
FIRE AND SWORD: THE SHORT VERSION

Morgan Conrad

CREATING A CHARACTER

A Character has the following statistics, many similar to many other role-playing systems. Generally they start in the range 10-17 and add up to around 95.

STR Strength CHA Charisma DEX Dexterity INT Intelligence CON Constitution SIZ Size POW Power

A character also has various Skills, such as Scimitar Attack and Hide. Since you usually roll a D20 to perform the skill, a skill of 10 is roughly 50% and a skill of 20 is very good.

Most characters also know some magic spells, either Divine or Sorcerous. They have money, equipment, such as a horse and armor, and may also have magic items.

RESOLVING CONFLICTS

This is usually done by comparing skills, though sometime a stat (like POW) is used. The raw skill or raw stat may be enhanced or reduced by magic or circumstances. Henceforward, we use the term “skill”.

If the Skill is ≤ 20

Roll a D20, and interpret the result as described below:

A skill roll less than or equal to the skill level, which is not a 1, is a *normal success*. A roll of 1, or a roll higher than the skill level, is a *failure*.

If you roll a 1, this is a possible fumble. Roll again. If the 2nd roll is another failure, this is a *fumble*.

A roll of skill exactly is a possible critical. Roll again. If the 2nd roll is less than or equal to your skill, this is a *critical*.

If Skill is > 20 (but ≤ 40)

Roll a D20 as above, treating the effective skill as 20. So a roll of 20 on that die is a critical. In addition, roll a second “special” D20 die, typically of a different color.

A roll of less than or equal to skill-20 is a *special success*.

A roll of exactly skill, followed by a special success, is a critical. Other rolls have no effect.

Note – in spirit combat, and a number of other special situations, 1s and 2s are misses and possible fumbles, a roll of skill-1 is a possible critical, and replace 20 with 30, and 40 with 60 in the above text.

OPPOSED SKILLS

When two skills are opposed, such as attack and parry, or Hide and Spot Hidden, the higher successful roll wins or “overcomes”. Specials are rated at +20 for this purpose. Criticals beat normal and special successes. Ties go to the “defender” – the parrier, the spell resister, or the hider. If the attacker wins, the defender will be hit by the weapon and take damage, will be affected by the spell, or will be spotted etc.

Sometimes a skill is opposed by a fixed “difficulty”, generally representing the world. The GM can either treat this as a fixed number, which must be beaten, or can deduct the number from the skill roll. Typical examples are on the chart below.

Sometimes a skill is opposed by both the world and an opponent. In that case, the effect due to the world is subtracted from your skill level, before rolling dice.

Modifier Table

Modifier	Examples
-10	Exhausted, completely blind, enemy in major fortifications, attempting to hide in middle of Yankee Stadium
-5	Tired, very poor visibility, enemy in fortification, hiding in a desert
-3	Poor morale, enemy up a steep hill

Sometimes a related skill may be used, typically at a –5 or –10 to effective ability. For example, Custom can be used for Streetwise at a –10.

MAGICAL EFFECTS

Magical spells may modify skills and skill rolls. There are three common types of modifiers:

Pluses to effective skill (e.g. Bless) This increases your effective skill.

Pluses to overcome opposition If you succeed at a roll, roll is increased before comparing to opposition

Increased chance to critical This adds +X to the roll, for purposes of rolling skill exactly

The most common ways of expressing these are +X for modifiers to effective skill, and +Y/+Z for modifiers to die rolled/modifier to overcome opposition. The following example may help:

Julius is fighting a wild boar. The boar is skill 22 to attack. Julius is skill 18 to parry, but has cast the Bless 3 (+3) and Mind of the Warrior (+1/+5) spells.

The boar rolls a 4 on the first D20, for a normal success of 4. And the boar rolls a 1 on the “special” die. A special 1! Julius, with an effective skill of 21, also gets to roll 2 dice. On the normal die, he rolls an 18. On the special die, he rolls a 7, and fails.

The boar’s effective roll is 21. Julius’ parry is an 18, but he gets to add +5 due to the Mind of the Warrior spell, for a new 23. He breathes a sigh of relief as his shield protects him from a nasty looking tusk

PHYSICAL COMBAT

Combat is treated as a series of opposed skill rolls, attack vs. parry, done in a series of rounds, each of which is composed of the following phases: declaration of intent, missile, movement, melee, and magic. Because the game is stylized and cinematic, the rules are not exact on how far a character can move in one round. A character typically has two actions per melee round, often used to attack and parry, but which may be used to run, cast a spell, look around, etc. Slow walking movement and simple combat maneuvering is free. Actions may be lost if the character is surprised, distracted, falling down, etc.

Attacks, when not parried, do damage, which is the weapon damage, plus or minus any relevant impact bonus, plus any magical bonus, minus any protection provided by armor or magical passive defense. Damage is only done if the attack roll overcomes the parry, dodge or active defense being used to resist the attack.

Special attacks, when not parried, automatically do maximum damage. When parried with a normal parry that has a higher die roll than the special attack, they do the damage of a normal attack. When parried by a special parry with a higher die roll than the attack, they do no damage.

Critical Attacks, when not parried, do maximum damage and ignore both armor and magical protection. When parried with a special parry that has a higher die roll than the second die of the critical success, they do the same damage as a special attack. When parried with a critical parry higher than the attack, they do no damage.

Armor protects against damage. The protection is one point for light armor, two points for medium armor, and three points for heavy armor. Enchanted armor, such as iron in Glorantha, is usually two better on defense, so that light iron is three points, medium iron is four points, and heavy iron is five points. Thick hides, etc, count as armor.

Unless weapons are very disproportionate in length (e.g. lance vs. sword), attacks / parries are simultaneous.

In general, one-handed weapons do D10 damage; two-handed weapons do D10+2. A typical “fighter type” PC or NPC has a +1 impact bonus.

SPECIAL RULES

A prepared character may throw a dart or javelin and advance of up to 25 paces into melee in a single action. A prepared opponent can attempt to parry that dart/javelin without losing one of their two normal actions.

Two-handed spears can be used from the second rank in melee

Short Bows have an effective range of 100 paces, and a long range of 200 paces. Composite bows have an effective range of 150 paces and a long range of 300 paces.

Targets hit by a lance must roll (greater of Dexterity or Siz) or else fall down and lose their attack that round.

A special parry of a special attack, critical parry of a critical attack, or cinematic parry of a cinematic attack, even if not higher enough to block the attack, reduces it one level. A parry of the next lower level than the attack (normal of special, special of critical, critical of cinematic) that would have parried the attack had it been of the same level reduces its effect by one class. Thus, a special 3 parried by a normal 6 is reduced to a normal success, and rolled as such.

INCAPACITATION

If an attack succeeds, the net damage is calculated as raw damage – armor. If any “gets through”, this forces a roll for incapacitation. The target rolls, generally a single D10 unless otherwise noted.

A roll of 1 always “fails” and the target is incapacitated.

For a named character, a maximum roll (normally 10) always resists incapacitation.

If the die roll is greater than the damage done, the character stays up and is unaffected.

If the result is exactly equal to the damage done, the character is “stunned” and out of the fight for the rest of the episode

If the result is less than damage done, they are incapacitated and out of the fight for the rest of the episode, and

At the end of the episode, an incapacitated character must roll a D20 for more permanent damage. The GM or a healer may modify this die roll.

Injury Table (D20)

Roll	State	Notes
1	Healthy	Pain only effect, recover at end of episode
2-5	Walking Wounded	
6-7	Walking Wounded	If Con roll is missed, infected by flesh rot
8-10	Badly Wounded	
11-12	Badly Wounded	If Con roll difficulty 5 is missed, infected by flesh rot
13	Badly Wounded	Disabled, roll on Disability table below
14-16	Dying	
17	Dying	Disabled, roll on Disability table below
18	Dying	Immediate Con roll, dead if failed
19	Dying	Immediate CON roll, difficulty 7; dead if failed
20	Dead	

As indicated on the table above, a character can be “disabled”. Disabled characters have a permanent condition, the consequences of which are determined by common sense, and which require special healing spells as described below.

Disability Table (D20)

Roll	Result
1-3	Right Leg Broken - Cure by Reset Bone
4-6	Left Leg Broken - Cure by Reset Bone
7-9	Right Arm Broken - Cure by Reset Bone
10-12	Left Arm Broken - Cure by Reset Bone
13-14	One eye put out - Cure by Restore Vision
15-16	Addled - Cure by Restore Sanity
17-18	Limb severed - roll D12 as above to determine limb but need Regenerate to cure.
19	/3 difficulty to listen rolls - Cure by Heal Body
20	Weakness - Impact Bonus -2, worst of 2 rolls when Con or Strength rolls are required - Cure by Heal Body.

SITUATIONAL COMBAT MODIFIERS

A GM may rule that under some circumstances combat is more difficult due to normal factors, such as shooting at an enemy who is behind cover, shooting from a moving horse, fighting in darkness, etc. These are handled by modifications to a character's effective skill. For example, a character shooting from a moving horse that normally has a skill of 17 with a bow might have an effective skill of twelve. After the modifier is applied, the skill is resolved normally. A few situational modifiers below:

Situational Modifier Table

<i>Situation</i>	<i>Modifier</i>
Shooting at enemy behind cover	-5
Shooting at a moving target	-5
Shooting from a moving horse	-5
Shooting at long range	-5
Fighting in Darkness without Darksense	-5
Exhausted (just had a combat episode) fighting fresh foe	-5
Fighting uphill	-2
Fighting Mounted enemy while on foot	-5

SPIRITS AND SHAMANISM

SPIRITS

A spirit is a creature primarily resident on the spirit plane, much as a normal creature is primarily resident on the material plane. They generally have an INT and a POW. Spirits may have skills, like normal characters. Spirits may have divine, or very rarely, sorcery, spells.

Hiding on the spirit plane is done using the normal hide skill, but rolled on a D30.

SPIRIT COMBAT

Spirit Combat occurs as a one-on-one duel during the Spirit Phase of Combat, which is after declaration of intent but before the Missile Phase of a round. Embodied spirits (i.e., most PCs) cannot avoid combat or disengage. Both sides roll to attack and to defend, much like physical combat. The rules below are for “normal” spirit combat, but spirits are quirky and the GM may apply special rules or circumstances, or provide a special Spirit Combat Effect Table, such as for disease or possession spirits.

To attack, roll a D30 vs. your POW. A shaman may also roll on special skills or with special spirits such as their Fetch. Take the one best roll. Likewise, to defend, roll a D30 vs. your POW, and, where appropriate, special skills or spirits. Two common divine spells may boost the effective POW roll. Shield adds +level of the Shield spell, and Spirit of the Faithful adds +5. There are also some special shamanic spells.

If the attacker overcomes the defense, they roll for “dominance” (a.k.a. damage), with a D10. The defender rolls to resist the dominance, usually with the same die used to resist physical damage (i.e. D10 or sometimes a D12). Note that unlike physical combat there is seldom any armor.

If the defender’s roll is less than the dominance, the defender is defeated. Usually this knocks the loser out of the combat till the end of the episode, at which time they roll on a spirit effect table. If the roll is equal to the dominance, the defender is defeated but need not roll on the table afterwards. If the roll is higher than the dominance there is no effect.

Spirit Combat Effect Table

Roll	Result
1-5	Character or spirit in deep sleep till end of episode, in good shape at end of episode
6-8	Character or spirit in deep sleep till end of episode, if loser is embodied, walking wounded at end of episode. Injuries are internal.
9-16	Character or spirit is in deep sleep till end of episode. If attacker is disease spirit, loser gets disease. If attacker is madness spirit, target is driven mad. If attacker can possess target, attacker does so. No visible injury
17-18	Combine effects of rolls of 6-8 and 9-16
19	Loser lost between planes. The losing character or spirit is out of the game until a summoning roll with a 10 difficulty is made to return his or her soul to its natural state

THEISM

Theistic characters join “cults”, each having a specific skill called <Cult Name> Cult Lore. The primary benefit is obtaining Divine Spells, which are generally 1,2,or 3 points in POW. The difficulty to obtain or recover a spell is (POW-1)*5. So a 1-point spell has no difficulty, a 3-point spell has a 10 difficulty.

To obtain a Divine Spell, a character must visit a friendly temple, roll a successful Cult Lore overcoming any difficulty, and sacrifice that many points in permanent POW.

To cast a spell, make a successful Cult Lore spell. If the roll is a failure, nothing happens and the spell is not “used”. If the roll is a success, the spell is used. The intended target may try to resist. If the spell overcomes their resistance roll (or they choose not to resist) the spell succeeds.

To regain a spell a character must participate in a ceremony. This takes two hours, and can come in one of several forms. Somebody (not necessarily the player) must make a Ceremony Skill roll. The player must then make a POW roll, overcoming the difficulty to recover the spell. Depending on how the ceremony is conducted, there may be a bonus to the POW roll.

SORCERY

Sorcery spells are learned by sorcery lore. To learn a sorcery spell a character must spend one game week, and has a book or source of training available. The player must then make a sorcery lore roll, overcoming the difficulty of the spell. When learned, sorcery spells start out at an effective skill of four. Some spells are rare and require GM approval to learn.

Spells are cast by making a skill roll and expending magic points (MP). A failed casting roll costs 1 MP. For most spells, the target may choose to resist. If the spell roll succeeds, but does not overcome the resistance, the MP are expended but the spell has no effect. A character recovers MP once a day, usually at dawn. The standard amount is their POW/4, rounding all fractions down. Magical items to store MP, and aid in their recovery, are highly desired by sorcerous adventurers.

Where appropriate, the character may use Ceremony to enhance their skill in casting a spell. Each uninterrupted hour spent in Ceremony adds +1 to skill. The character may spend no more time in hours than their skill at Ceremony. If the character spends more than 8 hours in Ceremony, they must make a CON roll every hour thereafter. That is, if attempting +9 or better, a CON roll will be required at hour 9, 10, 11... A failed roll negates the Ceremony. **The standard costs for duration and range are given below:**

Duration and Range

MP Cost	Duration	MP Cost	Distance
Free	Episode	Free	Self or touch
1	Until next sunrise	Free	20 Paces
3	Entire Day	Free	Short Bow Range
6	Seven Days	3	Long Bow Range
10	One Month	6	Vision Range
15	One Season	10	One Days March
21	One Year	15	Seven Days March
28	Seven Years	21	One Month's March (600 miles)

ENCHANTED ITEMS

Enchantments are made with the sorcery enchant skill, and are by far the most common type of magic items. The basic rules for producing these are given below.

The item to be enchanted must be of masterpiece craftsmanship. One POW is required to prepare the item for initial enchantment.

Enchantment Costs and Effects Table

Cost	Effect
1 point	+2 to POW for MP regeneration only
1 point	+1 to POW for resistance only
1 point	+1 to Specific Spell casting skill when casting that spell
2 points	+1 to school lore used when casting all spells for that school
1 point	3 points of permanent enchantment of a spell onto an item

There are a lot of special rules for Sorcery, please consult them if you plan to play one.

ECONOMICS

INCOME (FTE GRADE)

For simplicity, the monthly income of a Lunar PC is represented by an FTE grade.

1-3 Army recruit, servant in a temple, poor farmer, etc. This is just barely getting by, with few luxuries, except uniforms, meat once a week, etc. No savings.

4-6 Trained soldier, journeyman, most farmers, poor merchants, etc. Getting by, you can live this way but still not much. This level has a new outfit once a year, a little firewood in winter, an occasional beer binge or minstrel show. At this level a character saves (FTE grade -5 silver per session) * (FTE grade -5 silver per session).

7-9 Decurion, Specialist, priestess, clerk, master in a guild, most merchants in town, minor noble, etc. A couple of new outfits a year, once really nice outfit, a little silver jewelry, paper and ink, etc. FTE Grade 8 is usually the lowest supervisory grade entitled to support a servant or follower of his own. This level Saves (FTE grade -5 silver per session) * (FTE grade -5 silver per session) per session.

10-11 This level includes the following: Centurion, Champion, Senior Priestess, Junior Tribune, rich merchant, etc. A minor magic item or two, reasonably new clothes all the time, a really nice outfit for parties, aged wine, a scroll every third or fourth session, etc. If the character is Dara Happan, he or she will usually have gold jewelry. This is the lowest rank which confers political "clout", and normally creates eligibility to become one of the "Few", if not born to this status. Often have fairly major magic items, but usually they get them by making or capturing them, not pulling rank to get them. This grade saves (FTE grade - 5) * (FTE grade - 5) silver per session.

12-13 Tribune, Urban Praetor, Rich noble, High Priestess, Member of the Assembly of Experts, Minor Hero, etc. Can have most of what they want, within reason. At this level, the character can buy a scroll every session, if the character wants one and has the opportunity. The character becomes an ex officio, a Senator if you hold an office of this rank. At this level, a character can use admin skill to acquire magic items, significant commands, etc. At this level, a character saves (FTE grade -5) * (FTE grade -5) in silver per session.

14 Legate, Praetor or Strategos, high minor to middling hero, etc. This level can have pretty much anything he or she wants within reason, and on occasion, something that's not within reason. But not something that will unbalance the game. Saves 81 silver per session.

S - Super grade. This category is reserved for named individuals such as Beat-Pot, Jar-Eel, Countess Yolanela, Crassus the Crass, etc.

EXTRAORDINARY RESOURCES

Extraordinary resources are those a player keeps track of on his character's sheet. They are listed as, 1500 L. in gems, for example. If visibly worn, they must be described. If hidden, they need not be described, but are assumed to be in small portable gems or gold. Their location should be described, but is assumed to be reasonably secure (a money belt underneath outer layer of clothing, for example).

Spending extraordinary resources is a dramatic event, and usually will not be required for anything significantly less than a character's savings rate. A reference price list is given below; this is just a guideline for game masters and is not intended to be binding as to either availability or price.

A few things that can be bought from extraordinary resources:

Market Price Table

<i>Item</i>	<i>Cost</i>
Scroll (Common Skill)	50 L. per check
Scroll (Uncommon Skill)	100 L. per check
Scroll (Rare Skill)	200 L. per check
Scroll (Sorcery)	250 L. per check
Light Armor	100 L.
Medium Bronze Armor	300 L.
Shield	50 L.
Scimitar	250 L.
Dress (Level 9, party)	500 L.
Trained cavalry horse of mediocre quality	500 L.
slave girl, maid, App 13	500 L.
Trained cavalry horse of excellent quality	1000 L.
slave girl, maid, App 16	1000 L.
Dress (Level 11, party)	1000 L.
Iron Scimitar	1200 L.
Carmanian Charger	2500 L.
One Point Enchantment	1500 L. + cost of item enchanted
Two Point Enchantment	5000 L. + cost of item enchanted
Three Point Enchantment	15,000 L. + cost of item enchanted
Slave girl, trained dancer, App 17	10,000 L.
War Mammoth	10,000 L.

There are a lot of other things characters might want, but I'm not going to cover them all in detail here.

Note that some items may require an admin roll plus a modest bribe. For example, a consecrated object that adds +2 to Lore for divine spell casting and counts as a 2 point Sanctified object for purposes of regaining spells would probably require either 1000 L. in bribes and either a special admin roll or a contact in the temple. In general, divine relics can rarely be purchased outright, and where this is being considered should be converted into the equivalent cost in sorcery enchantments,

Extraordinary resources can also be used to buy land, titles and offices. This usually requires a luck roll (possibly with some difficulty), some service which is deserving of reward, and a bribe equal to about a tenth of the listed cost of trading capital needed for living at that level as a merchant.

POLITICS

The purpose of the political rules is largely to determine what a character can get from GM played characters, when. They have four major aspects: Favors, Influence, Status and Titles and Offices. Favors are a means of keeping track of who owes who, and how much. They are used to determine whether a character who deserves to become a knight actually becomes a knight, for example. Influence is the effect of doing little things that individually don't count for much, but if a character does enough of them it adds up. Both favors and influence are usually related to some individual or institution, such as a tribal chief, temple, or noble house. Social Status is culture wide, permanent status. Finally, titles and offices add economic and magical resources, and add to a character's social status.

A new player does not need to understand the details of the politics rules, and it is recommended that a new player master the rules covering opposed skill rolls, combat and magic first. But they are worth knowing if a player wants to fully exploit his or her character's potential.