and provides examples so you can see how it's done. When you are finished, you'll have a character ready to play.

The first time you read this chapter, you will come across rules and terms you don't understand yet. Don't panic. You'll learn everything you need to know as you work your way through the *Player's Guide*, and you'll want to at least skim the whole book before you sit down to make a character. Also remember that there is a glossary at the back of the book. You can look up important terms there at any time.

Before you start making a character, you will need a character sheet. You'll use this record to keep track of your character's various abilities and powers. There is a blank character sheet on the back of this book, or you can download a PDF version from WWW.GREENRONIN.COM.

MAKING A CHARACTER IN 8 EASY STEPS

Making a *Dragon Age* character is a straightforward process that you can complete in eight easy steps. The steps are listed here, and the rest of the chapter covers each step in order.

1. **CREATE A CHARACTER CONCEPT.** This is a rough idea of the sort of character you'd like to play. See the following section.
2. **DETERMINE ABILITIES.** These are your character's core physical and mental attributes. See page 19.
3. **CHOOSE A BACKGROUND.** This represents your culture and upbringing, and also determines your race (dwarf, elf, or human). See page 20.
4. **CHOOSE A CLASS.** This is your character's calling in life. You can choose mage, rogue, or warrior. See page 26.

5. **PICK EQUIPMENT.** Your character needs gear before the adventures begin. See page 30.
6. **CALCULATE DEFENSE AND SPEED.** Both are very important in combat. See page 31.
7. **PICK A NAME.** Every hero needs a good name! See page 31.
8. **CHOOSE GOALS AND CHARACTER TIES.** They help give your character personality. See page 32.

CHARACTER CONCEPT

Before you sit down to make a character, you should learn a little bit about the setting. If you haven't yet read **CHAPTER 1: WELCOME TO FERELDEN**, take a look at that now. If you are already familiar with Ferelden from the *Dragon Age: Origins* computer game, so much the better.

Now that you know more about the setting, you can start thinking about what kind of character you want to play. You'll be making the two most important choices—your background and class—in steps 3 of 4 of character creation, but before you get there it's a good idea to come up with a basic character concept. This can be quite broad to start; the process of character creation will help you focus it.

When coming up with a character concept, remember that one of the conceits of the game is that your character begins as an unknown and struggling adventurer. You don't get to start play as the crown prince or an archmage. You have to earn your honors with deeds, and you can be sure there will be a price. So start thinking about who your character is and how he became an adventurer. Here are some example character concepts:

- A guttersnipe raised on the streets who'll do anything to survive.
- A free spirit who fled from an arranged marriage for a life of adventure.
- A naïve farmer who wants to travel farther than 5 miles from where he was born.
- The child of a disgraced knight who wants to return honor to the family name.
- A cynical mercenary who trusts little but coin.
- A seeker of forbidden knowledge who often acts before thinking.
- An artist seeking inspiration in dark and dangerous places.

- A refugee from a village that was sacked and destroyed.
- A child of the forest more comfortable around animals than people.
- The scion of a merchant family who wants more from life than ledger books.

EXAMPLE

Kate and her friends are starting a *Dragon Age* campaign, so she must make a character. Having read **CHAPTER 1**, she decides to play a character with a crusading spirit and a keen sense of justice, probably from the lower rungs of society. She's a little light on the details for starters, but these basic ideas will guide her as she creates her character and you can follow along in examples throughout this chapter.

ABILITIES

Your character is defined by eight abilities: Communication, Constitution, Cunning, Dexterity, Magic, Perception, Strength, and Willpower. Taken together these abilities map out your character's strengths and weaknesses. You determine your abilities randomly by rolling dice, giving each one a numeric rating ranging from -2 to 4. A -2 is quite poor while a 4 is outstanding; a 1 is average. The higher the ability, the better. During play your abilities can increase as you gain experience and learn how to better harness your natural aptitudes.

Abilities are a key component of the game and you'll be using them frequently. You'll find it useful to understand the nature of each ability, so descriptions of them follow.

- **COMMUNICATION** covers your character's social skills, personal interactions, and ability to deal with others.
- **CONSTITUTION** is your character's fortitude and resistance to harm.
- **CUNNING** is a measure of your character's intelligence, knowledge, and education.
- **DEXTERITY** encompasses agility, hand-eye coordination, and quickness.
- **MAGIC** determines your character's innate arcane power.
- **PERCEPTION** covers all the senses and the ability to interpret sensory data.
- **STRENGTH** is your character's physical prowess.
- **WILLPOWER** encompasses mental toughness, discipline, and confidence.

DETERMINING ABILITIES

You roll dice to determine your starting abilities. You will need three 6-sided dice (3d6). Roll all three and add them together to get a result. If you rolled 3, 4, and 6, for example, your result would be 13 (3 + 4 + 6 = 13).

You need to make eight of these rolls all together, one per ability. On your character sheet, you'll notice a section for abilities that begins with Communication and ends with Willpower. Starting at the top with Communication, make a dice roll, and consult the **Determining Abilities** table to determine your starting ability. A roll of 11 on the chart, for example, means the ability's starting score is 1. Once you've recorded Communication, move on to Constitution, and then so on down the list until all eight abilities have starting scores.

When you are done, you may swap any two of the abilities. This gives you a chance to customize your abilities a bit.

EXAMPLE

Kate must now roll for her character's starting abilities. She rolls 3d6 and gets a 13. Looking at the chart, Kate sees this gives her character a starting score of 2 on her first ability (Communication). Kate makes seven more dice rolls, getting 5, 16, 8, 11, 6, 11, and 15. Her character's starting abilities are thus Communication 2, Constitution -1, Cunning 0, Dexterity 3, Magic 1, Perception 0, Strength 1, and Willpower 3. Kate then has the option of switching two of her scores. She decides to swap Perception and Willpower, so she ends up with a Perception 3 and Willpower 0.

ABILITY FOCUSES

A focus is an area of expertise within the larger ability. While Cunning as a whole determines how smart your character is, for example, a Heraldry focus would indicate a special knowledge of coats of arms and royal families. In game system terms, if you have a focus, your ability is effectively 2 higher than normal when working within that specialty. This is explained in greater detail in **CHAPTER 6: PLAYING THE GAME**.

Ability focuses (or focuses for short) are one of the ways to make your character unique. There may be another warrior in your adventuring party, but your focuses can be completely different. You don't need to worry about choosing focuses now; that happens later in the character creation process. Your character will get access to focuses through backgrounds, classes, and talents. For more information about ability focuses, see **CHAPTER 3: FOCUSES AND TALENTS**.

DETERMINING ABILITIES	
3d6 ROLL	STARTING ABILITY
3	-2
4	-1
5	-1
6	0
7	0
8	0
9	1
10	1
11	1
12	2
13	2
14	2
15	3
16	3
17	3
18	4

Set 1 includes the following focuses. More can be found in subsequent sets.

- **COMMUNICATION FOCUSES:** Animal Handling, Bargaining, Deception, Disguise, Etiquette, Gambling, Investigation, Leadership, Performance, Persuasion, Seduction.
- **CONSTITUTION FOCUSES:** Drinking, Rowing, Running, Stamina, Swimming.
- **CUNNING FOCUSES:** Arcane Lore, Cartography, Cultural Lore, Engineering, Evaluation, Healing, Heraldry, Historical Lore, Military Lore, Musical Lore, Natural Lore, Navigation, Research, Religious Lore, Writing.
- **DEXTERITY FOCUSES:** Acrobatics, Bows, Brawling, Calligraphy, Initiative, Legerdemain, Light Blades, Lock Picking, Riding, Staves, Stealth, Traps.
- **MAGIC FOCUSES:** Arcane Lance, Creation, Entropy, Primal, Spirit.
- **PERCEPTION FOCUSES:** Empathy, Hearing, Searching, Seeing, Smelling, Tracking.
- **STRENGTH FOCUSES:** Axes, Bludgeons, Climbing, Driving, Heavy Blades, Intimidation, Jumping, Might, Spears.
- **WILLPOWER FOCUSES:** Courage, Faith, Morale, Self-Discipline.

BACKGROUNDS

Your character did not spring from nothing. Just like real life, culture and upbringing shaped his or her personality and attributes. In *Dragon Age* you pick a background to represent these facets of your character and to determine your race. There are seven backgrounds to choose from: Apostate, Avvarian Hillsman, Circle Mage, City Elf, Dalish Elf, Fereldan Freeman, and Surface Dwarf.

You should read over the following section and then pick the background you find most appealing or suitable for your character concept. The descriptions of the backgrounds will also give you a better sense of the setting and help you place your character within it. Choosing a background modifies your character in several ways. These are spelled out in each description, but generally include the following:

- An increase to one or more of your abilities.
- One or more ability focuses.
- Determination of your race (dwarf, elf, or human).
- Determination of your class choices.
- The languages you can speak and read.



EXAMPLE

Now that Kate has rolled her abilities, it's time to pick a background. She is drawn to city elf because of the injustice of elves' treatment, and this works well with her character concept. She's already thinking about how growing up in an alien-age explains her character's poor Constitution. The background increases her character's Dexterity by 1, making it an impressive 4. She can choose one of the two offered focuses, and settles on **PERCEPTION (SEEING)**. She notes that she speaks the Trade Tongue, the most common language of Ferelden. She then must choose a class and has the option of playing a warrior or a rogue. With her character's high Dexterity, she's leaning toward rogue, but wants to read over the classes before deciding for sure. Lastly, she rolls on the city elf background table twice to get two more benefits. She gets a +1 to her Perception, which brings it up to 4, and gains another focus, **DEXTERITY (BOWS)**.

APOSTATE

In those nations outside the Tevinter Imperium (including Ferelden), only the members of the Circle of Magi may legally practice magic. Those who defy the law are known as apostates. The Circle of Magi is supposed to find those with magical power and train them before they endanger themselves and others. All those who practice magic risk demonic possession and could turn into abominations, and there is always the risk that any mage might turn to the same forbidden arts practiced by the magisters of the Tevinter Imperium, dangerous blood magic that relies on ritual sacrifice and subverts the minds of other men. This is why there are Chantry Templars in every Circle tower, and why Templars hunt down apostates.

APOSTATE		
2D6 ROLL	ELF BENEFIT	HUMAN BENEFIT
2	+1 CUNNING	+1 Constitution
3-4	SPEAK ELVEN	FOCUS: CONSTITUTION (STAMINA)
5	FOCUS: CUNNING (CULTURAL LORE)	FOCUS: WILLPOWER (SELF-DISCIPLINE)
6	FOCUS: WILLPOWER (SELF-DISCIPLINE)	FOCUS: CUNNING (HEALING)
7-8	+1 Magic	+1 Magic
9	FOCUS: DEXTERITY (STEALTH)	FOCUS: DEXTERITY (RIDING)
10-11	+1 DEXTERITY	FOCUS: COMMUNICATION (DECEPTION)
12	FOCUS: DEXTERITY (BOWS)	+1 Cunning

While the law treats all apostates the same way, the category is a broad one. Some are self-taught mages who discovered how to use magic by trial and error. Some come from magical traditions that pre-date the formation of the Circle of Magi, like hedge wizards and Avvarian shamans. Others are rebels, opposed to the Circle of Magic, the Chantry, or both. They resent the law and choose to go their own way despite the risks.

NOTE: If you choose to play an apostate, your character will have a disadvantage that those of other backgrounds do not. Namely, your character's powers must be used carefully lest they draw unwanted attention from the Circle of Magi or the Chantry Templars. The upside is that this conflict can lead to some great stories, but you should understand that your character will face challenges others do not.

PLAYING AN APOSTATE

If you choose to play an apostate, modify your character as follows:

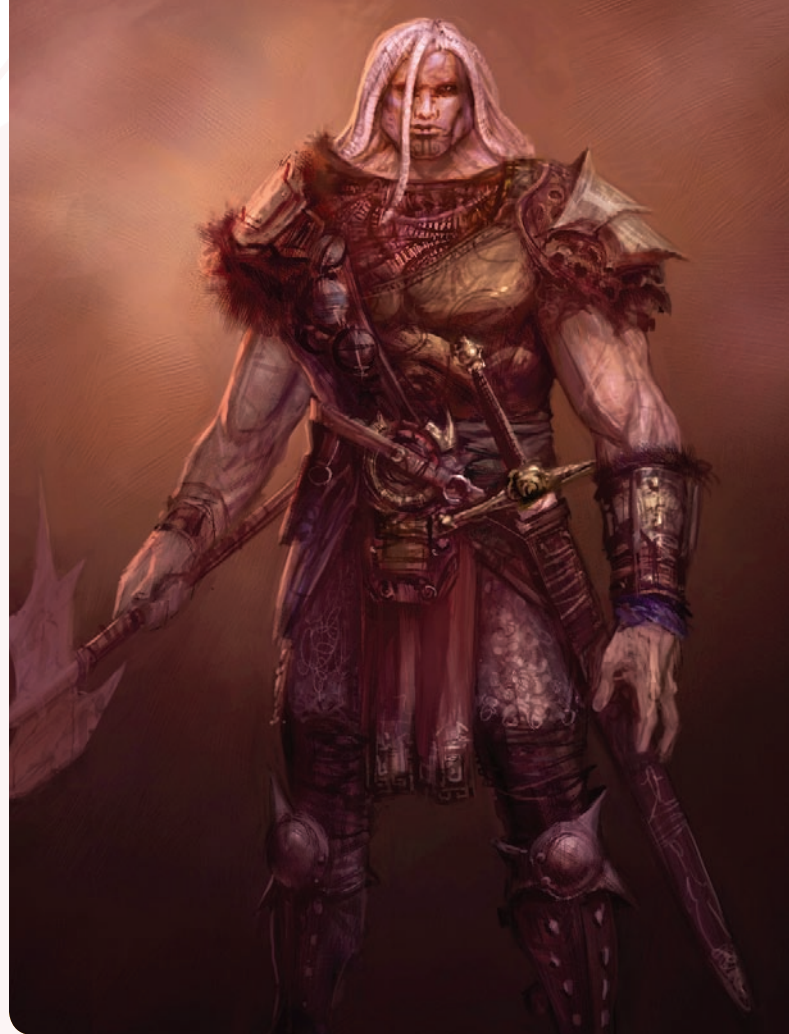
- Add 1 to your Willpower ability. An apostate needs strength of will to fend off possession.
- Pick one of the following ability focuses: **CUNNING (NATURAL LORE)** or **WILLPOWER (SELF-DISCIPLINE)**.
- Choose whether your character is a human or an elf.
- You can speak and read the Trade Tongue.
- Take the mage class.

Roll twice on the table and use the column that matches your chosen race (elf or human) for additional benefits. Roll 2d6 and add the results together. If you get the same result twice, re-roll until you get something different.

■ AVVAR ■

The Avvarian hillsmen, also known as Avvars, are a rugged human people who make their homes in the Frostback Mountains. In centuries past they were one of the many barbarian tribes that lived in and around the Fereldan region. When the Alamarri clans united 400 years ago under the first king of Ferelden, the Avvars refused to join them. The hillsmen were too independent, too proud, and too stubborn to pay homage to any king. Their continued raiding into the lowlands led to many long and bitter wars, but ultimately the Avvars alone could not stand up to the united forces of Ferelden. The hillsmen were driven back into their mountain homes, but no commander dared to fight them on their home ground. Since then there has been an uneasy peace between the Avvars and Ferelden.

Today the Avvarian hillsmen are largely isolated in the Frostbacks. They do trade with the dwarves and some Avvars descend to the lowlands to work as mercenaries or adventurers. Most people in Ferelden consider



AVVARIAN HILLSMAN

2D6 ROLL	BENEFIT
2	+1 DEXTERITY
3-4	FOCUS: COMMUNICATION (GAMBLING)
5	FOCUS: CONSTITUTION: (SWIMMING)
6	FOCUS: STRENGTH (INTIMIDATION)
7-8	+1 COMMUNICATION
9	FOCUS: STRENGTH (MIGHT)
10-11	FOCUS: CONSTITUTION (STAMINA)
12	+1 CONSTITUTION

the hillsmen uncivilized barbarians, while the Avvars think their old foes weak and corrupt. It is thus no great surprise that there are still sporadic raids from the Frostbacks, but the hillsmen have learned to strike quickly and retreat to their holds before they are counterattacked.

PLAYING AN AVVAR

If you choose to play an Avvarian hillsmen (or hillswoman), modify your character as follows:

- Add 1 to your Strength ability. Avvars must be strong to survive the mountain life.

- Pick one of the following ability focuses: **COMMUNICATION (ANIMAL HANDLING)** or **STRENGTH (CLIMBING)**.
- You can speak the Trade Tongue.
- Choose a class. You can play either a warrior or a rogue.

Roll twice on the following table for additional benefits. Roll 2d6 and add the dice together. If you get the same result twice, re-roll until you get something different.

CIRCLE MAGE

In ages past the use of magic was outlawed outside the Tevinter Imperium, and those who practiced it were persecuted and hunted. This only got worse with the rise of the Chantry, as the new religion spoke out against magic as corrupt and evil. Magic, of course, was also quite useful, particularly when fighting creatures like darkspawn. This led to a compromise in which mages could legally practice magic—but only under the watchful eye of the Chantry. Blood magic, the practice of the dreaded maleficar, was also strictly forbidden.

During the second Blight the mages proved their worth and helped save humanity. This allowed them to gain a measure of autonomy, and thus was born the first Circle of Magi. While there are still Chantry Templars

MAGE		
2D6 ROLL	ELF BENEFIT	HUMAN BENEFIT
2	+1 COMMUNICATION	+1 WILLPOWER
3-4	SPEAK ELVEN	FOCUS: WILLPOWER (SELF-DISCIPLINE)
5	FOCUS: CUNNING (HEALING)	FOCUS: COMMUNICATION (ETIQUETTE)
6	FOCUS: PERCEPTION (SEEING)	FOCUS: CUNNING (HERALDRY)
7-8	+1 CUNNING	+1 CUNNING
9	FOCUS: CUNNING (CULTURAL LORE)	FOCUS: CONSTITUTION (STAMINA)
10-11	+1 DEXTERITY	FOCUS: CUNNING (RELIGIOUS LORE)
12	FOCUS: DEXTERITY (BOWS)	+1 Constitution

stationed in every Circle tower, it is the mages who police those with magical power. Circle mages find people with magical talent and bring them to their towers for training and supervision, and to teach them to defend themselves against demonic possession. Practicing magic outside a Circle is a capital offense.

PLAYING A CIRCLE MAGE

If you choose to play a Circle mage, modify your character as follows:

- Add 1 to your Magic ability. This represents the training you have received from your Circle.
- Pick one of the following ability focuses: **CUNNING (ARCANE LORE)** or **CUNNING (HISTORICAL LORE)**.
- Choose whether your character is a human or an elf. Most Circle mages are human, but some elves choose to join to avoid becoming apostates.
- You can speak and read the Trade Tongue. You can read Ancient Tevene.
- Take the mage class.

Roll twice on the table and use the column that matches your chosen race (elf or human) for additional benefits. Roll 2d6 and add the results together. If you get the same result twice, re-roll until you get something different.

CITY ELF

Over two millennia ago the elves and dwarves were the powers of Thedas. The elves ruled above the earth and the dwarves below it. The elves spent centuries becoming master magicians, craftsmen, and artists, and it is said they were nearly immortal. When humans first arrived in Thedas, the elves gave them aid despite what they considered impatient and rude behavior on the human's part. The elves were shocked when dis-



CITY ELF	
2D6 ROLL	BENEFIT
2	+1 CUNNING
3-4	FOCUS: PERCEPTION (SEARCHING)
5	FOCUS: CUNNING (EVALUATION)
6	FOCUS: DEXTERITY (INITIATIVE)
7-8	+1 PERCEPTION
9	FOCUS: COMMUNICATION (DECEPTION)
10-11	FOCUS: DEXTERITY (BOWS)
12	+1 COMMUNICATION

eases carried by the humans began killing them. They were horrified when they discovered that just being near humans shortened their lifespan and made them mortal. They attempted to shut themselves away from the rest of Thedas, but the rising Tevinter Imperium attacked them with its legions and its blood magic. The elf kingdom of Arlathan fell and the survivors spent the next 500 years as slaves of the Imperium.

When freedom did come, it was all to brief. The new elf homeland, the Dales, tried to revive the lost culture of Arlathan. That included worship of the ancient elven pantheon and this the Chantry would not tolerate. It declared an Exalted March against the Dales, accusing the elves of blood magic and practicing other forbidden rites, and for a second time the elves lost their homeland. Some of the survivors became wanderers (see the Dalish Elf entry) but the rest were absorbed into the various human kingdoms. Here the so-called city elves still live as second class citizens, mostly working as servants and laborers. Few remember the culture of their heritage, fewer still can even speak elven any more, and almost none have a lifespan much longer than that of a human these days. They live in segregated sections of cities and towns known as alienages. Bitter and downtrodden, many city elves turn to crime. These rogues, all too common, only reinforce the prejudice most humans have towards city elves.

PLAYING A CITY ELF

If you choose to play a city elf, modify your character as follows:

- Add 1 to your Dexterity ability. The city elves retain their race's natural agility.
- Pick one of the following ability focuses: **DEXTERITY (STEALTH)** or **PERCEPTION (SEEING)**.
- You can speak and read the Trade Tongue.
- Choose a class. You can play either a warrior or a rogue.

Roll twice on the following table for additional benefits. Roll 2d6 and add the results together. If you get



the same result twice, re-roll until you get something different.

DALISH ELF

After 500 years of slavery, the elves won their freedom as part of the rebellion that broke the power of the Tevinter Imperium. While liberated humans and barbarians from the south took over former lands of the Imperium, the human leader Andraste gifted the elves a region of southern Orlais as a reward for their role in the rebellion. Here they established the Dales, a new elven homeland to replace the long-destroyed kingdom of Arlathan. Despite the centuries of slavery, the elves remembered much of their heritage and in the Dales their culture had a rebirth. As part of this they began to worship the ancient elven pantheon and this ultimately caused their downfall. The Chantry in the Orlesian Empire would not stand for such heresy and it declared an Exalted March against the Dales. A second elven homeland was destroyed and most of the survivors went to live in human lands and became the city elves.

The remaining leadership of the Dales would not bend a knee to the humans, however. They chose a life of

exile instead. These Dalish elves are descended from some of the oldest elven families and they retain a strong sense of duty to their people. They have taken it upon themselves to preserve elven culture and lore, so that when the day comes that the elves once again have a homeland they can teach the ancient ways to their city elf brethren. Until that time the Dalish elves wander in the ornately carved wagons they call aravel. Called landships by the humans, aravel are pulled by halla, a unique breed of white stag that originated in

DALISH ELF	
2D6 ROLL	BENEFIT
2	+1 COMMUNICATION
3-4	FOCUS: PERCEPTION (SEEING)
5	FOCUS: PERCEPTION (HEARING)
6	FOCUS: CUNNING (CULTURAL LORE)
7-8	+1 Dexterity
9	FOCUS: WILLPOWER (SELF-DISCIPLINE)
10-11	FOCUS: DEXTERITY (RIDING)
12	+1 PERCEPTION

long lost Arlathan. The Dalish elves travel in small family groups for the most part and do not stay in one place for long. Rumor has it that they have rediscovered the secrets of elven magic, but if that is true no human has seen proof of it.

PLAYING A DALISH ELF

If you choose to play a Dalish elf, modify your character as follows:

- Add 1 to your Willpower ability. The stubbornness of the Dalish elves is legendary.
- Pick one of the following ability focuses: DEXTERITY (BOWS) or WILLPOWER (COURAGE).
- You can speak and read the Trade Tongue. You can speak Elven.
- Choose a class. You can play either a warrior or a rogue.

Roll twice on the following table for additional benefits. Roll 2d6 and add the results together. If you get the same result twice, re-roll until you get something different.

FERELDAN FREEMAN

Ferelden, described in detail in the previous chapter, is a young nation that human barbarians founded 400 years ago. The Alamarri tribes had come to the region long before that, but they were so fractious that it took extraordinary events for them to come together to form Ferelden. Now it is a nation on the rise, hoping to build on its successes to become a great power.

Nobles rule Ferelden and the craftsmen and the priests have a powerful influence upon them. The bulk of the population, however, is made up of freemen. As their name indicates, they are not slaves or serfs but free men and women. They are soldiers, shopkeepers, laborers, farmers, entertainers, hunters, and so on. The freemen are not rich but they are proud and pragmatic. In Ferelden a freeman with ambition and ability can climb the social ladder and many do just that.

FERELDAN FREEMAN	
2D6 ROLL	BENEFIT
2	+1 COMMUNICATION
3-4	FOCUS: WILLPOWER (SELF-DISCIPLINE)
5	FOCUS: COMMUNICATION (ANIMAL HANDLING)
6	FOCUS: DEXTERITY (RIDING)
7-8	+1 WILLPOWER
9	FOCUS: STRENGTH (DRIVING)
10-11	FOCUS: CONSTITUTION (SWIMMING)
12	+1 STRENGTH



PLAYING A FERELDAN FREEMAN

If you choose to play a Fereldan freeman (or freewoman), modify your character as follows:

- Add 1 to your Constitution ability. The people of Ferelden descend from tough barbarian stock.
- Pick one of the following ability focuses: **CONSTITUTION (STAMINA)** or **WILLPOWER (COURAGE)**.
- You can speak and read the Trade Tongue, or as you call it, the King's Tongue.
- Choose a class. You can play either a warrior or a rogue.

Roll twice on the following table for additional benefits. Roll 2d6 and add the results together. If you get the same result twice, re-roll until you get something different.

SURFACE DWARF

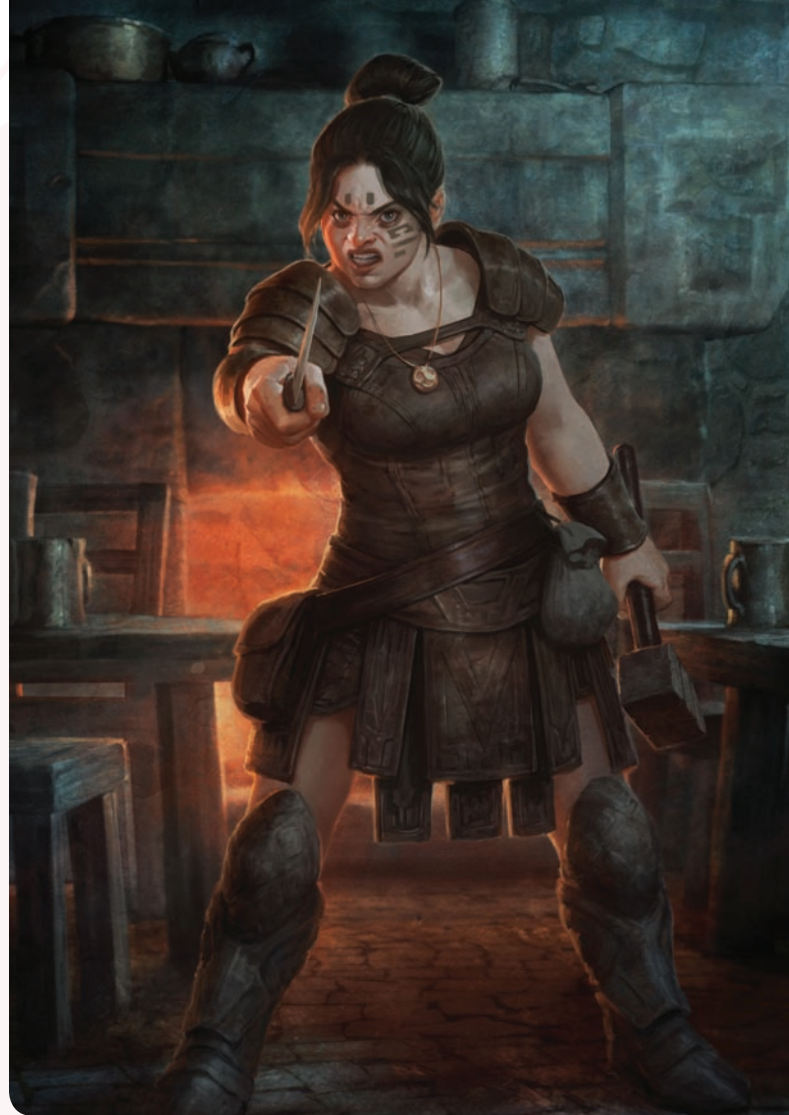
In ancient times the dwarves ruled a huge underground empire. They had many cities and settlements, all connected by Deep Roads that ran far beneath the surface. Today only two dwarf cities remain: Orzammar in the Frostback Mountains and far-distant Kal Sharok. Both are waging an endless war against the darkspawn that conquered the old dwarven lands. While the two fortress-cities remain strong, dwarven numbers have been dwindling slowly for the past thousand years. For the most part Orzammar and Kal Sharok look inward. Dwarven society is rigid and caste-based and politics is notably vicious.

One caste stands apart from the others though: the surface dwarves. They play a vital role but curiously other dwarves look down on them. Surface dwarves are largely merchants and middlemen, trading goods and raw materials to humans and elves. They provide ore, gems, finely-forged steel, expertly-crafted goods, and the precious mineral lyrium. Dwarf adventurers and wanderers also belong to the Surface Caste. In Orzammar and Kal Sharok dwarves of this caste rank below all others except the casteless and the criminals. It is ironic that the most famous dwarf adventurers in human lands have little standing and no prestige in their homelands.

PLAYING A SURFACE DWARF

If you choose to play a surface dwarf, modify your character as follows:

- Add 1 to your Constitution ability. Dwarves are famous for the toughness.
- Pick one of the following ability focuses: **CONSTITUTION (STAMINA)** or **COMMUNICATION (BARGAINING)**.



SURFACE DWARF	
2D6 ROLL	BENEFIT
2	+1 STRENGTH
3-4	FOCUS: STRENGTH (AXES)
5	FOCUS: STRENGTH (DRIVING)
6	FOCUS: COMMUNICATION (PERSUASION)
7-8	+1 COMMUNICATION
9	FOCUS: CUNNING (ENGINEERING)
10-11	FOCUS: WILLPOWER (COURAGE)
12	+1 WILLPOWER

- You can speak and read Dwarven and the Trade Tongue.
- Choose a class. You can play either a warrior or a rogue.

Roll twice on the following table for additional benefits. Roll 2d6 and add the results together. If you get the same result twice, re-roll until you get something different.

CLASSES

If background is where you came from, class is what you've become. Classes are both mythic archetypes and frameworks for your character's advancement. You have your choice of three: mage, rogue, and warrior. If you want a character that can cast spells, play a mage. If you want a character that is sneaky, play a rogue. If you want a character that can fight, play a warrior.

The classes are quite broad by design. A rogue could equally represent a thief with a penchant for burglary and a scout in a mercenary company. Your class helps define what your character can do, but it's up to you to interpret how those capabilities fit with your character concept.

EXAMPLE

Kate must now pick her class. After reading the descriptions, she goes with her first inclination and picks the rogue class. Since most city elves in Ferelden are poor, more than a few turn to crime. Kate decides that her character is going to buck that trend. She is going to take the rogue class, but use it to represent a sort of elven freedom fighter. Her character wants to liberate her people and give them a new homeland. Fighting the power this way will require stealth and that makes rogue a good match.

Your character starts at level 1, which means that he's a novice adventurer. As your character completes adventures and gains experience points, he'll go up in level and get access to new powers. This set provides information on class levels 1-5, while levels 6-20 are covered in Sets 2, 3, and 4.

CLASS DESCRIPTIONS

Each class determines certain key features of your character. A class description includes the following elements:

PRIMARY ABILITIES: A class has three primary abilities. These are the abilities most important to the class and the ones used most often.

SECONDARY ABILITIES: A class has five secondary abilities. These abilities are not as important as primary abilities but all can be useful in the right circumstances.

STARTING HEALTH: Health is a measure of your character's fitness and wellbeing. Class choice determines starting Health.

WEAPON GROUPS: Your class determines the weapons your character knows how to use. Weapons are divided into groups and this entry tells you which ones your character is trained in. For more information in weapons and weapon groups, see **CHAPTER 4: WEAPONS AND GEAR**.

CLASS POWERS: A class provides your character with a variety of special powers, such as ability focuses and talents. These powers are listed out by level in each class description.

GAINING LEVELS

Your character gains experience points by overcoming challenges, surviving adventures, besting foes, and achieving goals. At the end of each adventure, your GM will award a certain number of experience points (abbreviated XP), which you need to track on your character sheet. The experience points required to attain each level are summarized on the accompanying table. When your experience point total is high enough, your character gains a level. When this occurs, four things happen immediately:

- Your character's Health increases by 1d6 + Constitution.
- You may increase a single one of your character's abilities by 1. If you gained an even numbered level, you must increase a primary ability. If you gained an odd numbered level, you must increase a secondary ability.
- You can pick one new ability focus. If you gained an even numbered level, you must choose a focus from one of your primary abilities. If you gained an odd numbered level, you must choose a focus from one of your secondary abilities.
- You gain the class powers for your new level. You can find them in the class description.

EXAMPLE

At the end of her most recent adventure, Kate's character receives enough experience points to make it to level 2. First, she rolls to add to her Health. She gets a 4, subtracts 1 for her poor Constitution, and ends up gaining 3 Health. Second, she adds 1 to her Dexterity, making it 5. She had her choice of Communication, Dexterity, or Perception (the rogue's primary abilities) and decided pumping her Dexterity was the best option at this level. Third, she takes **COMMUNICATION (INVESTIGATION)** as a new ability focus. She could have chosen any focus from Communication, Dexterity, or Perception. Lastly, she gains a stunt bonus as her class power for becoming a level 2 rogue.

The GM hands out XP based on how the PCs handled themselves in the encounters of the adventure. The rules for experience points are in *the Game Master's Guide*.

MAGE

There is magic in all living things. While every elf, dwarf, human, animal, and plant is permeated with magic, only a rare few beings can manipulate it. The mage class represents these users of magic. They have been gifted (or cursed, depending on your point of view) with the ability to absorb mana, the life force of living beings, and use it cast magical spells. This sets them apart from normal people. In some times and places, mages have been honored for their power and wisdom. In others they have been feared and hunted, especially once the dangers of demonic possession were understood. Blood magic, as practiced by the mages of Tevinter and the maleficar, has also made mages widely feared.

The mage class represents users of magic in Thedas, most commonly from the Circle of Magi but sometimes the renegade apostates. A mage is capable of amazing feats, but must be wary of demonic attack when using powerful magic. The very gift that allows mages to use magic also makes them vulnerable to possession.

As a mage you will be a master of arcane powers. You should stay away from melee combat (let warriors handle that) and use your spells to help your allies and harm your enemies. Mages generally don't wear armor, so your Defense will be low. You also have limited access to weaponry. Your access to spells makes up for these limitations, though. You get access to many different spells; a mage who masters their use is a powerful character.

While mages only start with three spells, they gain more over time. These ever-increasing options require more decision making than other classes during encounters. If you've never played an RPG before, you might want to consider that before choosing this class. Whatever your experience, you'll want to read CHAPTER 5: MAGIC to learn more about the rules and terms used in spell casting.

PRIMARY ABILITIES

CUNNING, MAGIC, AND WILLPOWER.

SECONDARY ABILITIES

COMMUNICATION, CONSTITUTION, DEXTERITY, PERCEPTION, AND STRENGTH.

STARTING HEALTH

20 + CONSTITUTION + 1D6.

WEAPON GROUPS

BRAWLING AND STAVES.



CLASS POWERS

Mages gain the following powers at the specified level.

LEVEL 1

ARCANE LANCE: Mages learn to focus magical power through a staff or wand. If you are holding a quarterstaff or a wand, you can make a special ranged attack that damages foes with a lance of magical energy. This is resolved like a normal ranged attack (so stunts are possible), but the attack roll is a **MAGIC (ARCANE LANCE)** test. An arcane lance has a range of **16 YARDS** and inflicts **1D6 + MAGIC** damage. It requires no mana points to make this attack.

MAGIC TRAINING: This is the most important of the mage's powers. It allows a mage to cast the spells that are the hallmark of the class. Magic training gives you three spells to start with, and you can gain more through talents and class powers. See CHAPTER 5: MAGIC for more information about choosing and casting spells.

MANA POINTS: You use mana to power your spells. You start with a number of mana points equal to **10 + MAGIC + 1D6** and you gain **MAGIC + 1D6** more whenever you gain a new level. You must keep track of your current mana points; this is a measure of how much magical power is at your command at any given time. You spend mana points when you cast spells; you can regain them through rest and meditation. See CHAPTER 5: MAGIC for details.

STARTING TALENT: You become a novice in one of the following talents: Chirurgy, Linguistics, or Lore. See CHAPTER 3: FOCUSES AND TALENTS for more information.

LEVEL 2

NEW SPELL: You gain one new spell.

LEVEL 3

NEW TALENT: You become a novice in a new talent or gain a degree in a talent you already have.

LEVEL 4

NEW SPELL: You gain one new spell.

SPELL LANCE: You can cast a spell after hitting a foe with an arcane lance. This is a stunt that costs 3 stunt points, and the spell you cast cannot have a mana point cost greater than 3. A casting roll is required as usual. For more information about stunts, see CHAPTER 6: PLAYING THE GAME.

LEVEL 5

NEW TALENT: You become a novice in a new talent or gain a degree in a talent you already have.

ROGUE

"If it can go wrong, it will. That's why you always need to have an escape route ready, whether you're burgling a house or fighting in battle. And don't be afraid to run when you're in a bad spot. You want to control the situation, not the other way round. If you duel a knight, you're fighting on his terms. Let him huff and puff in his heavy armor while you fill him full of arrows. That's how you stay alive."

- Galen the Swift, Rogue

The rogue class represents the classic trickster. You can use this class to represent a thief, scoundrel, or conman, or a scout, expert, or spy. While a warrior gets by on brute strength and a mage on arcane power, a rogue relies on quickness and cleverness. Whether engaging in witty repartee or slipping a dagger between an enemy's ribs, a rogue must be artful to win the day.

As a rogue you are the eyes and ears of your adventuring group. You are excellent at ranged combat and can launch devastating melee attacks with your backstab ability. You are not, however, a true frontline fighter. Your Defense will be good due to your Dexterity, but your light armor means you can't absorb a lot of damage. Let the warriors go toe to toe with the enemy while you use stealth and surprise to keep them off balance.

The rogue is the most open-ended of the classes. If you aren't sure where you want to go with your character, rogue is a good choice, as the class provides the flexibility to develop in many directions.

PRIMARY ABILITIES

COMMUNICATION, DEXTERITY, AND PERCEPTION.

SECONDARY ABILITIES

CONSTITUTION, CUNNING, MAGIC, STRENGTH, AND WILLPOWER.

STARTING HEALTH

25 + CONSTITUTION + 1d6.

WEAPON GROUPS

BOWS, BRAWLING, LIGHT BLADES, STAVES.



CLASS POWERS

Rogues gain the following powers at the specified level.

LEVEL 1

BACKSTAB: You can inflict extra damage with a melee attack if you can strike an opponent from an unexpected direction. You must approach your opponent with a move action and win an opposed test of your **DEXTERITY (STEALTH)** vs. your target's **PERCEPTION (SEEING)**. If you win the test, you can use your major action this round to backstab him. This is a melee attack with a **+2 BONUS** to the attack roll that inflicts **+1d6 EXTRA DAMAGE**. You cannot backstab an enemy that you begin your turn adjacent to (but see the Bluff power at level 4).

ROGUE'S ARMOR: You are at home in leather armor. You can ignore the Armor Penalty of leather armor altogether. It affects neither your Speed nor your Dexterity.

STARTING TALENTS: You become a novice in one of the following talents: Contacts, Scouting, or Thievery. See CHAPTER 3: FOCUSES AND TALENTS for more information.

LEVEL 2

STUNT BONUS: You become more adept at finding the weak spots in your opponents' armor. You can perform the Pierce Armor stunt for 1 SP instead of the usual 2.

LEVEL 3

NEW TALENT: You become a novice in a new talent or gain a degree in a talent you already have.

LEVEL 4

BLUFF: You can try to backstab an opponent that you begin your turn adjacent to. You must first use a minor action to try to deceive him. This is an opposed test of your **COMMUNICATION (DECEPTION)** vs. your opponent's **WILLPOWER (SELF-DISCIPLINE)**. If you win, you have wrong-footed your opponent and can backstab him. As usual with a backstab, you make a melee attack with a **+2 bonus** and inflict **+1d6 extra damage** if you hit.

LEVEL 5

NEW TALENT: You become a novice in a new talent or gain a degree in a talent you already have.

"When the chaos of battle begins, you must keep your wits. If you panic, you'll die with a spear in the back. And don't go charging off on your own like a wild Avvar. The enemy will surround you and bring you down. No, it's discipline and teamwork that win battles. You must fight together or you will die alone."

- Torr of House Strakan, Warrior

The warrior is the classic fighting man. You can use this class to represent any kind martial character. Your character could be an ex-soldier, a caravan guard, a mercenary, a militiaman, or a former blacksmith turned adventurer. A warrior may fight for honor, revenge, justice, money, or a better tomorrow. Some members of the warrior class have received formal training and others fight by instinct; all can handle themselves in a fight.

As a warrior you'll usually find yourself in the thick of combat. You have access to heavier armor and more weapons than members of any other class, and you can dish out and take a lot of damage. It is often up to you to engage the hardest-hitting enemies, so the rogues and mages of the group have the chance to use their abilities.

If you've never played a tabletop RPG before, the warrior is a good class to start with. Your powers are straightforward and you have plenty to do in any combat encounter.

PRIMARY ABILITIES

CONSTITUTION, DEXTERITY, AND STRENGTH

SECONDARY ABILITIES

COMMUNICATION, CUNNING, MAGIC, PERCEPTION, AND WILLPOWER

STARTING HEALTH

30 + CONSTITUTION + 1D6

WEAPON GROUPS

BRAWLING, PLUS ANY THREE OF THE FOLLOWING: AXES, BLUDGEONS, BOWS, HEAVY BLADES, LIGHT BLADES, SPEARS, OR STAVES.

CLASS POWERS

Warriors gain the following powers at the specified level.

LEVEL 1

STARTING TALENTS: You become a novice in two of the following talents: Archery Style, Dual Weapon Style, Single Weapon Style, Throwing Weapon Style, Two-Hander Style, or Weapon and Shield Style. You also start as a novice in Armor Training.

LEVEL 2

NEW ABILITY FOCUS: You now gain one of the following ability focuses: CUNNING (MILITARY LORE), DEXTERITY (RIDING), or STRENGTH (CLIMBING).

LEVEL 3

NEW TALENT: You become a novice in a new talent or gain a degree in a talent you already have.

LEVEL 4

NEW WEAPON GROUP: You learn a new weapon group of your choice.

STUNT BONUS: You can strike so fast in combat that your weapons are a blur. You can perform the Dual Strike stunt for 3 stunt points instead of the usual 4.

LEVEL 5

NEW TALENT: You become a novice in a new talent or gain a degree in a talent you already have.





EQUIPMENT

Player characters do not start their adventures with much to their names. In play your character will have a chance to get better equipment but must start with the basics. Think of better gear as something to aspire to.

Characters begin play with the following:

- A backpack.
- Traveler's garb.
- A waterskin.
- If you are a mage, you get one weapon and a wand (for your arcane lance).
- If you are a rogue, you get light leather armor and two weapons.
- If you are a warrior, you get heavy leather armor and three weapons.
- If you choose a bow or crossbow, you get a quiver and 20 arrows or bolts.
- If you have the Weapon and Shield talent, you get a medium shield.

Make sure to pick weapons from weapon groups your character knows. Otherwise, you'll suffer penalties when you wield them, and there will be little point in carrying the weapons around. Also remember that some weapons have a minimum Strength requirement, so be sure your character is strong enough before picking something like a two-handed sword. You'll also want to write down your armor's Armor Rating on your character record sheet. This is a measure of the armor's protection and you'll need to know that during combat.

Your character also gets **50 + 3D6 SILVER PIECES** to buy additional gear. You'll find a complete list of available items in **CHAPTER 4: WEAPONS AND GEAR**.

EXAMPLE

Kate is ready to outfit her rogue. She writes on her character sheet that she has a backpack, traveler's garb, and a waterskin. As a rogue, she starts with light leather armor and two weapons. She can choose anything from the rogue's weapon groups: Bows, Brawling, Light Blades, Staves. She decides to take a short bow and a short sword, so she can make both ranged and melee attacks. Since she took a bow, she also gets a quiver and 20 arrows. She then rolls 3d6 and gets 12. That means she starts with 62 silver (50 + 12). She spends 15 of that on a light shield for when things get up close and personal. She also spends 2 silver on 20 yards of rope. That leaves her with 45 silver as the campaign begins, so she has some resources for food, lodging, bribes, etc.

DEFENSE AND SPEED

There are two final numbers you need to calculate for your character: **DEFENSE** and **SPEED**.

DEFENSE measures how hard it is to hit your character in combat. The higher the Defense, the better. You calculate Defense as follows:

$$\text{DEFENSE} = 10 + \text{DEXTERITY} + \text{SHIELD BONUS (IF APPLICABLE)}$$

Shield bonuses are explained in **CHAPTER 4: WEAPONS AND GEAR**. For the moment, you just need to know that light shields have a +1 bonus and mediums shield a +2 bonus.

EXAMPLE

Kate now calculates her rogue's Defense. With her Dexterity of 4, her Defense is 14 (10 + 4). If she equips her light shield, it rises to 15.

SPEED measures gait and quickness of foot. Basically, your character can move up to a number of yards equal to Speed when taking a move action. This is explained in greater detail in **CHAPTER 6: PLAYING THE GAME**. You calculate Speed as follows:

$$\text{DWARF SPEED} = 8 + \text{DEXTERITY} - \text{ARMOR PENALTY (IF APPLICABLE)}$$

$$\text{ELF SPEED} = 12 + \text{DEXTERITY} - \text{ARMOR PENALTY (IF APPLICABLE)}$$

$$\text{HUMAN SPEED} = 10 + \text{DEXTERITY} - \text{ARMOR PENALTY (IF APPLICABLE)}$$

Most suits of armor have a penalty that represents their weight and bulk; this naturally slows characters down some. You can learn more about this in **CHAPTER 4: WEAPONS AND GEAR**. For the moment, you just need to know that light leather armor has no penalty and heavy leather armor has a -1 penalty.

EXAMPLE

Kate is ready to calculate her rogue's speed. Since her character is an elf, she takes a base of 12 and adds her Dexterity of 4 for a total Speed of 16 (12 + 4 = 16). Her light leather armor has no armor penalty, so Speed 16 it is. Kate's rogue is quite light in the feet.

NAMES

What is a character without a name? Although this step is towards the end of the character creation process, it should not be an afterthought. The right name can be that little something that sums up who the character

is or wants to be. This section contains some naming guidelines for different cultures in *Dragon Age* and some example names for both sexes. Do feel free to make up your own names in the same style, but try to avoid silly name syndrome (Orf the Dwarf, for example). This is a dark fantasy game after all.

AVVARIAN NAMES

The hillsmen are divided into clans, each is which is centered on a settlement called a hold. The settlement and the clan are so intertwined that they share the same name, so the seat of Clan Craghold is Craghold. Avvar names have three parts: first name, byname, and clan name. The clans are matrilineal (as they say, one's mother is obvious to all), so the byname indicates an Avvar's mother by use of "An" (daughter of) or "Ar" (son of) in front of the mother's name. This is followed by "O" and then the clan name. Here's a complete example of an Avvar name: Arcill Ar Dubne O Wyrms-hold. So Arcill is the son of Dunbe and they belong to the Clan Wyrms-hold.

SAMPLE FEMALE NAMES: Annis, Cathal, Deirde, Ete, Bethac, Grissall, Katrin, Muire, Ninne, Swannac.

SAMPLE MALE NAMES: Arcill, Colban, Domnall, Dubne, Garnait, Martain, Nechtan, Padraig, Sithig, Tralin.

SAMPLE CLAN NAMES: Bearhold, Craghold, Falconhold, Frosthold, Helmhold, Peakhold, Redhold, Spearhold, Stormhold, Wyrms-hold.

DWARVEN NAMES

Dwarven society is made up of houses, each of which comprises a group of families. A dwarf has a given name and a house name. The house name is sometimes used as a last name and sometimes as part of a title. A dwarf might call himself Bhelen Aeducan or Bhelen of House Aeducan, for example, depending on the situation.

SAMPLE FEMALE NAMES: Althild, Branka, Ethelwid, Hildred, Jarvia, Kedwalla, Milburga, Orta, Peada, Sigge.

SAMPLE MALE NAMES: Eadrek, Gorim, Kerdik, Kynewulf, Legnar, Oerik, Oswulf, Roshek, Vengest, Witred.

SAMPLE HOUSE NAMES: Azagale, Drizcole, Dunnharg, Griskin, Korkill, Kitrik, Moratin, Nevvin, Strakan, Tranador.

ELVEN NAMES

City elves follow the Fereldan standard and have but one name. Dalish elves generally only identify themselves by first name as well, but they also have a clan name that is used in formal situations. Dalish clan names generally correspond to the noble houses of the Dales that they descend from.

SAMPLE FEMALE NAMES: Adanna, Ashalle, Desta, Elora, Hanan, Maram, Lanaya, Ranalle, Shinasha, Unathe.

SAMPLE MALE NAMES: Athras, Falos, Harel, Lindel, Masarian, Nethras, Pellian, Ralath, Sarel, Zathrian.

SAMPLE DALISH CLAN NAMES: Alvar, Brightmore, Brunwyn, Ellwood, Fadrick, Goldhawk, Litwyn, Redway, Winbow, Yonwyn.

FERELDAN NAMES

Most people in Ferelden have only one name. They may identify themselves by trade (Jannelle the Baker) or by their place of origins (Darrahn of Highever) if needed. True last names are reserved for the nobility.

SAMPLE FEMALE NAMES: Afton, Demelza, Edlyn, Kelsie, Locke, Radella, Seldon, Sherey, Tayte, Ulla.

SAMPLE MALE NAMES: Ackley, Blaen, Calder, Elden, Garrick, Landon, Marden, Oswin, Rylan, Tranter.

EXAMPLE

Kate's character is a city elf and they typically have but one name. Though some have elven names, others try to fit in by giving their children more common Fereldan names. Kate decides her character was named Locke, but that a cruel human mistress took to calling her Lack instead.

GOALS AND TIES

Now your character is almost ready to go. Before you jump into your first adventure, though, take a few minutes to think about your character's goals and what ties you might have to other characters in the group. Even if you've made your character on your own, it's a good idea to take these last steps together. Setting up goals and ties as a group allows you to riff off each other and come up with ideas that are complementary.

GOALS

Your character can have any number of goals, but try to come up with at least three. Goals usually have something to do with why your character became an adventurer in the first place. It's not a common calling after all, and certainly not a safe one. These driving forces often translate into one or more goals.

When making your list, try to come up with a mix of short- and long-term goals. Short-term goals are things you want to focus on now, and long-term goals are of a size and scope that may require years or even decades of struggle. A good GM will take your goals into account when running the game, and the more info the GM has to work with, the better.

So what makes a good goal? Two things. First, a good goal should help define your character by making explicit what is important to him. Second, it should provide story hooks that other players and the GM can grab and use in play.

EXAMPLE

Kate is nearly finished with Locke. At the first session of the campaign, she gets together with her group to finalize their characters. Kate decides that a good short-term goal is that Locke wants to find her missing brother. He left the alienage on a mysterious mission and never returned. Locke's next goal is to learn the elven language. Few city elves speak it anymore and she wants to reconnect with her heritage. Lastly, she picks a long-term goal of destroying the alienages and finding a new homeland for her people. She may not see this in her lifetime but she will strive to make it a reality.

TIES

The classic RPG set-up has the group meeting up in a tavern and embarking on a series of death-defying quests together despite being virtual strangers. That sort of approach can work if you are developing the characters as the campaign goes on. The group's cohesion will be stronger, however, if the characters start with some ties. It doesn't mean that all the characters need to know each other before play begins, but they should have some connections. Characters might have grown up in the same village, served in the same military unit, or even been romantic rivals. Or maybe they are distant cousins, chased by a shared enemy, or in debt to the same underworld figure.

You should try to come up with at least one tie for each other player character, even if it's a tenuous one. The group bond will grow over time but it's a good idea to plant the seed early so it can grow.

EXAMPLE

The other players in Kate's group are Gloria, who is playing a Ferelden warrior named Ulla, and Keegan, who is playing a circle mage named Oswald. Gloria was intrigued by Locke's goal to find her missing brother. She decides that Ulla's best friend also left home and never returned. Ulla found out that Locke's brother was on the same journey and tracked down Locke to see if she knew any more. Keegan decides that Oswald has but slight connections with the other characters. Locke was briefly a servant in his Circle tower (perhaps they share a secret from this time?) and Ulla served as bodyguard for some of his Circle's mages. With that finished, they are ready to play!

CHAPTER THREE



FOCUSES AND TALENTS

Focuses and talents are ways to make your character more unique. Your character starts with some of each through the process of character creation, and will earn more by gaining levels in play. Ability focuses are usually gained through background, class, and talents. Talents are usually gained through class alone. There are magic items, however, that can grant both focuses and talents.

Focuses and talents provide game system benefits, but they also give you convenient back-story hooks. Let's say you take the Horsemanship talent. Well, where did your character learn to ride horses? Perhaps an uncle passed on his expertise or maybe it was part of militia training. You can come up with anything you like, but answering the question tells you more about your character.

ABILITY FOCUSES

As noted in CHAPTER 2: CHARACTER CREATION, a focus is an area of expertise within a larger ability. A character with Communication 3 and the Deception focus is a good communicator in general, but excels at fooling others. If you have a focus, you get a +2 bonus when making an ability test related to it. The GM will usually let you know what focus applies to each test, but if it isn't clear don't be afraid to ask if a focus applies. You

can learn more about ability tests and how focuses apply in CHAPTER 6: PLAYING THE GAME.

Descriptions of the ability focuses follow. The GM has the final call on whether a focus applies to a given test.

COMMUNICATION FOCUSES

ANIMAL HANDLING: Interacting with and caring for animals.

BARGAINING: Negotiating with others and making deals.

DECEPTION: Lying to and tricking those less mentally adept than you.

DISGUISE: Making yourself look like someone else or a different class of person.

ETIQUETTE: Knowing the social niceties of various cultures.

GAMBLING: Playing games of chance and profiting from them.

INVESTIGATION: Interviewing people for information and finding and deciphering clues.

LEADERSHIP: Guiding, directing, and inspiring others.

PERFORMANCE: Entertaining an audience with an artistic talent.

PERSUASION: Convincing others to agree with you.

SEDUCTION: Making winning moves in the game of love.



CONSTITUTION FOCUSES

DRINKING: Consuming large quantities of alcohol and avoiding the aftereffects.

ROWING: Propelling a vessel with oars.

RUNNING: Moving quickly in both short sprints and long distance hauls.

STAMINA: Enduring fatigue, disease, and privation.

SWIMMING: Moving through the water and staying afloat.

CUNNING FOCUSES

ARCANE LORE: Knowing about magic, its traditions, and the Fade.

CARTOGRAPHY: Making and reading maps.

CULTURAL LORE: Knowing the traditions and beliefs of various cultures.

ENGINEERING: Knowing the practicalities of construction, building, and invention.

EVALUATION: Determining the value of goods and *objets d'art*.

HEALING: Aiding the wounded and sick.

HERALDRY: Knowing coats of arms and royal families.

HISTORICAL LORE: Knowing important events and personalities from the past.

MILITARY LORE: Knowing strategy, tactics, and famous applications thereof.

MUSICAL LORE: Knowing musical traditions and songs.

NATURAL LORE: Knowing the flora and fauna of Thedas.

NAVIGATION: Planning and following a route from one place to another.

RESEARCH: Making a systematic investigation, usually using records, archives, and books.

RELIGIOUS LORE: Knowing religious traditions and practices, particularly those of the Chantry.

WRITING: Expressing yourself with the written word.

DEXTERITY FOCUSES

ACROBATICS: Executing gymnastic, balancing, and tumbling maneuvers.

BOWS: Fighting with weapons from the Bows Group. See CHAPTER 4: WEAPONS AND GEAR.

BRAWLING: Fighting with weapons from the Brawling Group. See CHAPTER 4: WEAPONS AND GEAR.

CALLIGRAPHY: Writing with artful penmanship.

INITIATIVE: Acting quickly in tense situations.

LEGERDEMAIN: Using sleight of hand to trick others, hide things, and pick pockets.

LIGHT BLADES: Fighting with weapons from the Light Blades Group. See CHAPTER 4: WEAPONS AND GEAR.

LOCK PICKING: Opening locks without using keys.

RIDING: Directing a mount such as a horse or pony.

STAVES: Fighting with weapons from the Staves Group. See CHAPTER 4: WEAPONS AND GEAR.

STEALTH: Sneaking about quietly and out of sight.

TRAPS: Detecting and disarming traps and other mechanical devices.

MAGIC FOCUSES

ARCANE LANCE: Using the mage's class power of the same name. See CHAPTER 2: CHARACTER CREATION.

CREATION: Understanding the secrets of the Creation school of magic. See CHAPTER 5: MAGIC.

ENTROPY: Understanding the secrets of the Entropy school of magic. See CHAPTER 5: MAGIC.

PRIMAL: Understanding the secrets of the Primal school of magic. See CHAPTER 5: MAGIC.

SPIRIT: Understanding the secrets of the Spirit school of magic. See CHAPTER 5: MAGIC.

PERCEPTION FOCUSES

EMPATHY: Discerning the feelings and emotions of others.

HEARING: Using your auditory sense.

SEARCHING: Finding things that are hidden or obscured.

SEEING: Using your visual sense.

SMELLING: Using your olfactory sense.

TRACKING: Following tracks and other signs of passage.

STRENGTH FOCUSES

AXES: Fighting with weapons from the Axes Group. See CHAPTER 4: WEAPONS AND GEAR.

BLUDGEONS: Fighting with weapons from the Bludgeons Group. See CHAPTER 4: WEAPONS AND GEAR.

- CLIMBING:** Scaling walls and other vertical obstacles.
- DRIVING:** Directing and guiding carts, carriages, and other wheeled vehicles.
- HEAVY BLADES:** Fighting with weapons from the Heavy Blades Group. See CHAPTER 4: WEAPONS AND GEAR.
- INTIMIDATION:** Overawing others with physical presence and threats.
- JUMPING:** Springing and leaping.
- MIGHT:** Performing feats of raw power, such as lifting or holding up heavy objects.
- SPEARS:** Fighting with weapons from the Spears Group. See CHAPTER 4: WEAPONS AND GEAR.

WILLPOWER FOCUSES

- COURAGE:** Overcoming fear in the face of adversity.
- FAITH:** Deriving inner strength through spiritual or moral belief.
- MORALE:** Maintaining good spirits and confidence in yourself or your group. NPCs tend to use this focus more than Player Characters.
- SELF-DISCIPLINE:** Focusing your mental energy or controlling your impulses and emotions.

TALENTS

Your character has areas of natural aptitude and/or special training called talents. They provide a way to customize your character that goes beyond background and class. Choosing talents is thus an important part of developing your character.

Each talent is divided into two degrees: novice and journeyman, each of which provides a game system benefit. You have to be a novice in a talent before you can become a journeyman.

You gain new talents and new degrees through your class. You normally get a new talent or degree when you gain an odd-numbered level (3, 5, etc.). Your class also limits the talents you have access to. Each talent lists the classes it is available to; you cannot take talents that are not open to your class. Most talents also

have requirements, like specific focuses or weapon groups. If you don't have the requirement, you cannot take the talent.

When talents are listed for a character, the standard format is talent first, followed by the degree achieved in parentheses. Command (Journeyman), for example, or Music (Novice).

The rest of this chapter is a catalog of the talents available. They use the following format.

TALENT NAME

CLASSES: Classes that can take this talent are listed here.

REQUIREMENT: You cannot take this talent unless you have the specified requirement(s).

A short description of the talent.

NOVICE: This describes the benefit gained when you become a novice.

JOURNEYMAN: This describes the benefit gained when you become a journeyman.

ANIMAL TRAINING

CLASSES: Mage, Rogue, and Warrior.

REQUIREMENT: None.

You know how to train animals. Fereldans commonly train dogs, while Avvarian hillsmen prefer falcons and other birds of prey.

NOVICE: You know the basics of dealing with animals. With a week of training, you can teach an animal to follow a simple one-word command like "heel," "follow," or "attack." You can teach a single animal a number of commands equal to your Communication.

JOURNEYMAN: You can train animals to follow more complex commands, like "guard this place" or "return to me when strangers approach." Teaching a complex command takes two weeks of training and the total number of commands a single animal can learn is equal to your Communication + 2.

ARMOR TRAINING

CLASSES: Warrior.

REQUIREMENT: None.

You have learned to fight while wearing armor. You only take the armor's penalty to your Speed, while those without this talent take it to both Speed and Dexterity. For more about armor, see CHAPTER 4: WEAPONS AND GEAR.

NOVICE: You can wear leather and mail armor without suffering a penalty to Dexterity.

JOURNEYMAN: You can wear plate armor without suffering a penalty to Dexterity.

TALENTS

ANIMAL TRAINING	MUSIC
ARCHERY STYLE	PRIMAL MAGIC
ARMOR TRAINING	SCOUTING
CHIRURGY	SINGLE WEAPON STYLE
COMMAND	SPIRIT MAGIC
CONTACTS	THIEVERY
CREATION MAGIC	THROWN WEAPON
DUAL WEAPON STYLE	STYLE
ENTROPY MAGIC	TWO-HANDER STYLE
HORSEMANSHIP	UNARMED STYLE
LINGUISTICS	WEAPON AND SHIELD
LORE	STYLE



ARCHERY STYLE

CLASSES: Rogue and Warrior.

REQUIREMENT: You must be trained in the Bows Group.

You are experienced with bows and crossbows.

NOVICE: Your aim is true. When you take the aim action while using a bow or crossbow, you gain a +2 bonus on your attack roll instead of the usual +1.

JOURNEYMAN: Due to long hours of practice, you can reload faster than common bowmen. You can reload a bow as a free action and a crossbow as a minor action.

CHIRURGY

CLASSES: Mage, Rogue, and Warrior.

REQUIREMENT: You must have the CUNNING (HEALING) focus.

You can treat wounds and illnesses. For more on the Heal action and Healing, see pages 59 and 62.

NOVICE: You have trained in the art of chirurgy and your aid is swift and sure. Heal is a minor action for you.

JOURNEYMAN: You have the hands of a healer. When you use the heal action, your ally gets back an amount of Health equal to double the Dragon Die + Cunning.

COMMAND

CLASSES: Mage and Warrior.

REQUIREMENT: You must have Communication 2 or higher.

You are a natural leader.

NOVICE: Your presence inspires your allies. If you take a major action to make a heroic gesture (raise your sword, shout a battle cry, wave a flag, etc.), your allies gain a +1 bonus to WILLPOWER (COURAGE) tests for the rest of the encounter.

JOURNEYMAN: Your allies follow your lead. Any NPCs that you lead gain a +1 bonus when rolling for initiative.

CONTACTS

CLASSES: Mage, Rogue, and Warrior.

REQUIREMENT: You must have Communication 1 or higher.

You know many people, sometimes in the unlikeliest of places.

NOVICE: You can attempt to make a contact out of a NPC with a successful COMMUNICATION (PERSUASION) test. The GM will set the TN based on the likelihood of you knowing the NPC or having mutual friends. The more distant the NPC's homeland or social class from yours, the more difficult the test will be. A contact will be friendly to you, but won't go out of the way to help you without additional motivation. You can't make a contact out of a NPC who already dislikes you or is an enemy.

JOURNEYMAN: Once you've established a contact, you can try to get a favor with another successful COMMUNICATION (PERSUASION) test. The TN is based on the nature of the favor and whether it puts the contact in any danger.

CREATION MAGIC

CLASSES: Mage.

REQUIREMENT: You must have the MAGIC (CREATION) focus.

You have delved into the secrets of Creation magic.

NOVICE: You can summon a light wisp without spending mana points. The wisp hovers near your shoulder until dismissed, illuminating a 10-yard radius around you with the brightness of a lantern. Summoning and dismissing the light wisp are free actions.

JOURNEYMAN: Your knowledge of Creation magic is deep. When you cast a Creation spell, its cost in mana points is reduced by 1, to a minimum of 1. You also gain one new Creation spell.

DUAL WEAPON STYLE

CLASSES: Rogue and Warrior.

REQUIREMENT: You must have Dexterity 2 or higher.

You can fight with a weapon in your main hand and another in your off hand. Neither can be a two-handed weapon.

NOVICE: Wielding two weapons can aid you in attack or defense. If you take the activate action, you can gain either a +1 bonus on your melee attack rolls or a +1 Defense bonus vs. melee attacks until the end of the encounter. You can switch the bonus you are taking with another activate action.

JOURNEYMAN: Your weapons are a blur in combat. You can perform the Lightning Attack stunt for 2 SP instead of the usual 3 but the second attack must come from the weapon in your off hand.

ENTROPY MAGIC

CLASSES: Mage.

REQUIREMENT: You must have the **MAGIC (ENTROPY)** focus.

You have delved into the secrets of Entropy magic.

NOVICE: You gain deathstight. When someone you can see drops to 0 Health, you can tell how many rounds it will take him to die.

JOURNEYMAN: Your knowledge of Entropy magic is deep. When you cast an Entropy spell, its cost in mana points is reduced by 1, to a minimum of 1. You also gain one new Entropy spell.

HORSEMANSHIP

CLASSES: Mage, Rogue, and Warrior.

REQUIREMENT: You must have the **DEXTERITY (RIDING)** focus.

You are a skilled rider and can handle horses and other beasts of burden with ease.

NOVICE: You can jump into the saddle quickly. Mounting a steed is a free action for you.

JOURNEYMAN: You can ride like the wind. When you ride a mount, it gains a +2 bonus to its Speed.

LINGUISTICS

CLASSES: Mage, Rogue, and Warrior.

REQUIREMENT: None.

You can learn new languages easily. Some of the listed languages are spoken in lands far from Ferelden and are not commonly heard there. When you learn a new language, you learn to both speak and read it, with two exceptions. Ancient Tevene is only read because it's a dead language. Elven is only spoken because the Keepers are the only ones who know the secret of writing it.

NOVICE: You learn an additional language from the following list: Ancient Tevene, Ander, Antivan, Dwarven, Elven, Orlesian, Qunlat, Rivaini, Trade Tongue.

JOURNEYMAN: You learn to speak an additional language from the previous list. You can also try to imitate a specific dialect with a successful **COMMUNICATION (PERFORMANCE)** test.

LORE

CLASSES: Mage, Rogue, and Warrior.

REQUIREMENT: You must have Cunning 2 or higher.

You have an inquisitive mind and absorb facts easily.

NOVICE: You have studied hard. When you make a successful Cunning test with a lore focus, the GM should give you an extra piece of information on the topic. A lore focus is any Cunning focus with the word "lore" in it, such as Cultural Lore or Historical Lore. The GM determines the additional information and it may or may not be pertinent to the main question at hand.

JOURNEYMAN: You are an accomplished researcher. When making **CUNNING (RESEARCH)** tests as part of an advanced test, you gain a +1 bonus to the result of each Dragon Die. This allows you to reach the success threshold faster. Advanced tests are detailed in the *Game Master's Guide*; ask your GM if you want to know more.

MUSIC

CLASSES: Mage, Rogue, and Warrior.

REQUIREMENT: You must have the **COMMUNICATION (PERFORMANCE)** focus or the **CUNNING (MUSICAL LORE)** focus.

You have a natural talent for music.

NOVICE: You know how to play an instrument, sing, and write and read music.

JOURNEYMAN: Your musical journey continues as you learn to play more instruments. You know how to play a total number of instruments equal to your Communication.

PRIMAL MAGIC

CLASSES: Mage.

REQUIREMENT: You must have the **MAGIC (PRIMAL)** focus.

You have delved into the secrets of Primal magic.

NOVICE: You can create a small flame in your hand without spending mana points. The flame can't be used in combat but can set mundane items alight. It remains in your hand until dismissed. Creating and dismissing the flame are free actions.

JOURNEYMAN: Your knowledge of Primal magic is deep. When you cast a Primal spell, its cost in mana points is reduced by 1, to a minimum of 1. You also gain one new Primal spell.

SCOUTING

CLASSES: Rogue.

REQUIREMENT: You must have the **DEXTERITY (STEALTH)** focus.

You are skilled at the art of reconnaissance.

NOVICE: You can use the lay of the land to your advantage. If you fail a **DEXTERITY (STEALTH)** test, you can re-roll it, but you must keep the results of the second roll.

JOURNEYMAN: You know how to get the drop on your enemies. You can perform the Seize the Initiative stunt for 2 SP instead of the usual 4.

SINGLE WEAPON STYLE

CLASSES: Rogue and Warrior.

REQUIREMENT: You must have Perception 2 or higher.

You can fight effectively wielding only a single-handed melee weapon.

NOVICE: Fighting with a single weapon demands increased awareness. If you take the activate action, you gain a +1 Defense bonus until the end of the encounter while fighting in this style.

JOURNEYMAN: You can create a web of steel with but a single weapon. Your bonus to Defense increases to +2 while fighting in this style.

SPIRIT MAGIC

CLASSES: Mage.

REQUIREMENT: You must have the **MAGIC (SPIRIT)** focus.

You have delved into the secrets of Spirit magic.

NOVICE: You can sense the mood of an intelligent being within 6 yards of you as a minor action. The GM must describe the mood in one word (angry, confused, or happy, for example).

JOURNEYMAN: Your knowledge of Spirit magic is deep. When you cast a Spirit spell, its cost in mana points is reduced by 1, to a minimum of 1. You also gain one new Spirit spell.

THIEVERY

CLASSES: Rogue.

REQUIREMENT: You must have Dexterity 3 or higher.

What's yours is yours and what's theirs is yours too.

NOVICE: You don't let locks stand in your way. If you fail a **DEXTERITY (LOCK PICKING)** test, you can re-roll it, but you must keep the results of the second roll.

JOURNEYMAN: You are familiar with many types of traps. If you fail a **DEXTERITY (TRAPS)** test, you can re-roll it, but you must keep the results of the second roll.

THROWN WEAPON STYLE

CLASSES: Rogue and Warrior.

REQUIREMENT: You must be trained in the Axes Group, Light Blades Group, or Spears Group.

You are adept with throwing weapons.

NOVICE: Your accuracy is uncanny. You gain a +1 bonus on attack rolls with throwing weapons.

JOURNEYMAN: You can ready a throwing weapon in an instant. You can reload a throwing weapon as a free action instead of a minor action.

TWO-HANDER STYLE

CLASSES: Warrior.

REQUIREMENT: You must have Strength 3 or higher and be trained in the Axes Group, Bludgeons Group, Heavy Blades Group, or Spears Group.

You are deadly with two-handed melee weapons.

NOVICE: The length of your weapon and the power of your attacks forces foes to yield ground. When you hit with a melee attack with a two-handed weapon, you can move the target 2 yards in any direction.

JOURNEYMAN: You can strike fearsome blows with your weapon. You can perform the Mighty Blow stunt for 1 SP instead of the usual 2 when wielding a two-handed weapon.

UNARMED STYLE

CLASSES: Mage, Rogue, and Warrior.

REQUIREMENT: You must be trained in the Brawling Group.

You know a thing or two about brawling.

NOVICE: Your hands are as tough as iron. When you attack with your fist, you inflict 1d6 damage instead of 1d3.

JOURNEYMAN: Your punch can drop the toughest opponents. You can perform the Knock Prone stunt for 1 SP instead of the usual 2 when attacking with your fist or a gauntlet.

WEAPON AND SHIELD STYLE

CLASSES: Warrior.

REQUIREMENT: You must have Strength 1 or higher.

You've been trained to fight with a single-handed melee weapon and shield.

NOVICE: You can use shields of all shapes and sizes. You get the full Defense bonus when using a shield. See **CHAPTER 4: WEAPONS AND GEAR** for more information on shields.

JOURNEYMAN: You know how to get the most from your shield. You can perform the Defensive Stance stunt for 1 SP instead of the usual 2.

CHAPTER FOUR



WEAPONS AND GEAR

Your character has many types of equipment to choose from, all of which can be found in this chapter. Starting characters choose from equipment packages (see **CHAPTER 2: CHARACTER CREATION**) to make getting started easy. During the course of play, though, your character will have the chance to earn (or steal!) money, and may buy or gain access to additional equipment. In this chapter you'll find details on armor, weapons, clothing, foodstuffs, and miscellaneous goods and services. The prices presented are typical of Ferelden, but they can vary widely depending on the vagaries of supply and demand.

CURRENCY

Every nation in Thedas stamps their own coins. It used to be that they varied in size and purity, but the dwarven merchants used their powerful influence to standardize coins into gold pieces, silver pieces, and copper pieces. Now, while each nation's coins look unique and often have different names, their value is generally equivalent. So Ferelden calls a gold piece a sovereign and Orlais calls it a royal, but both have the same value.

A coin's nation of origin usually doesn't matter, so in *Dragon Age* the following terms are used as standard: gold piece (gp), silver piece (sp), and copper piece (cp).

100 copper pieces equals 1 silver piece, and 100 silver pieces equals 1 gold piece.

1 GOLD PIECE = 100 SILVER PIECES = 10,000 COPPER PIECES

Prices for most items are given in silver pieces, as that is the most common currency and the one used for day-to-day transactions. Gold pieces are much rarer and even one represents a good deal of money.

In Ferelden a gold piece is known as a *sovereign*, a silver piece is known as a *silver*, and a copper piece is known as a *bit*.

ARMOR AND SHIELDS

Armor and shields protect you from harm, but in different ways. Shields make you harder to hit, while armor reduces the damage you take when you are struck. Depending on your class and your talents, you may use neither, one or the other, or both armor and shield. Warriors and rogues start with some training in armor use, and warriors usually wear the best armor they



can afford. Using a shield properly requires the Weapon and Shield Style talent; this is most common among warriors. Those who prefer two-handed weapons or archery, however, usually forgo shields. You'll find more information on the role of armor and shields in **CHAPTER 6: PLAYING THE GAME**.

ARMOR AND SHIELD DETAILS

The two accompanying tables provide game system information for armor and shields. The following details are provided:

ARMOR RATING: Each armor type has a numeric rating. When you take damage in combat, you subtract the armor rating before losing Health. This applies each time you are hit, so over time even poor armor can prevent you from taking a lot of damage. Certain attacks, however, can bypass the effects of armor. They inflict what is called penetrating damage, which ignores armor altogether. Armor offers no protection against penetrating damage.

ARMOR PENALTY: Each armor type also has a penalty that represents its weight and bulk. The penalty applies to your Speed if you are trained in the armor's use, but to both Speed and Dexterity if you are not. See the Armor Training talent in **CHAPTER 3: FOCUSES AND TALENTS**.

COST: The item's price in silver pieces.

SHIELD BONUS: If you are carrying a shield, you get the listed bonus to your Defense. This helps you avoid getting hit in the first place. You need proper training to get the most out of shields, however. If you do not have the Weapon and Shield Style talent, the maximum Defense bonus you receive from a shield is +1. In other words, you must have the talent to get any benefit from using a medium or heavy shield.

WEIGHT: The item's weight in pounds.

ARMOR AND SHIELD DESCRIPTIONS

Descriptions of the various armors and shields follow. They are classed into broad categories for ease of play. It is not important to know every little piece of armor your character wears. For game purposes you just need to know the overall level of protection. Light mail, for example, could indicate a mail shirt and a helmet, a full suit of ring mail, or a mix of heavy leather and chainmail with a coif. You can decide the specifics if you like, using the categories as a guideline.

HEAVY LEATHER ARMOR: Boiling it in water or wax hardens the leather, which is then fashioned into breast and back plates and shoulder guards. More flexible leather is used for the leggings, gauntlets, and so forth. Some versions are sewn with metal rivets or studs.

HEAVY MAIL ARMOR: Also called chainmail, heavy mail is armor made by interlocking small metal rings to form

a mesh. Heavy mail is normally worn over a layer of quilted cloth to make it more comfortable, reduce chafing, and absorb some of the force from blows.

HEAVY PLATE ARMOR: A full suit of armor favored by knights and lords, plate armor is composed of shaped steel plates fitted over most of the body. The plate is strapped and buckled on over a padded doublet, evenly distributing the weight over the entire body, so it is less restrictive than it might seem.

HEAVY SHIELD: This is the large shield of heavy infantry troops. It is most common on the battlefield, as its use requires the kind of training usually provided only to professional soldiers. Heavy shields can be rectangular or kite shaped.

LIGHT LEATHER ARMOR: Light leather armor is common throughout Thedas. Cured and hardened for protection, it is supple enough to be worn like regular clothing. This category also includes hide, quilted, or padded armor.

LIGHT MAIL ARMOR: Also known as ring mail, this armor is made of interlocking metal rings worn over hardened leather armor. The rings are bigger than those used to make chainmail, so it is not as effective.

LIGHT PLATE ARMOR: Light plate, also known as half-plate, is a full suit of heavy mail with select pieces of plate armored (typically a breastplate and greaves) layered on top.

LIGHT SHIELD: A small shield, sometimes called a target, usually made of wood but sometimes of metal. Light shields are usually round.

MEDIUM SHIELD: The most popular shield amongst warriors, it provides good protection without being ungainly. Medium shields can be rectangular, round, or kite shaped.

WEAPONS

Adventurer is not a safe occupation. Sooner or later you'll find yourself cornered by rampaging darkspawn. When that happens, you'll want a good weapon in your hand. It's also important that you be trained in the weapon's use. If you're not, you'd be better off trying harsh language.

WEAPON TRAINING

As discussed in CHAPTER 2: CHARACTER CREATION, weapons are broken down into weapon groups, in which you receive training through your class. If you are trained in a weapon group, you can use any weapon in that group that you are strong enough to wield (see Weapon Details, following). If you are untrained in a weapon group, however, you take a -2 penalty on attack rolls and inflict half damage (rounded down) when using a weapon from that group. If it's a missile weapon, the

ARMOR			
ARMOR	ARMOR RATING	ARMOR PENALTY	COST
Light Leather	3	0	15 sp
Heavy Leather	4	-1	30 sp
Light Mail	5	-2	50 sp
Heavy Mail	7	-3	75 sp
Light Plate	8	-4	100 sp
Heavy Plate	10	-5	150 sp

SHIELDS		
SHIELD	SHIELD BONUS	COST
Light Shield	+1	15 sp
Medium Shield	+2	30 sp
Heavy Shield	+3	60 sp

range is cut in half as well. When halving damage, add your Strength before cutting the damage in half.

WEAPON DETAILS

The accompanying table summarizes the game statistics for the most common weapons in Thedas. They are broken down by weapon group and the governing ability is noted in parentheses. The first entry, for example, is Axes Group (Strength). When you attack with a weapon from this group, it's a STRENGTH (AXES) test.

The following details are provided for each weapon:

COST: The weapon's price in silver pieces.

DAMAGE: This is the weapon's damage. When you hit an enemy, you inflict this amount of damage plus your Strength if you are trained in the weapon group. If you are untrained, damage is halved (rounded down). Weapons from the Bows Group add Perception instead of Strength to damage.

MINIMUM STRENGTH: Some weapons are heavy and/or difficult to wield. You must have the minimum Strength listed to use a weapon effectively. If you don't, the weapon only inflicts 1d6-1 damage.

WEIGHT: The weapon's weight in pounds.

MISSILE WEAPONS

You can make ranged attacks with missile weapons. These are weapons you either shoot or throw. Due to the nature of ranged combat, these weapons require a few more details. They are summarized on the Missile Weapon Ranges table. The following details are provided for each weapon:

SHORT RANGE: If your target is within this range, you attack normally.

WEAPONS			
WEAPON	DAMAGE	MIN. STR	COST
AXES GROUP (STRENGTH)			
Battle Axe	2d6	1	14 sp
Throwing Axe	1d6+2	1	10 sp
Two-handed Axe	3d6	3	20 sp
BLUDGEONS GROUP (STRENGTH)			
Mace	2d6	1	12 sp
Maul	1d6+3	1	14 sp
Two-handed Maul	2d6+3	3	19 sp
BOWS GROUP (DEXTERITY)*			
Crossbow	2d6+1	1	20 sp
Short Bow	1d6+1	-1	9 sp
Long Bow	1d6+3	1	15 sp
BRAWLING GROUP (DEXTERITY)			
Fist	1d3	-	-
Gauntlet	1d3+1	-	4 sp
Improvised Weapon	1d6-1	-	-
HEAVY BLADES GROUP (STRENGTH)			
Bastard Sword	2d6+1	2	20 sp
Long Sword	2d6	1	18 sp
Two-handed Sword	3d6	3	23 sp
LIGHT BLADES GROUP (DEXTERITY)			
Dagger	1d6+1	-	9 sp
Short Sword	1d6+2	-1	14 sp
Throwing Knife	1d6	-	10 sp
SPEARS GROUP (STRENGTH)			
Spear	1d6+3	0	12 sp
Throwing Spear	1d6+3	0	12 sp
Two-handed Spear	2d6	1	20 sp
STAVES GROUP (DEXTERITY)			
Club	1d6	-	1 sp
Morningstar	1d6+3	1	11 sp
Quarterstaff	1d6+1	-	3 sp

* Weapons from the Bows Group add Perception instead of Strength to damage.

MISSILE WEAPON RANGES			
WEAPON	SHORT RANGE	LONG RANGE	RELOAD
Crossbow	30 yards	60 yards	Major Action
Long Bow	26 yards	52 yards	Minor Action
Short Bow	16 yards	32 yards	Minor Action
Throwing Axe	4 yards	8 yards	Minor Action
Throwing Knife	6 yards	12 yards	Minor Action
Throwing Spear	8 yards	16 yards	Minor Action

LONG RANGE: If your target is within this range, but farther way than short range, your ranged attack suffers a -2 penalty.

RELOAD: After you make a ranged attack, you must reload before you can fire again. Reload is an action (see CHAPTER 6: PLAYING THE GAME); this can be a major, minor, or free action depending on the weapon and your talents. This entry on the table indicates the type of action required to reload each weapon. Talents may change this.

WEAPON DESCRIPTIONS

Descriptions of the various weapons follow. Sometimes a weapon may represent a category of similar weapons. This is noted in the text.

AXES GROUP

BATTLE AXE: A wicked, broad-headed axe that is larger than a hand axe, used to cleave through armor and shields. Some battle axes are double-bladed.

THROWING AXE: A warrior's version of a hatchet, smaller than a battle axe and balanced to be thrown.

TWO-HANDED AXE: A greater cousin to the battle axe, this imposing weapon may end in a double-bladed axe head or may have a spike on one side.

BLUDGEONS GROUP

MACE: A blunt crushing weapon designed to smash armor, a mace consists of a heavy head of stone or metal set upon a wooden or metal shaft. The head is often flanged or knobbed to better penetrate armor.

MAUL: Normally a blacksmith's or woodsman's tool, this long-handled hammer may be used in warfare as a bludgeon to smash foes.

TWO-HANDED MAUL: A stout wooden shaft about four feet in length topped with a brutal metal hammerhead.

BOWS GROUP

CROSSBOW: A crossbow is a type of mechanized bow where the bow is mounted to a wooden stock and drawn with a lever.

LONG BOW: A tall bow, roughly the height of a man, made from a single piece of wood and with a long draw.

SHORT BOW: Sometimes called a horseman's bow, this weapon is smaller than a long bow but handier to use.

BRAWLING GROUP

FIST: The favored weapon in barrooms across Thedas.

GAUNTLET: A heavy glove made of leather and sometimes reinforced with metal. This category also includes weapons like brass knuckles.



IMPROVISED WEAPON: When you try to bash someone with whatever's at hand, it's an improvised weapon. This can be nearly anything.

HEAVY BLADES GROUP

BASTARD SWORD: Also known as a hand-and-a-half sword, a bastard sword has a longer blade and hilt than a long sword.

LONG SWORD: These one-handed blades are also known as broadswords or simply "swords." The blades are about three feet in length, double-edged, and mounted on a hilt with a heavy crossguard.

TWO-HANDED SWORD: A large, powerful blade that requires both hands to wield effectively. Two-handed swords can reach five or six feet in length.

LIGHT BLADES GROUP

DAGGER: A long knife used to stab and pierce, often carried as a tool as much as a weapon. Long daggers are sometimes called dirks.

SHORT SWORD: Shorter than a long sword but longer than a dagger, the short sword is a one-handed blade meant for thrusting.

THROWING KNIFE: Similar to a dagger, but shorter and balanced for throwing.

SPEARS GROUP

SHORT SPEAR: A simple weapon used for hunting and battle, a short spear is made of a shaft of wood with a sharpened steel head.

THROWING SPEAR: A light spear that is thrown as a ranged weapon. This category also includes weapons like javelins.

TWO-HANDED SPEAR: Also called a long spear, a two-handed spear has a wide head of steel at the end of a long wooden shaft.

STAVES GROUP

CLUB: A short cudgel fashioned of hard wood or sometimes metal. This category also includes weapons like saps.

MORNINGSTAR: A short-hafted weapon with a spiked head on the business end.

QUARTERSTAFF: A simple weapon made from a length of hardwood, sometimes reinforced with metal tips.

ADVENTURER'S GEAR

GEAR	COST
Arrows (20)	2 sp
Bolts (20)	3 sp
Backpack	9 sp
Candle (Pair)	5 cp
Flask	50 cp
Flint and Steel	10 cp
Healer's Kit	25 sp
Ink (Black, one vial)	20 cp
Lamp	2 sp
Lantern	5 sp
Lock Picks	12 sp
Mountain Garb	10 sp
Musical Instrument	10 sp
Oil, Pint	8 cp
Pouch (Belt)	1 sp
Rope (20 yards)	2 sp
Spike	5 cp
Tent, Large	35 sp
Tent, Small	10 sp
Torch	10 cp
Traveler's Garb	15 sp
Waterskin	40 cp
Whetstone	10 cp

ADVENTURER'S GEAR

This section includes common equipment favored by adventurers. The accompanying table lists the price for each item.

ARROWS: Ammunition for bows.

BOLTS: Ammunition for crossbows.

BACKPACK: Adventurers prefer backpacks that aren't too big, so they don't get in the way during a fight.

CANDLE: A candle illuminates a small (2-yard) radius and will burn for 1 hour.

FLASK: A container to hold liquids, made of ceramic, glass, or metal, with a tight stopper.

FLINT AND STEEL: A set of flint and steel is used to start a fire; striking the pieces together causes sparks, which are shed on tinder to begin a blaze.

HEALER'S KIT: This kit contains bandages, herbs, salves, potions, small knives, thread and needle, and other tools used to treat injuries.

INK: Black ink is the most common type, but other colors can be purchased at a higher price.

LAMP: An oil lamp will burn for about 6 hours on a pint of oil. It illuminates a 6-yard radius. It burns more steadily than a torch, but the flaming oil can spill easily.

LANTERN: A lantern is like a lamp but is enclosed in glass. It may have shuttered or hinged sides to control how much light it emits. A lantern will burn for about the same amount of time as a lamp (6 hours), but it normally illuminates a wider area (a 10-yard radius).

LOCK PICKS: A set of tools used to manipulate locks.

MOUNTAIN GARB: Those in mountains like the Frostbacks know how to dress for cold weather. Mountain garb includes a wool coat and fleece-lined cap, a heavy fur cloak with hood, a shirt of linen, heavy pants or skirts, and fur-lined boots.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENT: Common instruments in Thedas include flutes, harps, lutes, pipes, horns, drums, and fiddles. They liven up long marches and can inspire soldiers in battle.

OIL, PINT: Burned for light in lamps and lanterns. A pint lasts for about 6 hours.

QUIVER: Used to store arrows or bolts.

ROPE: A length of twisted fibers made from hemp.

SPIKE: A sharp stake of metal, often with an eye on the end. The spike is driven into a rock or ice face, or a castle wall, and a rope can be passed through the eye or tied off to assist in climbing a difficult surface.

TENT: A small tent is intended for one man, with arms and armor. Two would find it cramped. A large tent can fit up to four adventurers.



FOOD, DRINK, AND LODGING

GOOD OR SERVICE	COST
Bottle of Cheap Wine	20 cp
Pint of Ale or Beer	10 cp
Meal at an Inn	25 cp
1 Week of Travel Rations	2 sp
Lodging in the Common Room	50 cp/night
Lodging in a Private Room	2 sp/night

TORCH: A short piece of wood or length of flax or hemp, with an end soaked in tallow to make it easier to light. A torch illuminates about a 6-yard radius and burns for approximately 1 hour.

TRAVELER'S GARB: Travelers garb usually includes good boots, wool breeches or a skirt, a sturdy belt, a wool or linen shirt or tunic, probably a vest or jacket, gloves, and a hooded cloak. A prepared traveler will also have a wool scarf, gloves, and possibly a wide-brimmed hat.

WATERSKIN: Water is a necessity and a prepared adventurer ensures a ready supply.

WHELISTONE: Used to keep weapons sharp.

ANIMALS, MOUNTS, AND VEHICLES

This section describes common mounts and domestic animals and their associated gear, and includes a table with a price for each. You'll also find game stats for the animals.

CART: A small vehicle used for hauling. They are either pushed by hand or pulled by a mule.

DOG: Any of the various hunting and guard dogs common in Ferelden. The famed mabari dogs are covered in the *Game Master's Guide*.

DRAFT HORSE: Slow but strong beasts used to pull wagons.

FALCON: A bird of prey highly regarded among the Avvars.

FEED: Oats and grains used to feed horses and other animals.

MULE: A pack animal used for carrying heavy loads.

RIDING HORSE: A common horse used for travel and recreation. Not trained for combat.

SADDLE: A leather seat used by riders on mounts.

SADDLEBAGS: A pair of large pouches hung on horses and mules and used for storage.

STABLING: One night in a stable for an animal.

WAGON: A four wheeled vehicle usually pulled by draft horses.

ANIMALS, MOUNTS, AND VEHICLES

ANIMAL, GEAR, OR SERVICE	COST
Cart	20 sp
Dog	15 sp
Draft Horse	50 sp
Falcon	75 sp
Feed (per day)	5 cp
Mule	20 sp
Riding Horse	120 sp
Saddle	20 sp
Saddlebags	10 sp
Stabling (per day)	10 cp
Wagon	150 sp

ANIMAL GAME STATS

Animals in *Dragon Age* have abilities and powers, and can engage in combat, just like characters. If you acquire a mount or animal, you should copy its game stats to your character sheet so you have them handy during combat encounters. Some animals, such as draft horses or mules, are listed as non-combatants. This means that their attack roll is made at +0 no matter what their Strength or Dexterity.

DOG

Many breeds of guard and hunting dogs can be found in Ferelden.

DOG

ABILITIES (FOCUSES)			
-2	COMMUNICATION		
1	CONSTITUTION (RUNNING)		
-3	CUNNING		
2	DEXTERITY (BITE)		
-1	MAGIC		
2	PERCEPTION (SMELLING, TRACKING)		
1	STRENGTH (JUMPING)		
0	WILLPOWER		
COMBAT RATINGS			
SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
16	15	12	0
ATTACKS			
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL		DAMAGE
BITE	+4		1d6+1
POWERS			
FAVORED STUNTS: <i>Knock Prone and Skirmish.</i>			

DRAFT HORSE

Draft Horses can pull or carry a heavy load but are ponderous creatures.

FALCON

These statistics can be used for falcons or other birds of prey.

DRAFT HORSE		NON—COMBATANT	
ABILITIES (FOCUSES)			
-3	COMMUNICATION		
6	CONSTITUTION (STAMINA)		
-3	CUNNING		
-2	DEXTERITY		
-2	MAGIC		
1	PERCEPTION		
5	STRENGTH (MIGHT)		
1	WILLPOWER		
COMBAT RATINGS			
SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
8	50	8	0
ATTACKS			
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL		DAMAGE
KICK	+0		1d6+5
POWERS			
FAVORED STUNT: <i>Knock Prone.</i>			

MULE

Mules are favored pack animals in rough country like hills and mountain trails.

RIDING HORSE

Riding horses can get you from place to place but they are not trained for war.

MULE		NON—COMBATANT	
ABILITIES (FOCUSES)			
-3	COMMUNICATION		
5	CONSTITUTION (STAMINA)		
-3	CUNNING		
-2	DEXTERITY		
-2	MAGIC		
1	PERCEPTION		
4	STRENGTH (MIGHT)		
2	WILLPOWER		
COMBAT RATINGS			
SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
10	40	8	0
ATTACKS			
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL		DAMAGE
KICK	+0		1d6+4
POWERS			
FAVORED STUNT: <i>Knock Prone.</i>			

FALCON			
ABILITIES (FOCUSES)			
-2	COMMUNICATION		
-1	CONSTITUTION		
-3	CUNNING		
3	DEXTERITY (ACROBATICS)		
-1	MAGIC		
3	PERCEPTION (SEARCHING, SEEING)		
-2	STRENGTH		
1	WILLPOWER		
COMBAT RATINGS			
SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
4 (FLYING 20)	10	13	0
ATTACKS			
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL		DAMAGE
BITE	+3		1d6-2
POWERS			
FAVORED STUNT: Pierce Armor and Skirmish.			

RIDING HORSE		NON—COMBATANT	
ABILITIES (FOCUSES)			
-3	COMMUNICATION		
4	CONSTITUTION (STAMINA)		
-3	CUNNING		
0	DEXTERITY		
-2	MAGIC		
1	PERCEPTION (HEARING, SEEING)		
4	STRENGTH		
1	WILLPOWER		
COMBAT RATINGS			
SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
18	40	10	0
ATTACKS			
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL		DAMAGE
KICK	+0		1d6+4
POWERS			
FAVORED STUNT: <i>Skirmish.</i>			

CHAPTER FIVE



MAGIC

Magic permeates all living beings in the land of Thedas. It courses through every animal, plant, and sentient creature. Some even believe that magic is the power that gives life. Despite the prevalence of magic in all living beings, only a rare few possess the ability to manipulate it. Mages and other spellcasters are able to draw mana from living matter around them and shape it into fire to blast their foes, channel it into arcane glyphs, or use it to dominate the minds of those around them. This chapter provides some background on the use of magic in Thedas and then explains how it works in the *Dragon Age RPG*.

THE FADE

Mages have a special connection to the otherworldly realm known as the Fade. According to the Chantry, the Fade is the source of the primeval matter from which the Maker formed Thedas and all living beings. When the living die, their souls pass through what is called the Veil and into this realm. Those who lived good lives and worshipped the Maker then journey into the sky to join him as an eternal reward. Those who lived evil lives or did not worship the Maker, however, return to the ether from which they were formed when they enter the Fade. Mages claim that what happens to the souls of the dead is a Chantry tenet that has no substantia-

tion. No dead soul has ever been witnessed to enter the Fade, according to the mages, so it also cannot be proven that anything described by the Chantry happens upon death. It is an eternal debate between the Chantry and the Circle of Magi, made all the more difficult because the Chantry requires that its position be accepted as a matter of faith.

THE DANGER OF MAGIC

The Fade is not an empty realm. Indeed, it is full of spirits of various sorts, as well as those of beings asleep on Thedas. For reasons still unknown, mages attract the attention of the Fade's native spirits. Some sages speculate that the mages' natural ability to use magic makes them appear differently in the Fade. Unlike other living beings, when a mage enters the Fade (voluntarily or no) he is able to act normally, and spirits may be able to sense this difference in them. However it occurs, malevolent spirits (such as demons) that wish to enter the world of the living are drawn to mages like beacons. Should a mage encounter such a demon in the Fade, it will attempt to possess him. Some demons try to use force, but others cajole or trick their prey, offering power or nearly anything to get their way.

The result is inevitably the same: an abomination is created. This is the name given to possessed mages, though it is not a physical possession. The demon is still in the Fade, but so is the mage's own spirit; the demon twists and controls the mage's body through that captive spirit. The demon sees through the body's eyes, channels his power through it, and is able to use the mage's magic in ways the captive would never have imagined. Once the demon is in control, an abomination becomes a mad creature that goes on a rampage until stopped. The more powerful the demon, the worse the abomination, and historical records tell of abominations that have ravaged entire settlements and continued to terrorize the countryside for years.

So it is that the fears of the common people are not unjustified. All mages are susceptible to demonic possession, and even the strongest must stay on their guard. This is why the Chantry created the Circle of Magi in the first place. If mages must exist so their power can be wielded against the darkspawn, so be it. The Chantry insists, however, that they must be watched carefully and that those who endanger Thedas be dealt with before possession can take place.

LEARNING SPELLS

Only a mage can learn spells, so be sure to pick this class if you want to use magic. A level 1 mage begins the game knowing three spells. If you are the only mage in your group, you should seriously consider taking the heal spell as one of them. It will keep your allies alive in dire circumstances.

A mage can gain more spells in two ways: class powers and talents. A mage learns a new spell every other level as a class power, starting at level 2. This means that over 20 levels a mage will learn 10 additional spells just by being a mage. The other way to learn new spells is through talents. See Creation Magic, Entropy Magic, Primal Magic, and Spirit Magic in CHAPTER 3: FOCUSES AND TALENTS for examples of such talents.

A starting mage can choose any three spells from this chapter. If you're not sure what to pick, try one these suggested combinations:

BALANCED MAGE

ARCANE BOLT, HEAL, ROCK ARMOR

This is good choice if you are playing a mage for the first time. It has one attack spell, one defense spell, and Heal to help your companions.

CREATION MAGE

GLYPH OF PARALYSIS, HEAL, HEROIC OFFENSE

This is the support choice, as most of your spells are for aiding your allies. Your only offense is the glyph and proper use of it takes some forethought.

ENTROPY MAGE

DAZE, DRAIN LIFE, WEAKNESS.

This choice lets you really mess with enemies, but has no spells that help your allies.

PRIMAL MAGE

FLAME BLAST, ROCK ARMOR, WINTER'S GRASP

If you like to fight, this choice is for you.

SPIRIT MAGE

MIND BLAST, SPELL SHIELD, WALKING BOMB

This is also a good choice for combat, but offers no protection from mundane threats.

MANA POINTS

It takes the magical energy of living beings, known as mana, to power spells. The amount of magical power a mage has available at any given time is measured in mana points (abbreviated **MP**). The more you have, the more spells you can cast. If you run out of mana points, you can't cast spells until you get some back.

A level 1 mage starts the game with mana points equal to **10 + MAGIC + 1d6** and adds **MAGIC + 1d6** more every time he gains a level. Powerful mages can cast spells for a long time without running out of mana points. That said, mana points are a finite resource and a smart mage knows when to spend them and when to hoard them.

Each spell has a cost in mana points. This must be paid when the cast action is taken, regardless of whether the spell works or not. Magic always has its price.

SPELLS AND ARMOR

Although not trained in its use, mages can wear armor. However, doing so makes it more difficult for them to cast spells. When a mage in armor casts a spell, he must pay an additional amount of mana points equal to the strain of the armor type (see accompanying table). This extra mana must be paid for each spell, which makes wearing heavy armor a losing position for mages in the long run.

CASTING IN ARMOR	
ARMOR WORN	STRAIN
Light Leather	1
Heavy Leather	2
Light Mail	3
Heavy Mail	4
Light Plate	5
Heavy Plate	6

EXAMPLE

The mage Lorrahn wears a suit of light mail as part of a disguise while infiltrating a castle. He had hoped to find somewhere to remove the armor before the action started, but he is discovered and must defend himself. He casts an arcane bolt spell at an approaching guard. This would normally cost him just 2 mana points, but light mail has a strain of 3, so it costs him 5 mana points (2+3=5) to cast the spell instead. He will continue adding the strain to the mana cost of each spell he casts until he can remove the armor.

REGAINING MANA POINTS

A mage can regain spent mana points by resting. For each full hour of rest and/or meditation, you get back **1d6 + MAGIC** mana points. If you manage 8 hours of uninterrupted rest and/or meditation, you get all your mana points back.

CASTING SPELLS

You can cast any spell that you know by making a successful casting roll and spending the required number of mana points. A casting roll is simply a Magic ability test. The most common focuses that apply are Creation Magic, Entropy Magic, Primal Magic, and Spirit Magic,

each of which corresponds to one of the schools of magic. For more information on ability tests, see **CHAPTER 6: PLAYING THE GAME**.

CASTING ROLL = 3D6 + MAGIC + FOCUS (IF APPLICABLE)

If your casting roll equals or exceeds the spell's target number (TN), you successfully cast the spell. If not, the spell fizzles and has no effect. Either way, you must spend the required mana points.

Some spells make use of the Dragon Die, so it's a good idea to leave the dice where they fall until the spell is totally resolved.

The spells presented in Set 1 are the most commonly used and reliable spells available to mages and thus there is little danger in their use. Subsequent sets explore the perils of more powerful magic.

SPELLPOWER

For many spells, making a successful casting roll is all you need to worry about. Make it and the spell works as intended. Sometimes, however, you must overcome the natural resistance of the target before the spell takes effect. Spellpower is the measure of your arcane might; certain spells allow the target(s) to test against Spellpower to resist or at least offset the spells' effects.

SPELLPOWER = 10 + MAGIC + FOCUS (IF APPLICABLE)



Once again the most common focuses that apply are Creation Magic, Entropy Magic, Primal Magic, and Spirit Magic. This means that if you are a specialist in entropy magic, your entropy spells are harder to resist. The abilities used to test against your Spellpower vary by spell. The entry for each spell should tell you whether a test is required, the applicable ability, and the consequences of a passed or failed test.

SPELL STUNTS

Each spell has a standard effect, but if you do an exceptional job casting it you can manipulate the mana to get even more impressive results. This is known as a spell stunt.

If you make a successful casting roll and get doubles on any of the dice, you can perform one or more spell stunts in addition to the spell's normal effect. You receive a number of stunt points (SP) equal to the Dragon Die and must use them right away to perform stunts. Initially, all mages choose from the same list of spell stunts, but as they gain levels they get access to new stunts and may use standard ones for fewer stunt points.

You can only perform a given spell stunt once in a round.

STANDARD SPELL STUNTS	
SP COST	SPELL STUNT
1-3	PUISSANT CASTING: Increase the Spellpower of your spell by 1 per stunt point spent, to a maximum of 3.
2	SKILLFUL CASTING: Reduce the mana cost of the spell by 1. This can reduce the mana cost to 0.
2	MIGHTY SPELL: If the spell does damage, one target of the spell of your choice takes an extra d6 damage.
3	MANA SHIELD: You use the residual mana of the spell casting to set up a temporary protective shield. You gain a +2 bonus to Defense until the beginning of your next turn.
4	FAST CASTING: After you resolve this spell, you can immediately cast another spell. The second spell must have a casting time of a major action or a minor action. If you roll doubles on this casting roll, you do not get any more stunt points.
4	IMPOSING SPELL: The effect of the spell is much more dramatic than usual. Until the beginning of your next turn, anyone attempting to make a melee attack against you must make a successful WILLPOWER (COURAGE) test. The target number (TN) is 10 + your Magic ability. Those who fail must take a move or defend action instead.

Once you have decided on what spell stunts you want to use, you can narrate their effects. You can perform the stunts in any order you choose.

The spell stunts on the Standard Spell Stunts Tables can be used by any character for the SP cost indicated.

SPELL FORMAT

Spells in *Dragon Age* have the following format.

SPELL NAME: What the spell is called. Of course individual wizards might call a certain effect something different, just for psychological effect.

MAGIC SCHOOL: There are four different schools of magic in the world of *Dragon Age*—Creation, Entropy, Primal, and Spirit. Each spell belongs to one (and *only* one) of them.

SPELL TYPE: There are four types of spell—attack, defense, enhancement, and utility—and each spell falls into one of these categories.

MANA COST: This tells you how many mana points (MP) it takes to cast the spell.

CASTING TIME: It can take anywhere from a few moments to a few hours to cast a spell. This entry tells you how long it takes to cast this one.

TARGET NUMBER: Your casting roll must meet or beat this number for you to successfully cast the spell.

TEST: Some spells require tests from the target, usually against your Spellpower. This entry details the type of test the spell requires, if any. The effects of the test are specified in the description. Oftentimes a successful test has one effect and a failed test a different one.

DESCRIPTION: This entry explains what the spell does in detail. Armor protects against any damage inflicted as normal unless it is noted as penetrating damage (in which case, it ignores armor altogether).

SPELLS

The rest of this chapter details the spells available to characters of levels 1-5. More spells are available in Sets 2, 3, and 4.

ARCANE BOLT		
MAGIC SCHOOL: SPIRIT	SPELL TYPE: ATTACK	MANA COST: 2 MP
CASTING TIME: MAJOR ACTION		TARGET NUMBER: 10
TEST: DEXTERITY (ACROBATICS) vs. SPELLPOWER		

A bolt of arcane energy springs from your hand or your staff and streaks towards a visible target within 30 yards. The arcane bolt inflicts 2d6 damage, with

bonus damage equal to the casting roll's Dragon Die. If the target makes a successful **DEXTERITY (ACROBATICS)** test vs. your Spellpower, the spell only inflicts 1d6 damage.

DAZE

MAGIC SCHOOL: ENTROPY **SPELL TYPE:** ATTACK **MANA COST:** 2 MP

CASTING TIME: MAJOR ACTION **TARGET NUMBER:** 11

TEST: WILLPOWER (SELF-DISCIPLINE) vs. SPELLPOWER

You ensorcell one visible target within 10 yards. A target that makes a successful **WILLPOWER (SELF-DISCIPLINE)** test vs. your Spellpower is slightly confused and suffers a -1 penalty on all ability tests until the beginning of your next turn. A target that fails the test suffers the same penalty and cannot take any actions on his next turn.

DRAIN LIFE

MAGIC SCHOOL: ENTROPY **SPELL TYPE:** UTILITY **MANA COST:** 4 MP

CASTING TIME: MAJOR ACTION **TARGET NUMBER:** 12

TEST: CONSTITUTION (STAMINA) vs. SPELLPOWER

You suck life energy out of a visible target within 10 yards to heal yourself. The target takes 1d6 + Magic penetrating damage and you are healed by the same amount. Note this only heals damage you have suffered; it doesn't give you bonus Health above your normal amount. If the target makes a successful **CONSTITUTION (STAMINA)** test vs. your Spellpower, the penetrating damage is only 1d6.

FLAME BLAST

MAGIC SCHOOL: PRIMAL **SPELL TYPE:** ATTACK **MANA COST:** 3 MP

CASTING TIME: MAJOR ACTION **TARGET NUMBER:** 12

TEST: DEXTERITY (ACROBATICS) vs. SPELLPOWER

Gouts of blazing fire erupt from your outstretched hands, burning nearby targets. The flame blast is 8 yards long and 2 yards wide. Anyone hit by the blast takes 2d6+1 damage. Targets that make a successful **DEXTERITY (ACROBATICS)** test vs. your Spellpower only take 1d6+1 damage.

GLYPH OF PARALYSIS

MAGIC SCHOOL: CREATION **SPELL TYPE:** ATTACK **MANA COST:** 3 MP

CASTING TIME: 1 MINUTE **TARGET NUMBER:** 10

TEST: CONSTITUTION (STAMINA) vs. SPELLPOWER

You trace your fingers on the ground, creating an invisible glyph that holds a charge of magical power. The first enemy that moves within 2 yards of the glyph's location triggers it. The target must make a successful **CONSTITUTION (STAMINA)** test vs. Spellpower or become paralyzed for 1d3 rounds. A paralyzed character can take no actions and has a Defense of 7. You can maintain a number of glyphs of paralysis equal to your Magic ability at any one time. Each glyph is good for one use.

HEAL

MAGIC SCHOOL: CREATION **SPELL TYPE:** UTILITY **MANA COST:** 1-3 MP

CASTING TIME: MAJOR ACTION **TARGET NUMBER:** 10

TEST: NONE

Your touch seals wounds and restores vigor to one wounded target. You can choose to spend up to 3 mana points when you cast this spell. For each mana point spent, the target gets back 1d6 Health. You can cast this on yourself.

HEROIC OFFENSE

MAGIC SCHOOL: CREATION **SPELL TYPE:** ENHANCEMENT **MANA COST:** 3 MP

CASTING TIME: MAJOR ACTION **TARGET NUMBER:** 11

TEST: NONE

Your touch fills one ally with magical might. Until the end of the encounter, the target gains a +1 bonus to Strength.

MANA DRAIN

MAGIC SCHOOL: SPIRIT **SPELL TYPE:** UTILITY **MANA COST:** 3 MP

CASTING TIME: MAJOR ACTION **TARGET NUMBER:** 12

TEST: MAGIC (SPIRIT) vs. SPELLPOWER



You create a parasitic bond with a visible spellcasting target within 30 yards unless the target makes a successful **MAGIC (SPIRIT)** test vs. your Spellpower. Until the end of the encounter, an affected target must spend 1 extra mana point each time he casts a spell and each time this happens you gain 1 mana point.

MIND BLAST

MAGIC SCHOOL:	SPELL TYPE:	MANA COST:
SPIRIT	ATTACK	3 MP

CASTING TIME: MAJOR ACTION	TARGET NUMBER: 12
-----------------------------------	--------------------------

TEST: STRENGTH (MIGHT) vs. SPELLPOWER

You create a circular blast of telekinetic force with a 2 yard radius that's centered anywhere within 50 yards that you can see. Those caught in the blast are knocked prone and cannot take a major action on their next turn. Targets that make a successful **STRENGTH (MIGHT)** test vs. your Spellpower are only knocked prone. In either case, any prepared actions are lost.

ROCK ARMOR

MAGIC SCHOOL:	SPELL TYPE:	MANA COST:
PRIMAL	DEFENSE	3-8 MP

CASTING TIME: 1 MINUTE	TARGET NUMBER: 10
-------------------------------	--------------------------

TEST: NONE

Your skin becomes as hard as stone and protects you from harm. Rock armor has an Armor Rating equal to your Magic ability. The spell lasts for 1 hour but its duration can be extended by spending additional mana points. For each additional MP spent beyond the first 3, rock armor remains in effect for another hour, to a maximum of 6 hours total. A mage wearing regular armor gains no benefit from this spell. You can only cast this on yourself.

SHOCK

MAGIC SCHOOL:	SPELL TYPE:	MANA COST:
PRIMAL	ATTACK	4 MP

CASTING TIME: MAJOR ACTION	TARGET NUMBER: 13
-----------------------------------	--------------------------

TEST: CONSTITUTION (STAMINA) vs. SPELLPOWER

Electricity arcs from your hands or the end of your staff, shocking enemies in a 6-yard by 6-yard area. Anyone in this area takes 1d6 + Magic penetrating damage. Targets that make a successful **CONSTITUTION (STAMINA)** test vs. your Spellpower only take 1d6 penetrating damage.

SPELL SHIELD

MAGIC SCHOOL:	SPELL TYPE:	MANA COST:
SPIRIT	DEFENSE	4 MP

CASTING TIME: MAJOR ACTION	TARGET NUMBER: 13
-----------------------------------	--------------------------

TEST: NONE

You use your own magical power to protect yourself from the spells of others. The spell shield lasts a number of rounds equal to your Magic ability. During that time any spell (helpful or harmful) cast on you has no effect, but you must spend mana points equal to the spell's base mana cost (not counting deductions for spell stunts or talents). An arcane bolt cast at you would cause no damage, for example, but you would have to spend 2 MP (the spell's mana cost). If it's a spell that affects multiple targets, you are not affected but others are as normal. If you do not have enough mana points

left to pay the cost, the spell shield ends and the spell affects you as normal.

SPELL WISP		
MAGIC SCHOOL:	SPELL TYPE:	MANA COST:
CREATION	UTILITY	3 MP
CASTING TIME: 1 MINUTE		TARGET NUMBER: 11
TEST: NONE		

You summon a small wisp that floats near you for up to an hour and boosts the power of your spells. While the wisp is aiding you, you gain a +1 bonus to your Spellpower. The wisp itself is insubstantial and cannot be attacked or touched.

STONEFIST		
MAGIC SCHOOL:	SPELL TYPE:	MANA COST:
PRIMAL	ATTACK	3 MP
CASTING TIME: MAJOR ACTION		TARGET NUMBER: 11
TEST: CONSTITUTION (STAMINA) VS. SPELLPOWER		

You hurl a magical rock at a visible enemy up to 20 yards away. The rock inflicts 1d6 + Magic penetrating damage and the target is knocked prone. If the target makes a successful CONSTITUTION (STAMINA) test vs. your Spellpower, the spell only inflicts 1d6 penetrating damage and remains standing.

VULNERABILITY HEX		
MAGIC SCHOOL:	SPELL TYPE:	MANA COST:
ENTROPY	ATTACK	4 MP
CASTING TIME: MAJOR ACTION		TARGET NUMBER: 12
TEST: MAGIC (ENTROPY) VS. SPELLPOWER		

You curse a visible target within 20 yards, making him more vulnerable to attacks and spells. Until the end of the encounter, the target suffers a -1 penalty to Defense and a -2 penalty on ability tests vs. Spellpower. A target that makes a successful MAGIC (ENTROPY) test vs. your Spellpower only suffers the Defense penalty. A character can only be subject to one vulnerability hex at a time.

WALKING BOMB		
MAGIC SCHOOL:	SPELL TYPE:	MANA COST:
SPIRIT	ATTACK	4 MP
CASTING TIME: MAJOR ACTION		TARGET NUMBER: 13
TEST: CONSTITUTION (STAMINA) VS. SPELLPOWER		

You infuse the blood of an opponent within 10 yards with a corrosive poison. The round you cast it, walking bomb inflicts 1d6+1 penetrating damage. While the spell is in effect, the target must make a CONSTITUTION (STAMINA) test vs. your Spellpower at the start of each of his turns. If successful, the spell ends. If the test is failed, the target takes another 1d6+1 penetrating damage. Should the spell's damage reduce the target's Health to 0, he explodes in a spray of blood, flesh, and bones. Anyone within 4 yards of the exploding victim takes 2d6 damage.

WEAKNESS		
MAGIC SCHOOL:	SPELL TYPE:	MANA COST:
ENTROPY	ATTACK	3 MP
CASTING TIME: MAJOR ACTION		TARGET NUMBER: 11
TEST: MAGIC (SPIRIT) VS. SPELLPOWER		

Your magic drains a visible enemy within 20 yards of energy, making him slower and more sluggish. The target suffers a -1 penalty to Strength and Dexterity and a -5 penalty to Speed for a number of rounds equal to the casting roll's Dragon Die. If the target makes a successful MAGIC (SPIRIT) test vs. your Spellpower, he only suffers the Speed penalty.

WINTER'S GRASP		
MAGIC SCHOOL:	SPELL TYPE:	MANA COST:
PRIMAL	ATTACK	3 MP
CASTING TIME: MAJOR ACTION		TARGET NUMBER: 12
TEST: CONSTITUTION (STAMINA) VS. SPELLPOWER		

You envelop a visible target within 20 yards of you in a cloud of frost and ice that lasts a number of rounds equal to your Magic ability. The round you cast it, winter's grasp inflicts 1d6 penetrating damage. While the spell is in effect, the target must make a CONSTITUTION (STAMINA) test vs. your Spellpower at the start of each of his turns. If successful, the spell ends. If the test is failed, the target takes 1d6 penetrating damage and suffers a cumulative -2 penalty to Speed. Those killed by winter's grasp are frozen solid.

CHAPTER SIX



PLAYING THE GAME

By now you've seen almost all the elements of the *Dragon Age RPG*, but you haven't seen how they all work together. That is what this chapter is all about. First, it gives some practical advice on being a player. It then follows that up with the remaining rules of play, giving you what you need to know when you sit down at the table. Here you will find rules for ability tests, narrative and action time, combat, stunts, and healing. If you feel a bit overwhelmed after reading this chapter, don't worry. You don't need to memorize all this to play. The GM is there to help adjudicate the rules, and you'll pick things up as you play. And while reading the rules is important, nothing is a substitute for play. It is during a live game that you'll really see how it all fits and works together.

PLAYER BASICS

As you've surely noticed by now, this book contains a fair amount of rules material. The nuts and bolts of the game system are explained, along with plenty of examples to make everything clear. If you've never played a roleplaying game before, though, you may still be wondering what it means to be a player. Before getting into the nitty-gritty of ability tests and running combats, it's worth taking a step back and reviewing a few basics.

Your character sheet is a good place to start. You'll find a character sheet at the back of the book and you can photocopy this as needed. The character sheet is the cornerstone of your PC. Make sure you bring it to each game session, as playing without it is difficult. Some players leave their character sheets with, or make copies for, the GM to make sure this isn't a problem.

You should also ensure that your character sheet is up to date. It's up to you to track Health, experience points, ability increases, money, and other details. When you show up at a session, your character should be ready to go. Health is going to change the most, going up and down as your character gets into fights and heals up. You may want to track this on scratch paper so you don't have to constantly erase your sheet during play. If your character is wounded at the end of a session, be sure to note current Health so you have that for next time.

You'll also want to bring dice (at least 3d6, with a different color for the Dragon Die), a pencil, some scratch paper for notes, and any drinks and snacks you might want during play. You may also need to bring one or more miniatures if you are using battle maps (see page 62).

PLAYING ADVENTURES

During a session you will play your character through an adventure. It's the GM's job to present the adventure and yours to play a leading role. An adventure is played out in a series of scenes known as encounters. Each encounter builds on the last and leads ultimately to a climax and a conclusion. At the end of each play session you get experience points based on the resolution of each encounter. Your GM can tell you more about that, and rules for experience points are in the *Game Master's Guide* of this set.

There are three basic types of encounters in *Dragon Age*:

- **COMBAT ENCOUNTERS:** These are the classic action scenes that pit the adventuring group against one or more foes.
- **EXPLORATION ENCOUNTERS:** These scenes are about delving into the environment, and include such challenges as finding clues, overcoming natural hazards, avoiding traps, and solving puzzles.
- **ROLEPLAYING ENCOUNTERS:** These scenes are for conversation, intrigue, and investigation.

Each type of encounter has different challenges and rewards. Some require a lot of dice rolling and others none at all. Different players around the table may prefer different types of encounters. One may live for the thrill of combat, another for the challenge of problem solving, and another for the immersion of roleplaying. A good adventure will use all three types of encounters to mix things up and provide something for everyone.

ABILITY TESTS

During a game session, the GM sets the scene and then the players decide how their characters act and what they do in that scene. As a player, you narrate the actions of your character. You might say, "I search the library for a tome about the Fade." The GM tells you the results of your action, and may introduce new elements into the scene. His response might be: "You search for 10 minutes but before you find what you are looking for an angry priest bursts into the library and confronts you."

When your character is taking everyday actions that do not have a significant chance of failure, no dice need to be rolled. It's enough to say that you are walking to the tavern or buying a dagger from the local weaponsmith. When you want your character to do something that requires risk or has a real chance of failure, that's when the dice come out.

To resolve actions you must roll an ability test. These tests are the heart of the *Dragon Age* system and you'll make many in each game session. Ability tests are easy

to learn and quick to resolve, so the game can keep moving at a good pace.

To make an ability test, first pick up three six-sided dice (3d6). Two of the dice should be one color and the third a different color. The off-color die is known as the Dragon Die (see **The Dragon Die** sidebar on page 57). Roll all three dice and add the results together; you want to roll high. You then add the ability you're testing and another 2 if you have an applicable ability focus. The final number is your test result.

TEST RESULT = 3D6 + ABILITY + FOCUS

Even if you have several focuses that could apply, you can only use one on a test. You can never gain the benefits of more than one focus on an ability test.

EXAMPLE

The rogue Gerhard is trying to vault over a fence while on the run. The GM decides this is a Dexterity test. Gerhard's player rolls 3d6 and gets a 10 (3 + 3 + 4). He then adds his character's Dexterity of 3 and another 2 because he has an applicable focus (Acrobatics). Gerhard's final test result is 15 (10 + 3 + 2).

When ability tests are referred to in *Dragon Age* books, they use the following format: ability (focus). **CUNNING (ARCANE LORE)** and **CONSTITUTION (SWIMMING)** are examples of this format. In most cases, it does not matter if you have the listed focus. You can still attempt the test; you just won't get the bonus a focus provides. Some tests demand specialized skill or knowledge to even attempt, however, and those require you to have the focus to even attempt the test. If you don't have the required focus, you automatically fail. These tests note that the focus is required by using this format: **CUNNING (NAVIGATION REQUIRED)**.

EXAMPLE

The mage Lorrain and the rogue Gerhard find a book written in a strange script. Naturally, they try to decipher it. The GM tells the players that the test will be **CUNNING (ARCANE LORE REQUIRED)**. Lorrain has the Arcane Lore focus so he is able to make a test and read the book. Gerhard does not have the focus, so he has no hope of deciphering the book. It's gibberish to him.

TYPES OF TESTS

Now that you have the final result of the ability test, you need to compare it against another number to determine the outcome of the attempted action. There are two common types of test, basic and opposed, and you resolve each in a different way.

THE DRAGON DIE

You always roll three dice when taking an ability test, two dice of one color and one die of another. The off-colored die is known as the Dragon Die and it has several uses in the game system. It is used to measure degrees of success, to break ties, and to generate stunt points in combat. When you see a reference to the Dragon Die, just remember it's the off-colored die from ability tests.

MAKING A BASIC TEST

This is the most common sort of test. In a basic test, you are rolling against a fixed target number (abbreviated TN) determined by the GM.

1. You tell the GM what you are trying to do.
2. The GM determines the ability to be used and the applicable focus (if any). He then assigns a target number to the task based on its difficulty and the prevailing circumstances.
3. You make an ability test and figure out your test result.
4. If your test result is equal to or greater than the target number, you have successfully passed the test and completed the action.

EXAMPLE

The rogue Gerhard is trying to climb a building in the dark of night. The GM decides this is a Strength test and Climbing is the obvious focus. The wall has many handholds but it is dark, so the GM decides the target number is 13. Gerhard's player rolls and his test result is a 14. Despite the darkness, the rogue skillfully climbs the wall.

BASIC TEST DIFFICULTY

When a character takes a basic test, he must roll vs. a target number (TN) picked by the GM. The GM determines the target number based on his assessment of the test's difficulty. The GM should take all relevant factors into account, including terrain, weather, equipment, assistance, and so on. The following table provides benchmarks for basic test difficulty.

BASIC TEST DIFFICULTY	
TEST DIFFICULTY	TARGET NUMBER
Routine	7
Easy	9
Average	11
Challenging	13
Hard	15
Formidable	17
Imposing	19
Nigh Impossible	21

MAKING AN OPPOSED TEST

When your character is competing with another character directly, you must make an opposed test to see what happens. In this type of test, both characters get to roll and the results are compared. Another way to think about is that your target number is determined by your opponent's test result.

1. You tell the GM what you are trying to do.
2. The GM determines the ability and applicable focus (if any) to be used by you and your opponent. He may then assign bonuses or penalties to the ability rolls to either of you that take circumstances into account.
3. You and your opponent both make ability tests and figure out the test results.
4. Compare the test results. If you beat your opponent's test result, you win. If there's a tie, whoever rolled higher on the Dragon Die wins. If it's still a tie, whoever has the higher ability wins.

This same process can be used when more than two characters are competing. In such cases, everyone makes an ability test and all results are compared. The highest test result is the winner, with ties broken as in step 4.

Also note that that it isn't necessarily the case that all characters will be using the same ability. That would make sense in an arm wrestling bout, for example, with both characters making Strength tests. Other situations may require pitting one ability against a different one. A bodyguard trying to penetrate a spy's disguise, for example, would take a **PERCEPTION (SEEING)** test and his opponent a **COMMUNICATION (DISGUISE)** test.

EXAMPLE

Gerhard has made his climb, but he notices that a woman is taking the night air on the opposite side of the roof. He wants to quietly sneak to the trapdoor and slip into the building without the woman noticing. The GM decides that this is an opposed test of Gerhard's **DEXTERITY (STEALTH)** vs. the woman's **PERCEPTION (HEARING)**. Gerhard's player rolls a 10 and the GM rolls a 12 for the woman. The GM relates that the rogue was approaching the trapdoor when he kicked a potted plant he hadn't seen in the dark. At the sound the woman whips around and sees Gerhard. Now the rogue may be in trouble.

TESTS AND TIME

The GM determines how much time each test takes. This can vary from just a couple of seconds to an hour or more depending on what you are attempting. Sliding a dagger up your sleeve without anyone seeing would be a minor action taking but a moment, while asking around town a specific person might take two hours.

While you most commonly take tests when you initiate an action, sometimes you take them as a reaction or to resist something or someone. If pushed to the edge of a cliff, for example, you might have to pass a Dexterity test to avoid falling. Or if a mage cast a spell at you, you might have to make a Magic test to resist the effects. These sorts of reaction tests usually happen on another character's turn and taking them is considered to take no time. When it comes around to your turn again, you get your three actions as usual.

DEGREES OF SUCCESS

Most of the time, you only need to know if you succeeded in your ability test. Sometimes, however, it's important to know how well you succeeded. This is one of the uses of the Dragon Die. Check the dice on your ability test and note the number on the Dragon Die. The higher the number, the more impressive is your success. A 1 on your Dragon Die means you barely pulled it off, while a 6 means you did it flawlessly. Note that if you failed the test, the result of the Dragon Die is irrelevant.

Your GM will tell you when the result of your Dragon Die is important.

EXAMPLE

The rogue Gerhard, forced to flee the scene of an attempted burglary, wants to stash his gear in a stables while he hides in plain sight at a tavern. Guards will be searching for clues so the GM wants to know how good a job Gerhard did hiding his kit. Gerhard's player rolls a successful **DEXTERITY (LEGERDEMAIN)** test and gets a 5 on his Dragon Die. That means the gear is very well hidden indeed. When guards search the stable, the GM reflects that by adding 2 to the test's target number. With the added difficulty, none of the guards find the kit and Gerhard enjoys his drink in peace.

NARRATIVE TIME

It is the GM's job to track time in the game. It is divided into two types: narrative time and action time.

For much of play, time tracking will be rough. It isn't important to track things to the minute in most circumstances. If you tell the GM you want to climb a ridge to get a view of the surrounding countryside, he might say,



"It takes you about an hour to make the climb." Long distance travel is usually handled this way. A GM might say, *"Three days later you ride into town."* This sort of loose tracking is narrative time. A typical game will have sections of narrative time and action time interspersed. When the GM says, *"Roll for initiative,"* that's the signal that the game is switching into action time.

ACTION TIME

When things get tense and it starts to matter who does what in which order, narrative time ends and action time begins. Action time is most commonly used to handle combat, but it has other uses as well. Anything that would be considered an action scene in a movie can be handled with action time.

While narrative time is loose, action time is more tightly defined. Once it begins the GM tracks time in 15-second increments called rounds (so there are 4 rounds in a minute). During each round every character or creature in the encounter gets an opportunity to act. Once everyone has taken a turn, the round ends a new one begins.

When action time begins, the following procedure is used.

1. The GM says, *"Roll for initiative."* Action time is now in effect.

USING BATTLE MAPS

Many game groups play through combat encounters without the use of props. Actions are described and the GM keeps a mental picture of the battlefield and adjudicates distances and relative position on the fly. This keeps combat loose and doesn't bog the game down in tactical details. Other groups find they like to use a battle map and miniatures or other tokens to handle combat encounters because it makes it easier to see what's going on in the fight. And miniatures, particularly painted ones, look great and add a nice visual element to the game.

If your group is going to use battle maps, you'll need a miniature or token for each character. You have many choices here. The most popular miniatures are sized at 28mm and are made of either pewter or plastic. These days there are several pre-painted lines, though many gamers prefer to paint their own. There are also some cheaper options than miniatures, such as 2D tokens and cardboard stand-ups. Several companies make these in PDF format, so you can print out what you need when you need it. If all else fails, you can always use coins, colored stones, or even dice to represent characters on the map. If you do use dice, make sure no one scoops them up to make a roll!

You will also, of course, need battle maps. These come in a variety of sizes and formats. A popular option is the vinyl battle map overlaid with either squares or hexes. These can be drawn on with wet-erase markers, so terrain can be sketched out and then wiped away when the encounter is over. Dungeon walls, pits, water features, and even furniture can be quickly sketched in for all to see. Wet-erase markers come in different colors, allowing scenes to use blue for water, black for buildings, green for vegetation, and brown for relative altitudes of terrain. The height of objects can be written next to them, allowing players to distinguish quickly the 10-yard wall from the 20-yard tower.

Other companies make pre-printed maps of common locations like inns, shrines, dungeons, and so on. These have the advantage of looking great, but they must be used as is. Another option is map tiles, which are smaller areas that be built out into a larger map. You can get printed sets of such tiles, or PDFs that you can print out as needed. There are also some computer programs that let you design your own maps and then print them.

Using miniatures and battle maps in *Dragon Age* is easy. Two yards in the rules translates into 1 square or hex on the map. Round down if needed. So a character with Speed 9 would move 4 squares or hexes on a battle map with a move action. A short bow with a range of 32 yards can shoot up to 16 squares or hexes on a battle map.

A final option is to use miniatures with 3D terrain instead of a map. Some gamers, particularly those who regularly play miniatures games, have a ready supply of 3D terrain, such as hills, buildings, ruins, and so on. A table with built-out terrain is a beautiful thing. A cheaper option is again provided by PDF products. You can find fold-up terrain that you can print out and assemble as needed.

If you go with 3D terrain, there are no squares or hexes to regulate movement. Instead simply use a ruler or tape measure with each 2 yards of distance in the rules translating to 1" on the tabletop (and again, round down). So a throwing axe with a range of 8 yards could be thrown 4" on the tabletop.

2. Each player makes an initiative roll. This is a **DEXTERITY (INITIATIVE)** ability test. The GM rolls initiative for each major NPC and each group of minor NPCs (major NPCs act individually, while minor NPCs act together in groups).
3. The GM compares the test results of all the characters and arranges them from highest to lowest into an initiative list. This is the order that characters will take their turns in each round of the combat. If there's a tie, whoever rolled higher on the Dragon Die wins. If it's still a tie, whoever has the higher ability wins.
4. The character at the top of the initiative list takes his turn. On his turn, a character can take a major action and a minor action or two minor actions. Once the actions are resolved, this character's turn is over.
5. The next character on the initiative list takes his turn.
6. Repeat step 5 until each character has taken a turn.
7. Once each character has taken a turn, the round ends and a new one begins. Continue steps 4-7 each round. Initiative does not need to be rolled each round. The order remains set for the duration of the encounter. If new characters join the encounter, they roll initiative at the start of the round they appear and are added to the initiative list.
8. When the encounter is finished, the GM declares that action time is over. Narrative time now resumes.

EXAMPLE

The rogue Gerhard, the warrior Jannelle, and the mage Lorrahn are investigating an ancient graveyard when four fanged skeletons attack them. The players each roll for initiative and the GM rolls once for the skeletons (as a group, they will act at the same time on the initiative list). Putting the test results in order, the GM writes down the initiative list: Jannelle 14, Gerhard 12, Fanged Skeletons 9, and Lorrahn 8. Jannelle takes her turn first, followed by Gerhard, the skeletons, and Lorrahn. Then a new round begins with Jannelle taking another turn and so on.

TAKING ACTIONS

When it's your turn in a round, you tell the GM what you want to do. On your turn you can take a major action and a minor action or two minor actions. You can take these in any order and can take fewer actions if you like. You can talk while taking your actions, but since a round is only 15 seconds long, what you can say is limited.

A list of the most common major and minor actions follows. You are not limited to these actions. If you want to do something else, just tell the GM and he will adjudicate it. The GM may require you to take an ability test depending on what you are trying to do.

There are two additional actions of importance: cast and reload. Cast is used with a mage's spells and reload is used with missile weapons. Depending on the spell, weapon, and related talents, cast and reload can be major actions, minor actions, or free actions. See **CHAPTER 4: WEAPONS AND GEAR** and **CHAPTER 5: MAGIC** for more information.

Some actions take a negligible amount of time. They are known as free actions and they don't count towards your usual limitation on actions. The rules will note when something is a free action.

MAJOR ACTIONS

CHARGE: You may move up to half your Speed (rounded down) in yards and then make a melee attack against an adjacent enemy. You gain a +1 bonus on your attack roll.

DEFEND: You concentrate on defending yourself this round. Until the beginning of your next turn, you gain a +2 bonus to your Defense.

HEAL: You provide some quick first aid to an injured ally. You must be adjacent to your ally and you must have bandages ready. This is a TN 11 **CUNNING (HEALING)** test. If you are successful, your ally gets back an amount of Health equal to the **DRAGON DIE + YOUR CUNNING**. A character cannot benefit from another heal action until he takes additional damage.

MELEE ATTACK: You attack one adjacent enemy in hand-to-hand combat. An enemy within 2 yards of you is considered adjacent.

RANGED ATTACK: You fire or throw a missile weapon at one visible enemy within range.

RUN: You can move up to double your Speed in yards. You cannot take this action if you are prone (you'd need to use the Move action to stand up first).

MINOR ACTIONS

ACTIVATE: This action allows you to start using certain powers or items, such as fighting styles and potions.

AIM: You take the measure of your opponent and plan your next strike. If your next action is a melee attack or ranged attack, you gain a +1 bonus on your attack roll.

MOVE: You can move up to your Speed in yards. You can also go prone, stand up, or mount a horse or vehicle, but if you do so you can only move at half Speed (rounded down).

PREPARE: You pick one major action that you prepare to execute and then end your turn. Any time until your next turn, you can interrupt another character and take your prepared action immediately. If you don't use it

by your next turn, the action is lost. You cannot take the prepared action if you've already taken a major action on your turn.

READY: You can unsheathe a weapon, pull out a potion, or otherwise ready an item that is stowed. As part of this action, you can put away something already in hand. You could thus put away your bow and draw a sword, for example.

COMBAT ENCOUNTERS

Sometimes words are not enough. Sometimes conflict can only be settled in brutal combat. Young adventurers seek out such trials in the quest for honor and glory; veterans know that any fight you walk away from is a good one. Few are ready for the overpowering din of battle: arrows hiss through the air, steel clashes with steel, magical fire explodes, and the injured and dying cry for aid. Here you must fight for your life or become another forgotten corpse in the endless battles of Thedas.

Combat is the major feature of action time. Like everything else in *Dragon Age*, the core of combat is the ability test. Since lives are on the line, however, some additional rules are required. Specifically, you need to know how attacks are made, how damage is inflicted, and what it takes to kill a character.



MAKING ATTACKS

There are two basic types of attack: melee and ranged (magical attacks from spells are covered in **CHAPTER 5: MAGIC**). Both are handled the same way.

1. You start by picking a target. To make a melee attack, you must be adjacent to your opponent. To make a missile attack, you must be able to see your target and be within range. See **CHAPTER 4: WEAPONS AND GEAR** for more information about weapon ranges.
2. You make an attack roll. This is an ability test based on the weapon group of the weapon you are using (Strength for heavy blades, for example, or Dexterity for bows). This is modified by a focus if applicable and any other relevant bonuses (such as aiming, charging, magic items, talents, etc.).
3. Your attack roll is a basic ability test. Your target number is your opponent's Defense.
4. If your test result is equal to or greater than your opponent's Defense, your attack has hit.

EXAMPLE

It's the warrior Jannelle's turn. She sees a fanged skeleton 3 yards away and uses the charge action to close the distance and make an attack. Jannelle's player makes an attack roll. Jannelle is using a two-handed axe, so this is a Strength (Axes) ability test. The roll is a 9. To that she adds her Strength of 3, and she gets a +2 bonus because she has the Axes focus and another +1 for charging. Her test result for the attack roll is thus 15 (9 + 3 + 2 + 1). This beats the skeleton's Defense of 13, so Jannelle hits the creature with her axe.

INFLECTING DAMAGE

Once you've hit an opponent, you then inflict damage. Your damage roll determines if you struck a telling blow or one that was glancing and ineffectual. Armor is important here, as it protects the wearer from a certain amount of damage. The procedure for calculating damage follows.

1. Roll your weapon's damage and add your Strength ability and any other relevant modifiers (such as talents and magic). You can find the damage for each weapon in **CHAPTER 4: WEAPONS AND GEAR**. Note that weapons from the Bows Group add Perception instead of Strength to damage.
2. Subtract the armor rating of your opponent's armor (unless it's penetrating damage, in which case skip this step).
3. The result of steps 1 and 2 is your damage total. You inflict this amount of Health damage on your

opponent. Note that if your opponent is well armored you may hit but inflict no damage at all.

EXAMPLE

The warrior Jannelle has just hit a fanged skeleton with a two-handed axe. The axe's damage is 3d6, so Jannelle's player rolls 3d6 and gets a 10. She adds Jannelle's Strength of 3, and then subtracts the skeleton's armor rating of 4. The damage total is 9 (10 + 3 - 4), so the GM deducts 9 from the fanged skeleton's Health.

KILLING CHARACTERS

As characters lose Health, they get closer to death. When a Player Character's Health reaches 0, he is dying. He will die after a number of rounds equal to **2 + CONSTITUTION** unless he receives healing. A dying character can talk but cannot take any other actions. The character dies at the start of his turn on the final round, so his allies have until then to save him.

Most NPCs simply die when their Health reaches 0. The GM may apply the PC rules to major NPCs at his option, however.

Note that Health never goes below 0 (there is no negative Health).

EXAMPLE

The rogue Gerhard tries to escape from an angry mob. He takes a wrong turn down a dead end street and is cornered. He defends himself for 2 rounds, but a blow from street tough reduces him to 0 Health and Gerhard collapses on the cobbles. Since his Constitution is 2, Gerhard will die at the start of his turn 4 rounds from now. He had better hope his friends show up.

PULLING KILLING BLOWS

Sometimes characters want to incapacitate their opponents instead of killing them. When a blow is struck that would otherwise slay a character, the attacker can choose to pull the killing blow at the last second. This leaves the character unconscious with 1 Health. The character regains consciousness in 2d6 minutes unless circumstances dictate otherwise.

DELIVERING A COUP DE GRACE

A dying or unconscious character can be killed by a coup de grace. Any adjacent enemy can perform a coup de grace as a major action, and this automatically kills the target. A ranged attack can be used to deliver a coup de grace if the attacker makes a successful attack roll vs. Defense 10.

STUNTS

Combat is more than two fighters taking turns whacking at each other. A good fight should be dynamic and feature a lot of movement and action. The rules described so far create a good framework but to that the game adds stunts to mix things up and make fighting a little more unpredictable.

The stunt system is simple. If you make a successful attack roll and get doubles on any of the dice, you can perform one or more stunts in addition to dealing your normal damage. You receive a number of stunt points (SP) equal to the Dragon Die and must use them right away to perform stunts. Initially, all characters choose from the same list of stunts, but as characters gain levels they get access to new stunts and may use standard ones for fewer stunt points. These details can be found in each class's description.

You can only perform a given stunt once in a round. The only exception to this rule is the skirmish stunt, which can be used multiple times as long as you have enough stunt points.

Once you have decided on what stunts you want to use, you can narrate how your character pulled them off. You can perform the stunts in any order you choose.

The stunts on the **Standard Stunts** table can be used by any character for the SP cost indicated. Additional stunts can be found in class and monster descriptions.

EXAMPLE

Jannelle is trying to fight her way through the crowd to rescue Gerhard before he dies. She attacks a tough on the outside of the crowd. Her test result is an 18 in total and her dice read 3, 5, and 5, with one of the 5s being her Dragon Die. This beats the tough's Defense so Jannelle hits. Since she also rolled doubles, she receives a number of stunt points equal to her Dragon Die (5 in this case). Jannelle is trying to fight her way through the crowd, so she decides to perform three stunts. She spends 1 stunt point to use skirmish on the target of her attack, moving him to the side 2 yards. He also takes normal damage from the attack. Then Jannelle spends a second stunt point to use skirmish on herself to step into the spot recently vacated by her opponent. Lastly, she spends her remaining 3 stunt points to make a lightning attack. Since she is still adjacent to her original target, she could attack him, but chooses to attack a new opponent: the man now in front of her. She rolls another successful hit and gets doubles again. She does not, however, get any more SP. Jannelle's player describes how she barrels into the crowd shouting her war cry, smashing the tough aside and pushing forward to rescue her comrade.

STANDARD STUNTS

SP Cost	STUNT
1+	SKIRMISH: You can move yourself or the target of your attack 2 yards in any direction for each 1 SP you spend.
1	RAPID RELOAD: You can immediately reload a missile weapon.
2	KNOCK PRONE: You knock your enemy prone. Any character making a melee attack against a prone foe gains +1 bonus on the attack roll.
2	DEFENSIVE STANCE: Your attack sets you up for defense. You gain a +2 bonus to Defense until the beginning of your next turn.
2	DISARM: You knock your enemy's weapon 1d6 + Strength yards away in a direction you nominate.
2	MIGHTY BLOW: You inflict an extra 1d6 damage on your attack.
2	PIERCE ARMOR: You find a chink in your enemy's armor. His armor rating is halved (rounded down) vs. this attack.
3	LIGHTNING ATTACK: You can make a second attack against the same enemy or a different one within range and sight. You must have a loaded missile weapon to make a ranged attack. If you roll doubles on this attack roll, you do not get any more stunt points.
4	DUAL STRIKE: Your attack is so strong it affects two targets. First, pick a secondary target. He must be adjacent to you if you are using a melee weapon or within 6 yards of your primary target if you are using a missile weapon. Apply the test result of your original attack roll to the secondary target (in other words, you only make one attack roll and apply it to both opponents). If you hit the secondary target, inflict your normal damage on him.
4	SEIZE THE INITIATIVE: Your attack changes the tempo of the battle. You move to the top of the initiative order. This means you may get to take another turn before some of the combatants get to act again. You remain at the top of the order until someone else seizes the initiative.

MOUNTS AND COMBAT

Combatants can ride horses and other mounts. Accounting for that requires a few special rules.

You can mount an animal as part of a move action. If you do so, you can only move half your Speed in yards (a move action normally lets you move your Speed in yards).

Once you are mounted, you use move and run actions as normal, but you use the Speed of the mount instead of your own.

When engaging in melee combat, you get a +1 bonus on attack rolls vs. opponents on foot. The GM may rule that this does not apply vs. particularly large monsters.

Many mounts do not have attacks of their own (they aren't trained for fighting). Those that do take their

attacks on your turn in a round. You don't need to roll initiative separately for the mount.

Enemies can choose to attack you or your mount. You must keep track of your mount's Health.

Opponents can use the Knock Prone stunt to try to dismount you. This is more difficult than overbearing someone on foot, though, so you get a chance to resist it. If you make a successful **DEXTERITY (RIDING)** test, you remain mounted. The TN for this test is equal to 10 + opponent's Strength. If you fail, you are knocked to the ground, take 1d6 penetrating damage, and are now prone. The GM controls the actions of the mount until you re-mount or the encounter ends.

Passengers do not have to use move and run actions, as they are simply carried along. They take actions as normal but the GM should bear their situation in mind.

These rules also apply when driving a vehicle like a cart or wagon, but you use **STRENGTH (DRIVING)** for tests instead. If Knock Prone is used against a passenger of a vehicle, **DEXTERITY (ACROBATICS)** is used to resist it.

HEALTH AND HEALING

Health measures a character's fitness and wellbeing. A character with full Health is vigorous and ready for action. A character with less than full Health is fatigued or wounded. A character reduced to 0 Health is dying. Unless healing is received in **2 + CONSTITUTION** rounds, the character dies.

Health is fairly abstract by design, as is the nature of the damage received. When a character takes damage from a sword hit, for example, it can represent bruising, fatigue, loss of breath, or actual wounds. It would be tedious to track each cut or broken bone, so the rules sacrifice realism for the sake of playability. The exact nature of the damage isn't important. You just need to watch your character's Health and be careful when it gets close to 0.

When your character is wounded, there are several ways to heal.

- Another character can aid you with a heal action, as described previously in this chapter. You can't benefit from another heal action until you take more damage; there is only so much benefit you can gain from first aid. (see the **HEAL** action, p. 59)
- You can take a breather after a combat encounter. This is a 5-minute rest that lets you catch your breath, tend to minor cuts and abrasions, drink some water, and so on. After a breather, you get back **5 + CONSTITUTION + LEVEL** in Health. You can only take one breather after an encounter. If you were at 0 Health when the combat encounter ended, you cannot take a breather at all.

- You can get some sleep. If you can get at least 6 hours of restful sleep, you gain **10 + CONSTITUTION + LEVEL** in Health.
- You can receive magical healing. This is most commonly the mage spell heal.

EXAMPLE

Jannelle drives off the toughs before Gerhard dies and the combat encounter ends. He is still at 0 Health and dying, so she tries to save him with a heal action. She makes a **CUNNING (HEALING)** test, which is not her strong suit. However, she gets an 11 and just manages to save his life. She rolled a 10 (3 + 3 + 4) and then added her Cunning of 1 for a total of 11. Gerhard gets back 5 Health (the Dragon Die result of 4 plus 1 for Jannelle's Cunning). Not much, but better than dying. With Gerhard saved, Jannelle can relax a bit and take a breather. She rests for 5 minutes. She is a level 2 warrior with a Constitution of 2, so she gets back 9 Health (5 + 2 + 2). Since Gerhard had 0 Health when the combat encounter ended, he cannot take a breather.

GET OUT THERE AND PLAY!

You can read this book over and over but you won't really know the game until you play, so get out there and make it happen. Don't worry about remembering everything your first time out; that's not important. Getting a campaign going and having fun are what it's all about. Rules mastery will come in time.

If you still have questions, talk to your GM first. If you want other opinions, check out the *Dragon Age* forum on www.greenronin.com. Here you can meet and talk to other players and GMs, swap stories, and ask questions. At WWW.GREENRONIN.COM/DRAGON_AGE you can also find the following handy resources you can download and print:

- **AN EXPANDED TWO PAGE CHARACTER SHEET.** This version is more spacious and has more room for your character's details.
- **SIX PRE-GENERATED CHARACTERS.** If you don't have time to do a character creation session, these characters will let you jump right into the action.
- **QUICK REFERENCE SHEETS.** We've compiled the most commonly used info onto these play aids.

The *Dragon Age* page of our website is also where you'll find all the latest news about the game and where we'll post new resources and downloads.

Now pick up those dice and get ready to play!

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ABILITY: One of eight core benchmarks that define a character's physical and mental prowess. The abilities are Communication, Constitution, Cunning, Dexterity, Magic, Perception, Strength, and Willpower. They are used most commonly in ability tests.

ABILITY FOCUS: An area of expertise within an ability. A character that has an appropriate focus when making a test adds +2 to the test result. Only one ability focus can add to a test. Also known simply as focus.

ABILITY TEST: The most common dice roll in the game, an ability test is used to resolve actions and reactions. Test result = $3d6 + \text{ability} + \text{focus}$ (if applicable).

ACTIONS: During action time, a character can take a major action and a minor action or two minor actions. Free actions do not count toward this limit.

ACTION TIME: When it becomes important to track time precisely and know who did what when, the game switches from narrative time to action time. Time is tracked in 15-second rounds during action time, and characters take turns in initiative order. Action time is used most commonly to handle combat.

ADJACENT: When characters are within 2 yards of each other, they are said to be adjacent. You can only make melee attacks against adjacent targets.

ADVENTURE: A series of encounters that tells a complete story. Sometimes called a scenario. An adventure may take a single session to complete, or several.

ARMOR PENALTY: Each armor type has a penalty that represents its weight and bulk. The penalty applies to Speed if a character is trained in the armor's use, but to both Speed and Dexterity if the character is not.

ARMOR RATING: Each armor type has a numeric rating. When a character takes damage in combat, subtract the armor rating from the damage before deducting Health. Penetrating damage ignores armor rating, however.

ATTACK ROLL: The roll made when a character wants to attack in combat. This is an ability test with a target number equal to the opponent's Defense.

BACKGROUND: Each Player Character has a background that represents his culture and upbringing. The seven backgrounds in Set 1 are apostate, Avvarian Hillsman, Circle mage, city elf, Dalish elf, Fereldan freeman, and surface dwarf.

BASIC TEST: The most common ability test in the game. A test is made and the result compared to a target number determined by the GM. If the test result meets or beats the target number, the test is successful. Test result = $3d6 + \text{ability} + \text{focus}$.

BREATHING: This is a 5-minute rest that lets a character regain some Health after an encounter. After a breather, a character gets back $5 + \text{Constitution} + \text{Level}$ in Health. Characters can only take one breather after an encounter. Those at 0 Health when the combat encounter ended cannot take a breather at all.

CAMPAIGN: This is the continuing story of the Player Characters, as experienced

through a series of adventures. If an adventure is a short story starring the PCs, a campaign is a novel.

CASTING ROLL: A mage can cast any known spell by making a successful casting roll and spending the required number of mana points. Casting roll = $3d6 + \text{Magic} + \text{focus}$ (if applicable).

CASTING TIME: The amount of time, usually expressed in actions, which it takes to cast a spell.

CLASS: Each Player Character has a class that represents his path in life and provides a framework for advancement. There are three classes in Set 1: mage, rogue, and warrior.

CLASS POWERS: A class provides a character with a variety of special powers, such as ability focuses and talents. Known collectively as class powers, they are listed out by level in the class descriptions.

COPPER PIECE (CP): The smallest standard unit of currency.

DAMAGE ROLL: A damage roll is made when a character successfully hits an opponent in combat. Damage total = weapon damage + Strength - opponent's armor rating. The opponent deducts the damage total from his Health.

DEFENSE: Defense measures how hard it is to hit a character in combat. The higher the Defense, the better. Defense = $10 + \text{Dexterity} + \text{shield bonus}$ (if applicable).

DEGREE OF SUCCESS: When it's important to know how well a character performed on an ability test, the Dragon Die is used to determine the degree of success. The higher the Dragon Die, the greater the degree of success.

DICE: *Dragon Age* uses only one type of dice, the six-sided die. Usually abbreviated **d6**.

DRAGON DIE: In an ability test two dice of one color and one of another are rolled. The Dragon Die is the off colored die and it is used to measure degrees of success in ability tests and to generate stunt points during action time.

ENCOUNTER: An encounter is a scene in an adventure. There are three types of encounters: combat encounters, exploration encounters, and roleplaying encounters.

EXPERIENCE POINTS (XP): Player Characters receive experience points after completing encounters during an adventure. A running total is kept and when they accrue enough XP, characters gain a new level.

FREE ACTION: An action that takes a negligible amount of time. It does not count toward a character's usual limit of actions on a turn.

GAME MASTER (GM): The Game Master runs the game and acts as a referee. The Game Master's Guide has much more information on this key role.

GOLD PIECE (GP): The largest standard unit of currency. 100 silver pieces = 1 gold piece.

HEALTH: This is a measure of a character's fitness and wellbeing. Class choice determines starting Health and characters get $1d6 + \text{Constitution}$ more each

time they gain a level. A Player Character whose Health drops to 0 will die in Constitution + 2 rounds unless he or she receives healing.

INITIATIVE: At the start of action time, each character rolls for initiative. This is a **DEXTERITY (INITIATIVE)** test. The GM arranges the test results from highest to lowest; this is the order in which characters take their turns during a round. If there's a tie, whoever rolled higher on the Dragon Die wins. If it's still a tie, whoever has the higher ability wins.

LEVEL: Player Characters and some NPCs have a level. This is a measure of the character's prowess and ranges from 1-20. Set 1 provides rules for Player Characters of levels 1-5.

MAGIC SCHOOL: There are four schools of magic—Creation, Entropy, Primal, and Spirit—and each spell belongs to one and only one of them.

MAJOR ACTION: An action that takes most of a round to complete. If you take a major action, you can also take a minor action in the same round.

MANA POINTS (MP): Mana points are used to power spells and each mage has a number of MP based on level. A mage who wants to cast a spell must spend the required number of mana points and make a successful casting roll.

MINIMUM STRENGTH: Some weapons are heavy and/or difficult to wield. A character must have the minimum Strength listed to use a weapon effectively. Otherwise the weapon counts as an improvised weapon (even if the character is trained in its use).

MINOR ACTION: An action that takes only part of a round to complete. You can take two minor actions in a round, or one major and one minor action.

NARRATIVE TIME: The periods of play during which it is not important to track time precisely. Most roleplaying encounters and exploration encounters take place during narrative time.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTER (NPC): Any character portrayed by the GM.

OPPOSED TEST: When characters vie against each other, an opposed test is made. This is like a basic test, but the characters compare test results instead of trying to meet or beat a target number. If there's a tie, whoever rolled higher on the Dragon Die wins. If it's still a tie, whoever has the higher ability wins.

PENETRATING DAMAGE: Armor offers no protection against penetrating damage. Armor ratings are considered to be 0 against it.

PLAYER CHARACTER (PC): The heroes of a *Dragon Age* campaign. In a typical game, each player controls one PC.

PRIMARY ABILITIES: Each class has three abilities that are most important to it. They are known as primary abilities and a Player Character can increase one of them by 1 each time an even numbered level is gained.

RANGE: Each missile weapon has a short and long range. If a target is within short range, attack rolls are made as normal. If a target is within long range, but farther away than short range, attack rolls suffer a -2 penalty.

ROUND: A 15 second increment of time used during action time. During a

round, each character in the encounter gets one turn to act.

SECONDARY ABILITIES: Each class has five abilities that are less important to it than primary abilities. They are known as secondary abilities; a Player Character can increase one of them by 1 each time an odd numbered level is gained.

SHIELD BONUS: A character using a shield is harder to hit and adds the shield bonus to his Defense.

SILVER PIECE (SP): The most common standard unit of currency. 100 copper pieces = 1 silver piece.

SPEED: Speed measures a character's gait and quickness of foot. A character can move up to a number of yards equal to Speed when taking a move action, or double that with a run action.

SPELL: A special few can draw mana from living matter around them and shape it into spells. The ability to cast spells is the major class feature of the mage.

SPELLPOWER: This is the measure of a mage's might; certain spells allow the target(s) to test against it to resist or at least offset their effects. Spellpower = $10 + \text{Magic} + \text{focus}$ (if applicable).

SPELL STUNT: A special enhancement a mage can make when doubles are rolled on a casting roll. This generates a number of stunt points equal to the result of the Dragon Die.

SPELL TYPE: There are four types of spell—attack, defense, enhancement, and utility. Each spell falls into one of these categories.

STRAIN: When a mage wearing armor casts a spell, he must add the strain of the armor to mana cost. Strain ranges from 1 for light leather to 6 for heavy plate.

STUNT: A special move a character can make in combat when doubles are rolled on an attack roll. This generates a number of stunt points equal to the result of the Dragon Die.

STUNT POINTS (SP): These are used to perform stunts. A character must spend the stunt points immediately and no stunt but skirmish can be performed more than once on your turn.

TALENT: An area of natural aptitude and/or special training. Each talent has two degrees: novice and journeyman. A Player Character gains talents primarily through class.

TARGET NUMBER (TN): You must meet or beat this number to make a successful ability test. The higher the target number, the more difficult the test.

TURN: During action time, each character gets one turn to act each turn. On a turn a character can take a major action and a minor action or two minor actions. A character may opt to take fewer actions on a turn if desired.

WEAPON DAMAGE: The base damage a weapon inflicts on a successful hit.

WEAPON GROUPS: Weapons are divided into groups, each of which usually consists of three weapons. A Player Character receives training in weapon groups through his or her class. If a character uses a weapon in which he is not trained, he suffers a -2 penalty on attack rolls and inflicts half damage (add Strength and then divide by two, rounding down). If it's a missile weapon, its range is also halved.

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DRAGON AGE™

NAME

BACKGROUND

AGE

GENDER

APPEARANCE

HEIGHT

WEIGHT

DISTINGUISHING
FEATURES

SPEED

DEFENSE

ARMOR

HEALTH



ARMOR TYPE

COMMUNICATION

FOCUSES

RATING

CONSTITUTION

FOCUSES

RATING

CUNNING

FOCUSES

RATING

DEXTERITY

FOCUSES

RATING

MAGIC

FOCUSES

RATING

PERCEPTION

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EQUIPMENT & MONEY

CONCEPT, GOALS & TIES

GP

SP

CP