

"I will never understand the fascination that orks have with time. What is your urgency? Don't all things happen at their own passion-granted pace?" - Dorgomor, Obsidiman Warrior

"Hmmpf! That's easy to say coming from a race that lives over nine hundred years!" - Grith Sirrik, Ork Cavalryman

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Introduction

Not long after starting our Earthdawn campaign, we decided that our players needed some way of developing their characters between adventures, in particular, using a method that would fit in with our episodic style of campaign play. A system was required for working out exactly what characters were doing between games – what skills and talents they were increasing, what purchases they were making, how old they were getting, etc.

This led to the development of the Earthdawn Downtime System (abbreviated EDS in this document, for purposes of brevity) presented here. Either taken as it is here, or with a little refinement, we are sure that it will work for your Earthdawn campaign as well.

We accept any contributions from anyone actively using the Earthdawn Downtime System. Such contributions can't (unfortunately) be rewarded in monetary terms, but we do provide recognition for your efforts by noting your comments in an italicized paragraph starting with the keyword **Contribution**. The name of the contributor is included here in parentheses (). Our **Reply** to your comments, if any, will be shown after that of the contributor.

***Contribution** (Stephen F Eley): "I use EDS as the backbone for all in-town interaction in my game. It's mechanically simple and easy to use, and it lets people get most things done in a reasonable amount of time. If there's an in-context reason why things should be simpler or more complicated in a specific instance, we'll roleplay it; otherwise, we always rely on EDS. And your calendars are invaluable."*

Downtime

Downtime is the time characters spend between planned, or unplanned, scenarios. The EDS mechanics are intentionally simple, being designed to minimize the amount of gamemaster interaction required with players between scenarios. It also serves as an excellent system for aging new characters, providing them with important background, before they begin adventuring with more experienced characters.

Gamemaster vs. Players

Gamemasters or players may have a problem with the abstract nature of EDS. Most gripes tend to come from those players who want individual attention to their character's needs. It is a fair comment to make, but it is also fair to distribute gamemaster attention equally around all players. Here is a possible solution to this problem:

- As gamemaster, make a roster of all player characters in your campaign.
- Each gaming session, let one player character get some detailed interaction before starting the forthcoming scenario.
- Continue this process, checking each player character off the list, until everyone has had a turn. Then start again!

This solution ensures that the following conditions are met:

- Each player gets an opportunity to have some detailed downtime roleplaying.

Sometimes it's nice to roleplay out the purchase of a major item of equipment or the interaction with someone you are learning Spells from.

- The gamemaster still benefits from the main reason for using the EDS system, which is to reduce the amount of time spent between games sorting through last minute purchases, training, etc.

This also gives the gamemaster the opportunity to do a bit of "last minute" preparation before the game starts, once he or she knows exactly which characters will be taking part in the upcoming scenario.

Important! This part shouldn't have to be written, but we feel it must be at least mentioned. **The EDS system only works if there is trust between GM and player!** There is a lot of scope for "dice manipulation" in EDS. Gamemasters have to trust that their players are actually making the dice rolls they claim they are, and not fudging the results. Players are only cheating themselves if they cheat using EDS (or any other system for that matter)!

Remember, if the GM has to continually check on players to ensure that they are getting the results they say they are, then it defeats one of the points of using EDS. As a player, should you have any doubts as to how to resolve a particular part of EDS, take the time to ask your gamemaster. It may clarify a point that other players are having difficulty with as well, or even lead to a new game mechanic being added to the system!

Contribution (Stephen F Eley): *"I'm not sure if your intent was for players to track all this stuff themselves without GM intervention. I let them do the record-keeping, but they have to run all of it by me before it can be considered to happen. Some parts are necessarily GM-controlled, like finding out what spells a teacher has."*

Reply (James D Flowers): *"Our intent was to provide a system that allowed players to do most of their own legwork between games. However, it is up to the individual GM as to whether she or he requires players to have their EDS records checked between games. Personally, I too check my players record-keeping in the same way as Stephen does. The GM-controlled sections are no problem either. I have a list of pre-rolled spells for spellcasting tutors of different Circles, which are handed out to those players learning spells after they have confirmed their teacher's Circle and availability status. Depending upon the GM's requirements, similar systems work for the more common magic items as well. I also have a cap on the number of Healing Potions, etc., available for purchase each month. Characters can bargain until they drop from exhaustion, but if there aren't any Last Chance Salves left, then there aren't any left anywhere at any price!"*

The Downtime Period

The length of time characters spend performing downtime will vary from game to game. Some scenarios provide for little time between adventuring sessions (parts of FASA Corporation's *Terror in the Skies*, for example). Others provide a lot of time between adventuring sessions (most of FASA Corporation's *Mists of Betrayal*, for example).

Work out how much time characters spend on downtime in one of the following ways:

- Catch-up time for (secondary) characters, not in mainstream play
- A period of time determined by general player consensus
- A period of time determined by the gamemaster

It's okay to place some limits on the downtime period. A rule of thumb here is to allow for "no more than the average party Circle, in months" of downtime between played sessions. A standard "3 month maximum" also works well, allowing less experienced characters time to train talents and skills, while more experienced characters will find that they require several downtime periods, which means a longer wait, to increase their skills to higher Ranks.

Once the length of downtime has been decided upon, players can start working out what their characters are actually doing during the downtime period. The gamemaster should note downtime (all game time, in fact) clearly on the EDS Calendar Worksheet.

It may be useful to number each Earthdawn scenario, and create a quick coding chart for your campaign. This is great for tracking how long each scenario takes to complete, and provides a concise reference for players looking back at their character's history, particularly when they want to see an overall picture of campaign events. This can be taken to whatever level of detail the gamemaster desires, effectively creating a running "live" campaign log.

Example: James starts keeping a track of his new Earthdawn campaign. He has decided to put his players through FASA Corporation's *Mists of Betrayal* adventure, but there are likely to be a few sub-plots and encounters placed throughout the published pack. He decides to label *Mists of Betrayal* as adventure 1. Each session during the adventure will be given a separate number, 1.1, 1.2, etc.

The first session he runs is an encounter with a minor Horror, nothing to do with the main *Mists of Betrayal* adventure, but serving as a lead-in to the Earthdawn game itself. He decides that this will be labeled 0.1, "The Dwarf Woodcutter." After successfully completing this scenario, the players get 1 week of downtime, with GM-imposed limited activities, before starting session 1.1, the first part of *Mists of Betrayal*.

James notes down how long 0.1 took to complete on his EDS Calendar Worksheet, and updates his campaign log, filling in the code number (0.1), the name of the scenario (*The Dwarf Woodcutter*), a brief description of the scenario (now that would be telling) and what player characters took part. He also notes the 1 week of downtime and takes the opportunity to check the players' Activity Worksheets (it is the first time they've used EDS, after all). With that all out of the way, the players settle down for the start of the forthcoming adventure...

Important! Once the downtime period has been decided upon, that's it! No last minute changes, even as a result of general player consensus. The reason for deciding this now is to allow the gamemaster to get on with scheduling the next session. The start date may be critical to the new scenario, therefore it shouldn't be changed just because players find they need another "one or two days to finish training." Choose how much downtime you think you'll need carefully! Remember, the GM may over-rule the downtime period, depending on his or her campaign needs, so it might pay for players check with the gamemaster first before talking about what the player characters require.

Daily Legend Point Awards

People gain experience from exposure to many different things. The Earthdawn rules account for this by allowing characters to gain Legend Points by slaying foul (and fair) creatures, obtaining ancient magical treasures and generally performing heroic deeds. EDS gives player characters an opportunity to “spend” their hard-earned Legend Points. But it also gives characters and non-player characters Legend Points for another form of non-heroic activity.

All characters are awarded 5 Legend Points per day, for simply “being alive.” This amounts to 1825 Legend Points per year, including Earth-Time, the five day Throalic holiday period between the months of Gahmil and Raquas. It should provide enough Legend Points to purchase one or two Ranks in multiple skills or talents, but not nearly enough to easily gain Ranks higher than 4 in any specific skill or talent. It simply takes too many Legend Points, particularly when purchasing Skill Ranks. For adepts, these daily Legend Points supplement their normal Legend Point awards for adventuring. If the gamemaster wishes, this award can be halved for non-adepts, but either way it serves as a useful mechanism for guiding the development of non-player characters.

Important! These points should always be awarded, even during normal game adventuring. Some gamemasters may have a problem with this however, in which case simply award daily Legend Points only for downtime. It is easiest to award daily Legend Points at the beginning *or* the end of downtime for the entire downtime period. This makes book-keeping a lot easier for players and gamemasters alike. If awarded at the end, then these points can be spent during the next adventure (for activities such as Karma Ritual) or during the next downtime period.

***Example:** The characters have just completed scenario 0.1, “The Dwarf Woodcutter,” the first adventure of their Earthdawn gaming life. James, the gamemaster, has allocated the players 1 week of downtime to develop their characters before the next game session starts. Scenario 0.1 took 2 days to complete. This means the daily Legend Point award, when added to the 1 week downtime period (7 days) will give each character an extra 45 (9 days x 5 LPs) Legend Points to spend, in addition to those they earned during the gaming session. James allocates these bonus points now, before the players decide what their characters are doing during downtime.*

What Can You Do?

As mentioned earlier, EDS is intentionally designed as an abstract system. This means that choice of activities for characters between scenarios is more limited than in an actual roleplaying situation. Some activities take longer than one day to perform. Some activities take less than one day to perform. No activity takes less than half a day to perform. See the section on Downtime Activities below for full details.

The gamemaster should resist any player’s attempts to carry out actions other than those listed as Downtime Activities in EDS (see the Introduction above for a possible exception, “detailed interaction”). The whole point of EDS is to quickly simulate the passing of time between scenarios. Once the current game session has started, players can have their characters interact in a more detailed manner.

Important! Some of the activities listed can only be used in an established settlement (village, town or city). A comment to this effect is included as part of the activity description, along with any limitations on such activities. Use your common sense, or consult the gamemaster for clarification. Some activities also have a monetary or Legend Point cost associated with them. These are also noted in the activity description.

Important! The activity descriptions, particularly training periods may differ from comparable entries in the main Earthdawn rulebook. This is intentional. Skill training is a good example of a core system modified in favor of EDS.

How Long is a Week?

Many of the activities described in EDS take weeks to perform. Depending on whether the GM is using a Theran or Throalic calendar, the length of a week could be either 5 or 7 days.

Important! It is important that the players are clear in advance as to how long a standard week is in the campaign. The EDS Calendar Worksheets have been worked in 5 day blocks to facilitate ease of working. This means there is an even number of weeks throughout the year, including 5 days for Earth-Time. It doesn't necessarily mean that we are Theran saboteurs trying to subvert the course of the game by preaching the Theran calendar as gospel. Or perhaps it does... At some future date, an alternate set of EDS Calendar Worksheets will be provided in 7 day increments. These will be setup for a range of years, with provision for the GM to change years as required for his or her campaign.

Cost of Living

The standard cost of living at a comfortable level is 5 silvers per day, multiplied by the character's highest discipline Circle. Non-adepts can be treated as equivalent to First Circle characters for this calculation. The gamemaster will note any obvious exceptions (Theran Ambassadors would definitely NOT spend a mere 5 silvers per day!). Players may wish to have their characters live a lot better than this of course, although there are no EDS game benefits for doing so (it does keep the local merchants happy though).

The cost of living is based on information found in FASA Corporation's Barsaive boxed set (pages 10-11 of the Barsaive Gamemaster Book). The basic cost of living, for a comfortable existence, is given as approximately 150 silvers per Circle per month. When converted to a daily living cost for a First Circle adept, based on a 30 day Throalic month, it works out to be 5 silvers per day.

Important! All characters must maintain a standard of living commensurate with their highest experience Circle. Characters who fail to maintain a living standard equal to that of their highest discipline Circle suffer the equivalent of a Talent Crisis (see FASA Corporation's Adept's Way™ sourcebook for details) and are penalized -1 step on all talent rolls per level difference they fail to maintain.

Example: *A Fourth Circle Warrior, who can only afford a Second Circle living standard, operates at -2 steps (4-2) to all her talent rolls.*

This penalty continues to affect the character until he or she has "made up the lost living standard" by spending the required extra time living at an artificially high lifestyle.

Example: *After 2 weeks, the Fourth Circle Warrior from the previous example comes into some money. Her penalty still remains at -2 steps until she has spent at least 2 weeks living at a Sixth Circle (4+2) standard of living, or 4 weeks living at a Fifth Circle (4+1) standard of living. Effectively she has lost the equivalent of 4 Circles (-2 Circles x 2 weeks) of living, which have to be made up for.*

Remember, this is the cost for a comfortable standard of living. A wealthy standard of living can be three, or more, times as expensive. It is recommended that the Cost of Living only be applied to EDS downtime, not normal adventuring time. Some disciplines, it can be argued, would not spend such sums of money, with their interests lying elsewhere. It is up to the gamemaster how to handle these exceptions, although our recommendation is to apply Living Costs to all characters, regardless of discipline. Remember that it's unfair to penalize some characters at the expense (sic) of others. The Cost of Living, as presented here, does balance out in the end.

Contribution (Stephen F Eley): *"We recently capped out living expenses at 25 silvers a week up until at least Fourth Circle. (After which it will probably raise to 50 or so.) My game isn't a high-loot game, and PC's sometimes found themselves running a deficit on weeks they spent working. Also, I despise the notion of "talent crises," so originally living below your Circle meant that Legend Awards went down... That's not likely to happen again for quite some time, so I might just drop the penalty rule."*

Reply (James D Flowers): *"Change the cost of living to suit your game. If you feel that characters are making too much money, simply raise the Cost of Living. The reverse is also true. Of course, you might have to make up a good reason to explain the sudden increase in rent and food prices..."*

Activities

The activities and descriptions given below are a sample of what actions can be carried out by characters during EDS downtime.

Players should note their character's downtime activities (all game time, in fact) clearly on their EDS Activity Worksheet.

Shown in parentheses (), after the name of each activity, is a capitalized code that can be written down on the character's EDS Activity Worksheet. **Bold text**, surrounded by square brackets [], describes how long the activity takes to perform. Read the description for each activity thoroughly for full details and any special rules.

Important! The gamemaster may have some additional activity codes, or some revised downtime rules. Check with him or her regarding this possibility before using any of these activities. Some training times or difficulty numbers are quite different from those described in the Earthdawn rulebook. **This is intentional!** Because of the abstract nature of EDS, some liberties have been taken to ensure the system works without having to make continual reference to sets of published rules. Again, where appropriate, consult your GM if there are any questions.

Adventuring (ADV)

[Variable number of days, depending on the scenario]

This is a code for characters to write down on their EDS Activity Worksheet to show when "real" adventuring occurred. A separate code can be noted down here, if the gamemaster is using a coding system for his or her scenarios.

No Cost of Living is required for ADV time. Daily Legend Points are awarded for ADV time, unless the GM rules otherwise. You will already have worked out what happened during this period, so nothing else is needed. Note that Karma Rituals must have been performed during the scenario itself to be eligible for noting down here.

***Example:** Caelarion, an up and coming Elven Nethermancer, spends 16 days on an adventure, hunting down a notorious horror. After returning, unsuccessful and remarkably undamaged, to his home town of Haven his player, Michael, notes down 16 days of ADV activity time on Caelarion's EDS Activity Worksheet. He also includes the GM's code for this scenario, 3.7 "Death Stalks the Countryside," so that he can match it back to the gamemaster's main campaign calendar later.*

Attribute Increase (ATT)

[One (1) day, times the new Attribute Value]

This activity doesn't require consecutive days of training, but the player must note clearly which Attribute is being trained. Characters can do a day here, a day there, and eventually meet the requirement for Attribute increase (see the Earthdawn rulebook, pages 220-221). Training can be performed anyway, regardless of whether the character is in a settlement. The cost of Attribute training is 10 silvers per day of training. The Legend Point cost is variable, depending on how many points the Attribute has previously been increased by. The Attribute Increase Table, from page 221 of the Earthdawn rulebook is reproduced here, showing Legend Point costs.

Increase to Attribute	Legend Point Cost
1	800
2	1,300
3	2,100
4	3,400
5	5,500

Characters do not have to Locate a Tutor (see below) for this activity. Only one Attribute can be trained up between Circles, as per the Earthdawn rulebook, pages 220-221. If the player changes his or her mind as to which of the character's Attributes is being trained, any Attribute Training already carried out is lost.

Example: *Caelarion is approaching Fourth Circle. Before he hits this heady level, Michael decides that Caelarion will increase his Perception Attribute Value from 17 to 18. He has already spent 6 days, and 60 silvers, training his Perception during previous downtime periods. This time he notes down the remaining 12 days (6 days plus 12 days equals 18 days, the new Attribute Value) of ATT activity time down on Caelarion's EDS Activity Worksheet. Michael also subtracts an additional 120 silvers from Caelarion's cash pool, not to mention Caelarion's Cost of Living during this time.*

Contribution (Stephen F Eley): *"Raising an Attribute still takes a number of days equal to the new Attribute value, but I decided it's actually a couple of hours on each of those days, so you can still do other things during that time like find items or whatnot."*

Reply (James D Flowers): *"Again, it's up to the individual GM. My thought here is if this activity takes less than a day, then it's not really worth recording as a separate activity. Because of the abstract nature of the system, it could be argued that the character may very well only be actively training for a few hours each day but, due to the exhaustive nature of the training, he or she is unable to do much else other than rest or perform minor activities. Perhaps allow a half day activity like Purchase."*

Blood Oaths (OAT)

To be completed...

Circle Increase (CIR)

[Number of days equal to the new Circle number]

This activity requires consecutive days of downtime to perform. It also requires that the character first successfully finds, and hires a Tutor (see the Locate Tutor activity below). The gamemaster may impose other restrictions on this activity, as he or she sees fit. Of course, the character must also meet the Minimum Number of Talent requirements to advance to the next Circle (see the Earthdawn rulebook, page 223). Training Costs are as per the Earthdawn rulebook, page 223, but may be reduced as a result of impressive Charisma rolls when Locating a Tutor (Good -10%, Excellent -20%, Extraordinary -30%).

Tables from page 223 of the Earthdawn rulebook are reproduced here, showing Circle Advancement requirements and Training Costs.

New Circle	Minimum # of Talents	Minimum Rank	Single Talent from Circle #
2	5	2	1
3	6	3	2
4	7	4	3
5	8	5	4
6	9	6	5
7	10	7	6
8	11	8	7
9	12	9	8
10	13	10	9
11	14	11	10
12	15	11	11
13	16	12	12
14	17	12	13
15	18	13	14

Tutor's Circle	Cost in Silvers
2	200
3	300
4	500
5	800
6	1,000
7	1,500
8	2,000
9	2,500
10	3,500
11	5,000
12	7,500
13	10,000
14	15,000
15	20,000

This activity is a simplified method for characters to advance to the next Circle. Gamemasters may want to run Circle Increases as "one on one" scenarios, using the rules in FASA Corporation's Earthdawn Companion and Adept's Way supplements. If this is the case, gamemasters shouldn't allow characters to choose this as a valid downtime activity.

Example: Caelarion meets the Minimum Number of Talents requirement for Fifth Circle. Michael decides that Caelarion will take the plunge and advance a Circle. First Caelarion has to Locate a Tutor, who will provide him with the lead-in and training for the next Circle (see Locate Tutor below). After eventually finding a Sixth Circle Tutor, with an average result (no reduction to the Training Cost) on his Charisma test, Michael notes down 5 days of CIR activity for Caelarion, and subtracts the appropriate cost (1,000 silvers) from his money pool. Caelarion is now Fifth Circle and can start adding the new talents acquired at this new Circle to his character sheet.

Enchanting (ENC)

To be completed...

Karma Ritual (#)

[Special Duration]

This is a “no activity” activity, and may be performed anytime (see the Adventuring activity however) once per day, in addition to whatever other activity the character is carrying out that day. Note that a Karma Ritual activity has occurred by writing the number of points gained from the ritual in parentheses () beside the other activity code for the day. Don't forget to erase the required number of Legend Points from the character's Current Legend Point total for performing the Karma Ritual, and update the character's Current Karma Points as well.

Example: During Caelarion's 2 days of non-activity he is still careful to ensure that his Karma Point pool is kept topped up, for emergencies of course! Michael notes the number of points of Karma Caelarion gained each day in parentheses (1) beside the NA activity code for each day, NA(1). He then subtracts the Legend Point cost for the Karma Points gained from his Current Legend Point total.

Learn Knack (KNA)

To be completed...

Learn Spells (SPL)

[One (1) day times the Circle of the Spell to learn, plus one (1) day to scribe the Spell]

The character must first find a Tutor (see the Locate Tutor activity below) willing to teach the character new Spells. Once a Tutor has been successfully found, the character must randomly determine what Spells the Tutor is willing to teach the character.

Roll a number of times depending on how many Spells the Tutor knows, allocating a different number against each Spell. If the same Spell is rolled then still count it as one roll. In this way it is possible to make, say, four rolls and get only three Spells. The number of Spells that a particular Tutor is willing to teach varies depending on his or her Circle, as follows:

Number of Spells Available

Tutor Circle	Number of Spells
2	1 x First, 1 x Second Circle
3	3 x First, 2 x Second, 1 x Third Circle
4	4 x First, 3 x Second, 2 x Third, 1 x Fourth Circle
5	5 x First, 4 x Second, 3 x Third, 2 x Fourth, 1 x Fifth Circle
6	6 x First, 5 x Second, 4 x Third, 3 x Fourth, 2 x Fifth, 1 x Sixth Circle
7	7 x First, 6 x Second, 5 x Third, 4 x Fourth, 3 x Fifth, 2 x Sixth, 1 x Seventh Circle
8	8 x First, 7 x Second, 6 x Third, 5 x Fourth, 4 x Fifth, 3 x Sixth, 2 x Seventh, 1 x Eighth Circle

Tutor Circle Number of Spells	
9	9 x First, 8 x Second, 7 x Third, 6 x Fourth, 5 x Fifth, 4 x Sixth, 3 x Seventh, 2 x Eighth, 1 x Ninth Circle
10	10 x First, 9 x Second, 8 x Third, 7 x Fourth, 6 x Fifth, 5 x Sixth, 4 x Seventh, 3 x Eighth, 2 x Ninth, 1 x Tenth Circle
11+	Follow the previously established pattern. Note that no spells greater than Tenth Circle can be learned using this method. All spells of higher Circle can only be learned through campaign play.

Use suitable dice when randomizing the Spells each Tutor knows. It is highly recommended that only the Spells listed in the Earthdawn rulebook and Magic: Manual of Mystic Secrets, Arcane Mysteries of Barsaive and Earthdawn Companion supplements be available for learning using EDS, unless the gamemaster says otherwise. The following numbered spell tables, by Circle and Spellcaster discipline, may be useful here (an N/A result has the same effect as that for rolling the same Spell more than once, or the GM can ignore the result altogether or perhaps replace with a Spell of his or her own devising). Note that these spells are only those found in the main Earthdawn rulebook and Companion: GMs are encouraged to consult the other published supplements and/or also refer to Dialog Publishing's series of spellcaster 'Grimoires' for quick reference summaries of all published spells for Earthdawn.

Circle One Spells

D10	Elementalist	Illusionist	Nethermancer	Wizard
1	Crunch Climb	Assuring Touch	Bone Dance	Astral Sense
2	Earth Blend	Best Face	Chilling Circle	Crushing Will
3	Earth Darts	Disguise Metal	Command Nightflyer	Dispel Magic
4	Flameweapon	Displace Image	Detect Undead	Divine Aura
5	Heat Food	Light	Dry and Wet	Flame Flash
6	Plant Talk	Pauper's Purse	Experience Death	Ignite
7	Purify Water	Rope Guide	Insect Repellent	Iron Hand
8	Resist Cold	Unseen Voices	Putrefy	Mind Dagger
9	Resist Fire	N/A	Spirit Grip	Wall Walker
10	N/A	N/A	Undead Struggle	N/A

Circle Two Spells

D8	Elementalist	Illusionist	Nethermancer	Wizard
1	Boil Water	Crafty Thought	Bone Circle	And His Money
2	Gills	Ephemeral Bolt	Ethereal Darkness	Astral Shield
3	Ice Spear	Innocent Activity	Fog Ghost	Clean
4	Icy Surface	Monstrous Mantle	Life Circle of One	Dodge Boost
5	Path Home	Tailor	Pocket Guardian	Rope Ladder
6	Slow Metal Weapon	True Ephemeral Bolt	Repel Animal	Vines
7	Sterilize Object	Weather Cloak	Shield Mist	Wake-Up Call
8	Stick Together	N/A	N/A	N/A

Circle Three Spells

D8	Elementalist	Illusionist	Nethermancer	Wizard
1	Behind Eye	Alarm	Death's Head	Combat Fury
2	Ice Mace and Chain	Dampen Karma	Fog of Fear	Leaps and Bounds
3	Plant Feast	False Floor	Grave Message	Levitate
4	Porter	Impossible Lock	Pack Bags	Quicken Pace
5	Puddle Deep	Mind Fog	Pain	Notice Not
6	Repair	Nobody Here	Spirit Double	Seeking Sight
7	Sky Lattice	Suffocation	N/A	Shatter Lock
8	Throne of Air	N/A	N/A	N/A

Circle Four Spells

D8	Elementalist	Illusionist	Nethermancer	Wizard
1	Air Blast	Circle of Well Being	Animate Skeleton	Ball of String
2	Blizzard Sphere	Clarion Call	Astral Flare	Dust Devil
3	Lighten Load	Eyes Have It	Evil Eye	Inventory
4	Lightning Shield	Improved Alarm	Fatal Food	Relax
5	Suffocating Paste	Multi-Missile	Spirit Servant	Thorny Retreat
6	Uneven Ground	Stop Right There	Viewpoint	Trust
7	Weapon Back	N/A	Visions of Death	N/A
8	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Circle Five Spells

D6	Elementalist	Illusionist	Nethermancer	Wizard
1	Earth Staff	Flying Carpet	Animate Spirit Object	Counterspell
2	Fireball	Improve Karma	Astral Horror	Invigorate
3	Metal Scream	Noble Manner	Circle of Astral Protection	Mage Armor
4	Metal Wings	Pleasant Visions	Pass Ward	Makeshift Missile
5	Stone Cage	Wall of Unfire	Target Portal	Slow
6	N/A	N/A	Wither Limb	Solo Flight

Circle Six Spells

D6	Elementalist	Illusionist	Nethermancer	Wizard
1	Drastic Temperature	Bouncing Blaster	Blessed Light	Doom Missile
2	Ease Passage	Chosen Path	Bone Shatter	Displace Self
3	Flameshaw	Dancing Disks	Foul Vapors	Karma Cancel
4	Ricochet Attack	Illusory Missiles	Friendly Darkness	Makeshift Weapon
5	Tossing Earth	Spotlight	Recovery	Razor Orb
6	N/A	N/A	Soul Armor	Sleep

Circle Seven Spells

D6	Elementalist	Illusionist	Nethermancer	Wizard
1	Calm Water	False Enchantment	Constrict Heart	Blood Boil
2	Cloud Summon	Rebel Limb	Restrain Entity	Confusing Weave
3	Death Rain	Twisted Tongues	Reverse Withering	Lightning Cloud
4	Storm Manacles	Vertigo	Spirit Portal	Move On Through
5	Whirlwind	Walk Through	Wit Friend	Spell Cage
6	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Circle Eight Spells

D6	Elementalist	Illusionist	Nethermancer	Wizard
1	Blade Fury	Astral Nightmare	Control Being	Cat's Cradle
2	Earth Wall	Form Exchange	Horror Call	Compression Bubble
3	Perimeter Alarm	Leaping Lizards	Restrain Horror	Delay Blow
4	Silence Metal	Massive Missiles	Shadow Tether	Safe Opening
5	Silver Shadow	Other Place	Translator Spirit	Wound Mask
6	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Circle Nine Spells

D6	Elementalist	Illusionist	Nethermancer	Wizard
1	Cloud Banish	Grim Reaper	Create Life	Absorbing Sphere
2	Dragon's Breath	One of the Crowd	Dark Sword	Draining Eye

D6	Elementalist	Illusionist	Nethermancer	Wizard
3	Fire Wall	Revulsion	Shift Skin	Observe Event
4	Moon Shadow	Shift Walls	Talent Shredder	Reattach Limb
5	Water Wall	Thundering Walls	Walking Dead	Tell Tale
6	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Circle Ten Spells

D6	Elementalist	Illusionist	Nethermancer	Wizard
1	Air Fortress	Afterlife	Damage Transfer	Death Vow
2	Earth and Air	Astral Materialization	Fragile Pattern	Hold Pattern
3	Elemental Merchant	Eclipse	Gateway	Journey to Life
4	Fire and Water	Eternal Day	Strong Pattern	Onion Blood
5	Weather Change	Haunted House	Tap Horror Karma	Warp Astral Space
6	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Important! It takes half (½) a day times the Spell Circle number to learn the Spell, plus one additional day to write it down. The cost for this activity is 100 silvers times the Circle of the Spell being learned. This cost includes the price of teacher assistance, therefore no rolls are required (this differs from the procedure detailed in the Earthdawn rulebook), either to learn the spell or scribe it into the character's grimoire. It's easier to learn a Spell when the owner is sitting right beside you serving as a translator!

Locate Tutor (LOC)

[One (1) day per attempt]

This activity must be carried out in a settlement of some sort (village, town or city), thus it precludes the carrying out of some of the activities used in EDS. The LOC activity is used to Locate a Tutor for Skill Training, Spell Learning or Circle Increase. The cost is a flat 50 silvers per attempt, whether successful or not. To find and convince a Tutor to teach the character you must first know the Rank or Circle of the Tutor, calculated as follows:

- If learning a skill, roll D3 and add the character's current Rank with that skill
- If increasing Circle, roll D3 and add the character's current Circle number
- If learning Spells, roll D3 and add the character's current Circle number to determine the Circle of the Spellcaster teaching new spells to the character

The Tutor's Skill Rank or Circle is equal to the appropriate result above. This is also the Difficulty Number that the character must roll using her Charisma Step or appropriate skill or talent (Winning Smile, First Impression, etc). If the roll is a failure, only time and money has been lost. If the character achieves a Good or better success, reduce the cost of learning skills, Circle increase, etc, by -10% for each level above Average (Good -10%, Excellent -20%, Extraordinary -30%). The Tutor will stay for the duration of the training.

In the case of Skill Rank increase, if the character stops training for any reason then a new Tutor will have to be located and hired. You cannot automatically use the same Tutor (though it could in reality be the same person). Any monetary charges for partial training must be paid at the end of the training period.

Example: Michael has decided that his character Caelarion is going to advance to the fifth Circle. First he must locate a Tutor to teach him the basics. Michael notes 1 day of LOC activity down on Caelarion's Activity Worksheet. He then rolls D3, getting a 2, and adds the result to Caelarion's current Circle number of 4, to get a total of 6. This is the difficulty number that Caelarion must roll using his Charisma step (he doesn't have Winning Smile or any other suitable skills or talents) of 6 (D10). Michael rolls a 7 - success! Caelarion has successfully found a Tutor, and has achieved an Average success (no reduction in training costs).

No Activity (NA)

[One (1) day of doing nothing]

The character performs no activities of consequence for the day, simply strolling around taking in the sights or just sitting in a bar drinking. Rest and recuperation also uses this code as it is considered that the character cannot do anything of consequence during this period (recovering from disease or poisoning; perhaps even a hangover!). Time simply passes...

Example: *Caelarion decides to take a couple of days, off simply doing nothing. Michael, his player, notes 2 days of NA activity time down on Caelarion's Activity Worksheet.*

Purchase Goods (PUR)

[Half (½) day per purchase attempt]

Characters always have the opportunity to purchase equipment, potions and other useful items. Purchasing general equipment and goods, items that don't have an availability rating (unusual, rare, etc) are easily located and considered to always be available for purchase at normal listed prices.

Any amount of such equipment can be purchased, as long as the character has the money. Purchasing any quantity of general equipment takes *half a day*. Other unusual or rare equipment can be purchased, as long as it is available.

Each attempt, whether successful or not, takes *half a day* per item. The procedure for determining whether an item is available is calculated as follows:

- The availability factor of the item is expressed as the level of availability (unusual, rare, very rare) and a modifier in parentheses (), to be added to the base difficulty number for purchasing one example of that item.
- The modifier in parentheses () is added to the merchant's Haggle step, always considered to be 9 (Skill Rank of 4 plus Attribute Step of 5), to determine if the item is available.
- Reduce the difficulty number by -1, to a maximum of -3, for each additional +10% above the cost of the goods the purchaser is prepared to pay. Increase the difficulty number by +1 for each additional item above the first the purchaser wants to buy.

The final result is the difficulty number that must be rolled against using step 9 (1D8+1D6) to determine if the item is available for purchase. Success means the character buys the item for the modified price, if that is the case. This takes *half a day*. Failure means the character simply wastes half a day - she can try again, taking more time to do so. No reduction is made for waiting extra time for goods - the item is either available or it isn't! It's as simple as that.

The number of attempts that can be made per month to purchase an unusual, or rarer, item is limited, dependent upon the size of the settlement the character is currently in. Use the following Item Scarcity Table to determine the number of Purchase activities that can be used to buy a limited availability item, per month.

Settlement	Unusual	Rare	Very Rare
Village	3	2	1
Town	5	3	2
City	7	4	3

Research (RES)

[One (1) week to learn the Test Knowledge (per Key Knowledge); One (1) week times the Key Knowledge Number to learn the Research Knowledge (per Key Knowledge)]

Characters cannot perform this activity outside of a settlement (village, town or city). This activity is used to determine whether the character works out the purpose and use of a Common or Legendary Thread Item. The procedure is similar to that given in the Earthdawn rulebook, on pages 144-146. No rolls are required, just time and money spent. It is assumed that the character, because of his or her proximity to suitable resources (libraries, scholars, storytellers, etc) is able to locate the information required to determine how and what an item does.

The Test Knowledge is a prerequisite at each stage for learning about the item. This takes one week to complete at a cost of 100 silvers. The Research Knowledge takes a little longer, as this imparts the actual answer to the Test Knowledge to the character, allowing him or her to then Weave a Thread, and thus effectively use, the item. It takes a number of weeks equal to the Key Knowledge Number, at a cost of 100 silvers per week, to learn the Research Knowledge for that Key Knowledge Number. Once learned, the character is then able to Weave a Thread to the item (assuming he or she has Thread Weaving, of course).

Important! Characters using EDS must learn the both the Test and Research Knowledge at each Key Knowledge Rank before learning the next (1 before 2, 2 before 3, 3 before 4, etc). Some items have no Test or Research Knowledge at a particular Rank. In this case, the character spends one additional week per extra Rank, at 100 silvers per week, learning the effects at each new Key Knowledge Rank. Most Common Thread Items (refer to the Earthdawn Companion supplement, pages 55-73) have a Test and Research Knowledge only at Key Knowledge Rank 1. Characters cannot research more than one item at a time. Each item must be painstakingly, and individually, researched.

***Example:** Caelarion purchases a Thread Brooch from a grey-haired Merchant in Haven. He then sits down to investigate the intricacies of the new item. Michael notes down one week of RES activity as Caelarion researches the Rank 1 Test Knowledge for the Brooch. He spends 100 silvers in the process (plus some extra money maintaining his Cost of Living, leeching away his cash reserves). This gives him the Test Knowledge for the item - he now knows that he must find the Name of the Brooch, plus the Brooch has 3 Key Knowledge Ranks. He spends another week (one week multiplied by Rank Knowledge 1) and 100 silvers learning the Research Knowledge for the Brooch. After perusing the pattern of the item at length, and consulting a few dwarf scholars, Caelarion finds the Name of the Brooch is "Maevella." He decides to pursue further research.*

Normally he would have to learn the Test Knowledge for the next Key Knowledge Rank, then spend a number of weeks equal to the next Rank learning the Research Knowledge. But there isn't a Test Knowledge for the Brooch at Rank 2, Neither is there one at Rank 3. Caelarion spends an additional week learning the intricacies of the Rank 2 Key Knowledge of the Brooch, then a further week learning the Rank 3 effects, thus completing his knowledge of the item. This costs him a further 200 silvers, a donation to the local library, and the various scholars and assorted experts willing to assist him at all times.

Ritual Magic (RIT)

To be completed...

Skill Increase (SKL)

[Number of weeks for general and artisan skills as follows: Rank 1 = 3 weeks, Rank 2 = 5 weeks, Rank 3 = 8 weeks, Rank 4 = 13 weeks, etc (substitute weeks with months for knowledge skills)]

Note that the time spent learning new skills, or increasing existing Skill Ranks, is considerably different from those given in the Earthdawn rulebook. The EDS system, like some parts of the Earthdawn game system, uses a Fibonacci sequence for skill learning. The extra time assumes that sufficient training is given by the Tutor for the character to immediately benefit from the learning, with any practice afterwards being of limited benefit.

The character must first find a Tutor (refer to the Locate Tutor activity above) before improving his or her Skill Ranks. Unless the characters can somehow find a Tutor in the wilderness (requiring gamemaster permission), all skill training must be carried out in a settlement - a village, town or city.

Time spent performing this activity can be non-contiguous, broken up over a longer period of time, with the following provisos:

- A Tutor must be Located, and hired, before each new block of training time is started
- Training must be carried out in blocks of entire weeks (or months, if Knowledge Skills)

If the character stops training, for any reason, then a new Tutor will have to be Located and hired. You cannot automatically assume you are using the previous Tutor. Any monetary charges for partial training must be paid at the end of each training period.

The cost for increasing skills is 25 silvers times the new Skill Rank, per week of training. This applies to Knowledge Skills as well (they are more expensive). Gamemasters may increase the cost if the character is training in an area with limited resources, such as a village or town. Legend Point costs for learning skills are as given in the Earthdawn rulebook, on page 222. The Skill Rank Cost Table is reproduced here, with Legend Point costs. The number after the slash / is the accumulated cost of purchasing that rank (i.e. if a character wanted to purchase rank 4 in a skill then he would spend 2,300 Legend Points and would also have to train for the appropriate period):

Rank of Skill	Legend Point Cost
1	200 / 200
2	300 / 500
3	500 / 1,000
4	1,300 / 2,300
5	2,100 / 4,400
6	3,400 / 7,800
7	8,900 / 16,700
8	14,400 / 31,100
9	23,300 / 54,400
10	37,700 / 92,100

Example: *Caelarion decides he wants to learn Melee Weapons as a skill. After successfully Locating a Tutor, with an average Charisma roll (no saving on training costs), he notes down the required 3 weeks of SKL activity on his EDS Activity Worksheet, lowers his Current Legend Point total by 200 LPs and deducts 75 (25 x 3) silvers from his taxed coffers (plus his Cost of Living). He notes that he now has Melee Weapons at Skill Rank 1 on Caelarion's Character Record Sheet.*

Talent Increase (TAL)

[One (1) day per Talent Rank increased]

Time spent performing this activity must be continuous. We assume that characters spend 8 hours per day in meditation while increasing their Talent Rank. The additional time available for the rest of the day is taken up in finding suitable accoutrements to use for Meditation, or simply an appropriate place to carry it out! Legend Point costs are as given in the Earthdawn rulebook, on page 221. The Talent Rank Cost Table is reproduced here for convenience, with Legend Point Costs by Circle Number. The number after the slash / is the accumulated cost of purchasing that rank (i.e. if a character wanted to purchase rank 4 in a Circle 6 talent then she would spend 1,800 Legend Points and it would take 32 hours of meditation, or 4 days in EDS time):

Talent Rank	Circle 1-4	Circle 5-8	Circle 9-12	Circle 13-15
1	100 / 100	200 / 200	300 / 300	500 / 500
2	200 / 300	300 / 500	500 / 800	800 / 1,300
3	300 / 600	500 / 1,000	800 / 1,600	1,300 / 2,600
4	500 / 1,100	800 / 1,800	1,300 / 2,900	2,100 / 4,700
5	800 / 1,900	1,300 / 3,100	2,100 / 5,000	3,400 / 8,100
6	1,300 / 3,200	2,100 / 5,200	3,400 / 8,400	5,500 / 13,600
7	2,100 / 5,300	3,400 / 8,600	5,500 / 13,900	8,900 / 22,500
8	3,400 / 8,700	5,500 / 14,100	8,900 / 22,800	14,400 / 36,900
9	5,500 / 14,200	8,900 / 23,000	14,400 / 37,200	23,300 / 60,200
10	8,900 / 23,100	14,400 / 37,400	23,300 / 60,500	37,700 / 97,900
11	14,400 / 37,500	23,300 / 60,700	37,700 / 98,200	61,000 / 158,900
12	23,300 / 60,800	37,700 / 98,400	61,000 / 159,200	98,700 / 257,600
13	37,700 / 98,500	61,000 / 159,400	98,700 / 257,900	159,700 / 417,300
14	61,000 / 159,500	98,700 / 258,100	159,700 / 417,600	258,400 / 675,700
15	98,700 / 258,200	159,700 / 417,800	258,400 / 676,000	418,100 / 1,093,800

Example: Caelarion is increasing his Spell Casting Talent from Rank 5 to Rank 6. Michael notes 1 day of TAL time on his Activity Worksheet, subtracts the necessary Legend Points, and recalculates Caelarion's new Spell Casting Step on his Character Record Sheet. Had Caelarion wanted to increase his Spell Casting from Rank 5 to Rank 7, this would have required 2 consecutive days of TAL time, plus Legend Point costs for the double rank increase.

Depending on your GM's views on Talent Rank increase, you might only be able to increase your Talent Ranks by one step between adventures. Or you might also only be able to increase Talents that have been used on previous adventures. Check with your gamemaster to see if any special house rules apply to this activity code.

Thread Weaving (THR)

[One (1) day per item, for each Thread Rank]

Once a character has worked out the Research Knowledge for a Thread Item, he or she can begin the process of Weaving Threads to the item, in order to use it. The character spends one day per item, for each Thread Rank woven. Basically, one Thread can be woven per day.

The character makes a Thread Weaving test against a Difficulty Number based on the Thread Rank being woven. The Weaving Difficulty Table can be found on page 146 of the Earthdawn rulebook, and is reproduced here for your convenience:

Thread Rank	Weaving Difficulty
1	8
2	9
3	10
4	11
5	12
6	13
7	14
8	15
9	16
10	17
11	18
12	19
13	20
14	21
15	22

Once the Weaving Difficulty has been determined, the character reduces his or her Current Legend Point total by the required amount, based on the Legend Point Cost for the relevant Key Knowledge Rank for the Thread Item. The character then makes a Thread Weaving effect roll against the Weaving Difficulty from the table above. There is no monetary cost (other than Living costs) for this activity.

If the result is equal to, or greater than, the Weaving Difficulty, the character has successfully woven the Thread, and can now use the power of the Thread Item at that Rank. If the character rolls less than the Weaving Difficulty, he or she has failed to Weave the Thread, and cannot make an attempt with that Thread Item again until their Thread Weaving Talent has been increased. Legend Points expended in the attempt are still considered "used up," though no further points need be expended for the next (or further) attempts to Weave a Thread at that same Rank in the future.

Important! The Thread Item must be present for the Weaving attempt. Some Thread Items require that a Deed be carried out as part of the Research Knowledge for that Rank. **All Deeds must be carried out through normal gaming play, not as part of EDS!** Something as important as a Deed should not be part of such an abstract system as EDS. (Some gamemasters might still decide otherwise, in which case they should feel free to create some sort of abstract Deed Resolution System for use with EDS.)

Example: Caelarion is preparing to Weave a Rank 1 Thread to his new Thread Brooch. He has successfully Researched the Key Knowledge of the item up to Rank 3. Michael notes down one day of THR time on Caelarion's Activity Worksheet. He deducts the required 100 Legend Points from his Current Legend Point total. He then makes a Thread Weaving roll against a Weaving Difficulty of 8. Leaving nothing to chance, Caelarion also burns up a point of Karma as well, giving him a final result of 17. No problem. He then spend another day, to Weave the Thread at Rank 2, meeting the Weaving Difficulty number of 9, with the help of another point of Karma of course, with a Thread Weaving result of 19. Easy stuff. He deducts 200 Legend Points. Caelarion notes down a third day of THR activity time, and goes for Rank 3, Weaving Difficulty 10. He spends a Karma point and makes his Thread Weaving roll, getting an unfortunate result of 9, a failure! He deducts the 300 Legend Points for the attempt, noting the expenditure on his EDS Activity Worksheet. Caelarion cannot try Weaving a Rank 3 Thread to that item until he increases his Thread Weaving Talent.

Working (WRK)

[One (1) week, minimum]

Characters can earn their keep by selling their expertise. The Working activity is useful when a character finds herself a little short on funds. Choose an appropriate skill or talent (e.g. Melee Weapon for Warriors or Swordmasters, Spell Casting or Thread Weaving for Spellcasters, Animal Training for Beastmasters, etc.) for the character to use.

Make an effect roll (Karma use is allowed for discipline talents, but only a maximum of one point per discipline) using the character's skill or talent step. The resulting effect number, multiplied by 10, is the number of silvers the character earns that week. Of course, the Cost of Living is still deducted from this total. The character must work for a full week (seven days) to be eligible to make this roll, during which time the character can pursue no other activity other than performing Karma Rituals. The Working activity can only be carried out in a settlement (village, town or city).

Example: Caelarion is lacking some basic funds. He decides to work for a week to cover his increased Living Costs. Michael notes down 7 days (1 week) of WRK activity on Caelarion's Activity Worksheet. Choosing Spellcasting as his working talent, at Step 14 plus a Karma dice, Michael makes the roll, getting a total of 21. This effect number, multiplied by 10, equals 210 silvers. He subtracts Caelarion's cost of living (Circle 5 x 30 silvers = 150 silvers) and adds the remaining 60 silvers to his cash pool.

He also takes the opportunity to perform a Karma Ritual after his last day of Working, noting the activity code for the day as WRK(1), deducting the Legend Points from his Current Legend Point total. This is to replace the point he used while using his Spellcasting talent.

Endplay

Credits

Design and Development

Dialog Publishing, James D Flowers

Contributions

Stephen F Ely (thanks, Stephen!)

Dedication

To my son Nathaniel James Keats with all my love.

Version

Earthdawn Downtime System 3.01

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