

THE NEW

EPOCH

INDUSTRIAL

AGE FANTASY



ADVENTURE CODEX

THE NEW EPOCH INDUSTRIAL AGE FANTASY

BOOK THREE: ADVENTURE CODEX

VERSION 1.50

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www.fltgames.com

david@fltgames.com

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DAVID JAMES LINDSAY

Lead Design, Author, Editing, Fonts,
Borders, Graphics, Cover Art, Cartography,
Layout & Formating, Website, Languages

LEAD CONCEPT ARTIST

Brendan Christopher Garvey

CONCEPTS & ILLUSTRATIONS

Zhou Changbin, Charben
Li Yanhua, Morwen

EDITING & REWORKING

Colin Chapman, Ian Morgenheim, Aric Wieder, Andrew South

PROMOTION & MARKETING

Andrew R. W. Woodruff

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david@fltgames.com

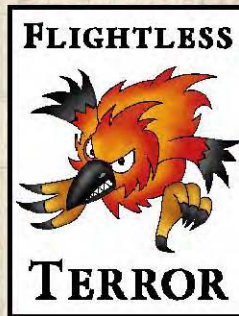
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VERSION 0.8

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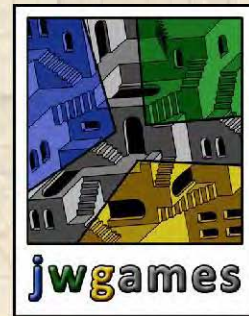
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SPECIAL THANKS

MOST OF ALL, THANKS TO VANESSA, MY BELOVED WIFE

JWGames, Mark Finnegan, Lauren Kage, Joey Zhang, Jamie Higgins,
Joshua Shain, Grant Davis, Guan Hui (Hughie), Wang Wei (Wayne)

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I: CAMPAIGNS



CAMPAIGNS

IMAGINE THAT EACH PERIOD OF HISTORY WAS A CAMPAIGN OF ADVENTURES IN WHICH THE PLAYERS CHANGED THE FUTURE OF THE WORLD...

- ✦ IN THE FORGOTTEN AGE, HEROES ROSE TO POWER AND BROUGHT ABOUT A BETTER WORLD.
- ✦ IN THE ERA OF MYTH LEGENDARY ADVENTURERS ORCHESTRATED THE DOWNFALL OF THE PARAGONS.
- ✦ IN THE CATAclysm THE VERY EXISTENCE OF MANKIND HUNG IN THE BALANCE WITH ONLY A HANDFUL OF THE WORLD'S BRAVEST TO ENSURE SURVIVAL.
- ✦ IN THE RESIDIUM, MONSTERS RAVAGED THE POST APOCALYPTIC WASTELANDS OF THE WORLD AND HEROIC PIONEERS FORGED NEW CIVILIZATIONS.

BUT WE HAVE YET TO WRITE A STORY ABOUT THE NEW EPOCH, AND HOW THE WORLD CHANGED INTO SOMETHING BETTER... OR WORSE.

A campaign of adventure awaits you within these books. There are literally unlimited possibilities for you and your friends to live out the adventures of heroes and villains at your gaming table.

OVERVIEW

Campaigns are the stuff of legends, stories with body and length, plot twists that keep you up at night, battles that rage on into the early hours of the morning. In this chapter, we hope to convey the ideas that inspire us to roleplay.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY: What does it sound like when a group gets together to roleplay? Well, here is a transcription of an introductory test session by the developers. You may be able to glean from this the style in which the New Epoch RPG was intended to be played and hopefully improve on it!

CAMPAIGNS: Explains the structure of adventures and how to manage long and complex storylines. Also gives examples of how a long plot is split into small manageable pieces.

GROUPS: Describes the three main types of adventuring group, in order of increasing power: the party; the company; the faction. Also notes the in-game legal requirements of founding such groups.

LOOKING FOR ADVENTURE: Making acquaintances is a difficult art to master, especially when you have to impress a group of peers. So how do adventurers meet, exactly? See this section for examples.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY: PART 1

One of the first adventures played in the New Epoch was done by the following five people. After removing the in-jokes and idle chatter, the transcript of the session looked a little like this:

Dave: [GM] Dave plays the part of many non-player characters, including Gaius Payge, a heartlander with a proposal to make to the party. Dave tells the story, has all the background information and usually knows what's going to happen next, improvising whenever things don't go as planned.

Andrew: [VOYL] Andrew plays the part of Voyl Nereph, an intelligent but cynical and vain draug arcanist.

Grant: [NOJANTU] Grant plays the part of Nojantu Kraw, a dishonored hobgoblin warder trying to rebuild his reputation.

Lauren: [OZURNIG] Lauren plays the part of Ozurnig of Forge Kushg, a inquisitive and fastidious steam dwarf mechanist.

Vanessa: [JACINTH] Vanessa plays the part of Jacinth Petalbright, a halfling sky gypsy tomboy who is new to the roleplaying group.

➔ IT'S BEEN A MONTH SINCE THEIR ROLEPLAYING GROUP LAST PLAYED, AND TONIGHT'S SESSION BEGINS WITH DAVE DESCRIBING THE SCENE AND BRINGING THE CHARACTERS BACK TOGETHER VIA AN INTRODUCTORY DESCRIPTIVE PASSAGE.

DAVE: [GM] Several weeks have passed since you returned to the City-state of Locke. Little here has changed, though word of your deeds has taken seed in the local newspapers. Several articles and an interview with Voyl for the Locke Times have created quite a stir amongst merchant circles.

For the most part, each of you has been busy attending to your personal affairs, arranging short-term accommodation, visiting friends and loved ones, training and honing your skills, and staying out of trouble.

After almost two weeks, each one of you has received a letter from a well-to-do human gentleman by the name of Gaius Payge. The letter is as much an opportunity as it is a business proposal, promising payment and a high probability of good spoils to be had.

After a day or two of thought, you decide to follow up on the letter and within the week you find yourselves sitting around a table on the second floor of a large port side warehouse. Across the table you see old friends, and a newcomer.

ANDREW: [VOYL] "My colleagues," (he nods to each in turn) "Mr. Payge, I take it? Voyl Nereph." (Andrew shakes Dave's hand).

DAVE: [GAIYUS] "Yes indeed. A pleasure to meet you. Gaius Payge, explorer and businessman."

Gaius is of average human proportions, a heartlander no doubt, with brown eyes, scruffy hair and a ruddy complexion. His garb and manner are much finer, like that of a rich eccentric. He wears robes of exquisite quality and polished brass fittings to match.

LAUREN: [OZURNIG] "The elf returns. Hail glorious leader! Late again, as usual."

GRANT: [NOJANTU] "What was it this time, Voyl. A manicure?"

ANDREW: [VOYL] "Children, come now. You promised to be on your best behavior! Tsk tsk tsk." (turns to Gaius) "Forgive their manners. These are not city folk, you see, but rather savage outlanders."

DAVE: [GAIYUS] "Seems like you have quite the rapport with them."

VANESSA: [JACINTH] (Speaking to Gaius and waving toward the group) "Oooh, division in the group? Didn't mention that Gaius. It's going to cost more."

DAVE: [GAIYUS] (Laughs awkwardly) "Urr... Allow me to diffuse things." (Explains to the party) "Since the task will involve some measure of... umm... 'entering uninvited', I brought along an expert in such things. Shall I introduce her?"

VANESSA: [JACINTH] "Leave that to me. It's Jacinth. Born in Ostenia, raised in the skies. That's it: my life story. Heard good things about you lot—hope it's true."

Jacinth is small, even for a halfling. She has dark brown eyes, a cunning smile and long, sandy red hair. She wears pieces of brigandine and leather, and deftly turns a dagger over in her hands. She seems to be studying some sort of plans for a lock.

So what do your characters look like?

➔ EACH PERSON TAKES A TURN TO DESCRIBE THEIR CHARACTER IN THE SAME FASHION. WHEN FINISHED, THE DIALOGUE CONTINUES.

GRANT: [NOJANTU] (Sarcastically) "Great, a foreign gypsy."

LAUREN: [OZURNIG] "Show some respect. Gypsies and tinkers are born into families of fine engineers."

GRANT: [NOJANTU] (Defensively) "Fine, it ain't up to me anyhow." (Acts out lighting a smog pipe and mumbles) "Hope she lasts longer than Gapplydibbs..."

ANDREW: [VOYL] (Interrupting) "Nojantu often speaks out of turn—his type can barely keep their liquor down, let alone control their tongues." (Grant chokes and splutters) "Like all of us, he remembers our old traveling companion, a halfling tinker. We shouldn't speak ill of our late colleagues in such a way."

VANESSA: [JACINTH] (Gulp!) "What happened?"

LAUREN: [OZURNIG] "He tried to get a head start on the looting. Disappeared during the night. We found his body the next day. Grimlocks got him.... Drained to the bone."

➔ AFTER SOME UNCOMFORTABLE SHUFFLING AND THROAT CLEARING, DIALOGUE CONTINUES.

DAVE: [GAIYUS] "Let's talk about the task at hand. What I'm really commissioning is a search and rescue. Only it's artifacts I'm interested in, not people.

Precious items need to be rescued from the ruins of these three sites. I want to display them during my next exhibition: Secrets of the Residium!"

ANDREW: [VOYL] "And what's the catch?"

DAVE: [GAIYUS] "Well, the Ijolean Liberation Guard isn't fond of adventurers taking away national treasures, but I've found a contact in the City of Zov that is receptive to the idea. She'll contact us in the ruins of Joza, to help get our treasure out."

VANESSA: [JACINTH] "Ah, you mean a smuggler?"

DAVE: [GAIYUS] "Not exactly. You see..."

LAUREN: [OZURNIG] "There's no need to explain, Mr. Payge. We dwarves know how it works in Ijolea. Stoigmari adventurers always bring certain things across the border."

DAVE: [GAIYUS] "Oh dear, no! We are not stealing. I have arranged to reclaim these treasures and display them in the exhibition, but return them in good faith afterwards."

GRANT: [NOJANTU] (Angrily sets down his smog pipe) "Damn! You're getting all complicated now! Keep it simple. Where do we go, what do we bring back and who's guarding it?"

ANDREW: [VOYL] (Sensing it is a good time to start bargaining) "This is no simple task, I'm going to start with a four number figure. I think we'll need around 1,000\$ per ruin, and more if things become complicated..."

IMPERIAL MEASUREMENTS

There is a certain flavor to the old imperial units that makes them great for the New Epoch roleplaying setting. While many people use the metric system, the measurements found in this book will generally be imperial.

For the convenience of all, the basic measurement is the yard because it easily substitutes as a meter for people who are more familiar with the metric system. A suggested metric value is given (very approximate) in the square parentheses below.

LENGTH: For measurements of length, the game typically deals with yards and miles. A yard is approximately 1 meter while a mile is about 1.6 kilometers.

- **INCHES:** [25 MILLIMETERS] (in.) An inch is used whenever measurements are smaller than a foot. There are 12 inches in a foot.
- **FEET:** [30 CENTIMETERS] (ft.) Distances smaller than a yard are measured in feet. This is most often used to describe height or proportions of people and creatures. There are 3 feet in a yard.
- **YARDS:** [1 METER] (yd.) One yard and one meter are essentially equivalent. This unit is the most commonly used and important measurement in the game.

There are 1,760 yards in a mile. This is an odd number because there is an obsolete intermediary measurement called a furlong which is 220 yards, and 8 furlongs make a mile.

- **MILES:** [1.6 KILOMETERS] (mi.) When you travel long distances, they are measured in miles.

WEIGHT: The weight of objects is usually referred to in pounds, although extremely heavy objects, or cargo capacities are measured in tons (2000 pounds). The 'very' approximate metric values here are for convenience of counting, not accuracy.

- **POUND:** [500 GRAMS] (lb.) Weight doesn't play a large part of the New Epoch game because encumbrance is estimated, not calculated. It is still useful for describing character weight and the price of certain vehicle feeds. There are about 8 pounds in a gallon and 100 pounds in a hundredweight.
- **TON:** [1,000 KILOGRAMS] (T.) Tons are only used for describing the cargo capacity of vehicles. There are 2,000 pounds in a ton. This weight is only used for vehicles or cargo loads.

TEMPERATURE: Fahrenheit is used for temperature scales. For those used to metrics, it easiest to think of Fahrenheit between 30 and 80. At 30°F it's a cold day and at 80°F it's a hot day.

- **0° FAHRENHEIT:** [-18°C] A bitter stoigmari winter near the frigid reaches.
- **20° FAHRENHEIT:** [-7°C] A crisp and chilly snow in the lowlands of Avenoss.
- **50° FAHRENHEIT:** [10°C] A typical day in the City-state of Nexus. Mild and cool.
- **80° FAHRENHEIT:** [27°C] The dry and hot Husk Desert on a warm day.
- **100° FAHRENHEIT:** [38°C] A blazing ghorian summer's day with scorching temperatures.

THE BRIEF VERSION

For those of you who want to skip past and read ahead, an abridged version of the first chapter's main points is given here.

ADVENTURES: This section details how an adventure plot can be divided into measurable parts for both the GM and the players. Each part of an adventure is described here along with inspiring examples for what those parts might entail. The playtimes here assume hobbyists with one night to spare for roleplaying each week.

- **CAMPAIGN:** [1 YEAR OF PLAYTIME] A large story arc or a setting that encompasses many quests and might grant up to a year of playtime or more.
- **QUEST:** [1 MONTH OF PLAYTIME] A long adventure that contains several chapters with a single end goal that you hope to achieve. A quest could take you up to a month to complete if you play only once a week for a few hours.
- **CHAPTER:** [1 NIGHT OF PLAYTIME] One session's worth of an adventure, typically featuring several encounters and a few different outcomes depending on what you choose to do.
- **ENCOUNTER:** [1 HOUR OF PLAYTIME] A single scenario with challenges and enemies to defeat. An encounter is often a mapped area that you have to explore, with several rooms, enemies and challenges that await.
- **CHALLENGE:** [10 MINUTES OF PLAYTIME] A number of challenges make up an encounter. Each challenge can be solved by several skill checks, a combat, or by solving the problem through your own cunning.

GROUPS: What kind of adventuring group will you be a part of and what kinds of requirements and legal issues are involved?

- **PARTY:** [AROUND LEVELS 0 TO 30] An adventuring party is the smallest type of group, with very few or no entry requirements. They are unlikely to attract attention from government offices but have no leverage with the authorities.
- **COMPANY:** [AROUND LEVELS 30 TO 60] Companies are registered groups of adventurers (or businesses) that can train advanced classes and organize large expeditions. They are well protected by the law, but are closely monitored by authorities.
- **FACTION:** [AROUND LEVELS 60 TO 90] Factions are the largest and most powerful groups. They are tied into politics, have a lot of power with authorities and also have to abide by the strictest regulations.
- **BEYOND:** [AROUND LEVELS 90+] Beyond these levels, there are greater adventures to be had, but here is only a glimpse of what is in store.

ADVENTURES

Adventures are born from campaigns, quests, chapters, encounters and challenges. The term 'adventure' itself is a rather general, referring to just about any difficult task that your character strives to do.

To understand the structure of an adventure, you have to know what it's built from. Here we can look at an adventure in a very modular way by splitting an adventure into 5 parts: campaigns, quests, chapters, encounters and challenges.

Assuming a roleplaying group gets together once or twice a week, the times below show how long it takes to play through the different parts of an adventure. Naturally, not all groups meet as frequently; life and playstyle can dramatically impact how long play takes.

PART	AVERAGE PLAYTIME	CONSISTS OF
Campaign	1 year	3-10 quests
Quest	1 month	3-10 chapters
Chapter	1 night	3-10 encounters
Encounter	1 hour	3-10 challenges
Challenge	10 minutes	3-10 skill checks

Upcoming adventures and supplements will be presented in this format, so you can gauge the time required to play through an adventure.

EXPERIENCE: You award players with experience at the end of a chapter or quest. The amount you give is noted at the end of this book in Chapter 7: Rewards.

CAMPAIGN

A campaign is a series of quests that links together stories driven by a grand, over-arching plot. The campaign gives rise to many quests that could take half a year or more to play through. The campaign may affect an entire nation or even a whole world gear. Campaigns don't have clear, measurable goals—there are so many possible outcomes that the end result is hard to define.

A campaign is where you want to foster long term, well developed characters, go on epic length journeys and become incredibly wealthy and powerful (assuming you survive the perils of your quests). Campaigns typically evolve as they unfold and can't be planned out in their entirety beforehand. Here are some example campaigns, one for each of the great heartland nations:

STOIGMAR: THE BORDER WARS: The nation of Stoigmar plans a series of ambitious and aggressive expansions into the uncharted greenskin tribelands of Pflay and is met with resistance from barbarian hordes, undiscovered magics and a lost civilization from Stoigmar's past.

AVENOSS: THE GHORIAN INSURGENCE: The nation of Avenoss defends against insurgents from the Grand Empire of Ghor while trying to protect the virgin nation of Perivia. When the Ghorian armies awaken the dragon of the Stonechasms the fate of both

countries hangs in the balance.

OSTENIA: PURGING THE BLIGHTWOOD: Ostenian lands are being swallowed by the Blightwood of Heironul, leaving no choice but to venture into the forest and discover what became of the last Paragon, possibly contradicting the church's most holy Liber Explicatum in the process.

HEARTLANDS: THE UNDERWORLD THEORY: Nexan divinologists postulate a new theory on the Underworld, the opposite side of the world gears cloaked in perpetual umbra. An audience with the Clockwork Oracle ensues, revealing a vision in which swarms of brood creatures cross into the overworld and destroy the City-state of Nexus.

QUEST

A quest is a grand adventure, a series of chapters that could last a month or two (given regular play sessions). Quests have a clear goal which could be attained though any number of methods. The way you go about reaching the goals of the quest determines which chapters you play through and which ones you don't.

A quest is a story, usually part of a grander scheme—a campaign. If not playing as part of a long term campaign, most players embarking on a quest prefer to create strong, memorable personalities with fewer avenues for character development. In other words, stereotypes. One quest idea is given for each of the campaigns mentioned above:

STOIGMAR: THE LEGEND OF MYLENOS: Ancient maps from the Capital suggest that the legends of Mylenos, mythical city of Stoigmar's forefathers, are not fiction. The site lies deep within enemy territory and may provide clues as to how the Pflay barbarians wield such powerful magic.

AVENOSS: WEAPONS OF WAR: Ghor has a new secret weapon, causing the mysterious disappearance of several avenian falconer airships. Different factions of the military have their own agendas—recover the falconers, destroy the enemy weapon, copy the enemy blueprints. A noble elven family will also pay for the safe return of their son, the admiral.

OSTENIA: THE CHAPEL OF LIES: The Church of Ostenia secretly orders the destruction of texts that lie in a ruined chapel deep within the Heironul blightwood. The King of Ostenia wants to thwart the church and publicly announces that a great reward will be given if these texts are recovered and preserved.

HEARTLANDS: ASCENDING THE SPIRE: The spire at the center of the world has begun to bleed with oil and fill the skies with black clouds. Several expedition teams depart to discover the reason for this dark omen. Airships have never been able to approach the cloud-hidden top of the spire safely because gravity seems to bend away from it. So, a long climb up the spire's shafts and tunnels is to be expected.

CHAPTER

Quests are broken up into chapters, each of which could take a single night to finish, much like reading a book. Each chapter is usually a significant portion of a quest—sometimes it ties closely into the plot, but at other times it could be an interesting diversion.

To finish a chapter of a quest, you generally need to resolve

something important, defeat something challenging or make a decision that has some sort of consequence. In doing so, you'll receive some experience points.

A chapter usually represents one game session. During this time, you'll try to reach the end of the chapter and solve the immediate problems at hand while keeping your quest goals in mind.

STOIGMAR: SINS OF THE FOREFATHERS: The legends of Mylenos have some truth to them. There is a city, but its original purpose seems much darker... The forefathers of Stoigmar were feeding an ancient paragon machine with the bodies of their enemies in order to become more powerful, but at what price?

AVENOSS: THE ADMIRAL'S TRUE COLORS: The players have discovered the secret to the enemy weapon. The ghorians have mastered a new field of portal magic and banished both airships to a barren pocket plane that exists far from the prime material. However, upon discovering the elven admiral and his new undead crew, they must decide whether to destroy or reason with the traitorous necromancer.

OSTENIA: HONOR VERSUS BELIEF: As the adventurers arrive at the corrupted chapel they encounter a skirmish taking place between the church's channelers and the king's warders. Do the players take sides or try to reason with both? Will they venture into the chapel alone, or under the banner of one faction?

HEARTLANDS: THE CLOUD ENGINE: After battling shadow creatures that have infested the spire, players discover a massive complex from the Era of Myth—a factory that produces clouds and rain! It has been corrupted by creatures of the underworld. There isn't much time; will the players shut it down permanently or risk tampering with it?

ENCOUNTER

An encounter is the building block of a chapter and typically takes an hour or less to play through (sometimes only half an hour). A chapter might have between 3 and 10 encounters, for example. Most chapters are relevant to the plot but sometimes irrelevant encounters get tossed into the mix—you are ambushed on a failed Navigate check, for example.

Usually, an encounter is a bite-sized scenario within a chapter in which the players have to overcome a single challenge. If you play through the encounters well, you'll complete the chapter and receive experience.

Playing through encounters well doesn't necessarily mean being the hero of the day, as in many computer games. It means you survive, roleplay your character accurately, come to a conclusion, discover something important, find a clue, defeat a henchman, and so on.

STOIGMAR: THE WELL OF SOULS: In the deeper bowels of the machine, the players discover the well of souls and face the evil barbarian hierophant and his empowered followers. Each have sipped from the well of souls and become incredibly powerful. Should the players sip from the well or destroy it?

AVENOSS: ESCAPE PLANS: In the smoldering wreck of the admiral's falconer airship is a device essential to escaping the pocket plane. The engine room is huge, poorly lit, and covered with severed limbs. Traps, enemies and time are all against the players and something even more dangerous lurks in the dark corners of this room.

OSTENIA: THE HARROWING GROVE: Deep in the corrupted chapel dungeons, the roots of the blightwood have nested and pooled their energies. An embryo fiend waits here with its cast of cloned treasure seekers—those who came before you and failed. The embryo fiend persuades its followers not to attack you so it can lure the party into its grove.

HEARTLANDS: LUNGS OF THE WORLD: In a gargantuan alcove that overlooks the clouds below, the shadow creatures have set fire to one part of the great cloud factory which now pumps poisonous black fumes into the air and ebbs toxic tar out all sides. Shadows coalesce from the surroundings to form a creature made from pure smoky darkness and ten lesser minions who bar the way forward.

CHALLENGES

Encounters are built from challenges which each take about 10 minutes to overcome. Sometimes a single difficult challenge is enough to be worthy of an encounter while at other times several lesser challenges can make up the encounter.

Lesser obstacles don't count as challenges because they can be overcome by a skill check. For example, a chasm can be vaulted over by rolling a Jump skill check, or a rat can be killed with a single gunshot. These are not challenging.

Real challenges require several skill checks to overcome: transporting cargo up a perilous cliff face would require several Climb, Repair and Heave checks; a tough werewolf takes many blows before it succumbs to its wounds; tracking a beast through the wilderness requires several Navigation, Lore and Stealth checks.

STOIGMAR: HIEROPHANT'S FOLLOWERS: The hierophant decides this is a good time to determine the effectiveness of his new followers, so has them walk out one-by-one to demonstrate their skills versus the party—each one is a separate challenge. Characters could try to sneak around the enemies to sip from the well (Stealth skill), try to run past them (Sprint skill) or defeat them (weapon skills).

AVENOSS: FURNACE TOILER: As the players begin to extract the plane jumping device (repair skill), a nearby furnace groans, sprouts arms and legs and rises to attack them. The furnace toiler has killed many would-be thieves before and is not going to let the players be an exception. The metallic beast can be calmed (Handle skill) and then reasoned with (Convince skill) or befriended (Charisma skill). Alternatively, it can be defeated (weapon skills).

OSTENIA: A QUESTION OF ETHICS: The embryo fiend does not want to fight. If the party can supply her with a living humanoid prisoner, she will release one of the clones into the service of the party as a tireless slave as well as letting them access the texts that lie beyond. A learned character (Lore check) might know more about what she plans to do with the prisoner, or how to defeat an embryo fiend—see the Creature Codex. Alternatively, a bargain could be struck (Convince skill). Otherwise, it is a combat challenge for the party (weapon skills)—they must defeat the embryo fiend or capture a living subject as a sacrifice.

HEARTLANDS: BRIDGE ACROSS THE SKY: A thin bridge leads out over the clouds to a control station which must be reset to bring the cloud factory back online. The bridge is buffeted by strong winds and riddled with traps laid by the shadow creatures. Each trap has its own rating (Traps skill), but some could also be jumped (Jump skill) or climbed around (Climb skill).

CAMPAIGN STRUCTURE: In order to show the structure clearly, the bare minimum number of challenges has been used per encounter in the diagram below. The minimum number of encounters has also been used to make up a chapter. This would be a very short quest, indeed.

CAMPAIGN: THE UNDERWORLD THEORY

QUEST: ASCENDING THE SPIRE

CHAPTER: FIRST CONTACT

ENCOUNTER: Broodlings in Nexus

- CHALLENGE: Ambushed by Shadows
- CHALLENGE: Chase through The Boiler Maze
- CHALLENGE: Destroying The Nest

ENCOUNTER: The Scholar's Plight

- CHALLENGE: Decoding the Scholar's Riddle
- CHALLENGE: Scouring the Library Depths
- CHALLENGE: The Lore Guardian

ENCOUNTER: The Broodling's Revenge

- CHALLENGE: Thieves in the Night
- CHALLENGE: The Nightwatch
- CHALLENGE: Taking Back the Key

CHAPTER: THE CLOCKWORK ORACLE

ENCOUNTER: Convincing Magistrate Xarthus

- CHALLENGE: Gaining Audience
- CHALLENGE: Rallying the Triumvirs
- CHALLENGE: Dealing with Corruption

ENCOUNTER: Quelling the Rumors

- CHALLENGE: Wainwright's Wharf
- CHALLENGE: The Factory Foreman
- CHALLENGE: Stubborn Merchant

ENCOUNTER: Audience with the Oracle

- CHALLENGE: The Clockwork Dungeon
- CHALLENGE: Awakening the Paradigm
- CHALLENGE: A Meeting of Minds

CHAPTER: THE CLOUD ENGINE

ENCOUNTER: The First Few Hundred

- CHALLENGE: The Road Less Travelled
- CHALLENGE: Scaling The Spirewall
- CHALLENGE: The Etherloons

ENCOUNTER: Through Stone

- CHALLENGE: The World Arteries
- CHALLENGE: Repairing the Elevator
- CHALLENGE: The Griffon's Nest

ENCOUNTER: Lungs of the World

- CHALLENGE: The Brood Infestation
- CHALLENGE: Bridge Across the Sky
- CHALLENGE: To Save a City

GROUPS

In tales of the past, every group of adventurers strutted around like deputized peacemakers. In order to control brash and destructive young adventurers, laws were made to regulate their actions. Once adventurers become powerful enough, they have to form companies and pay attention to the law.

FINDING WORK: If you want to sign on with an adventuring party, company or faction, you have to be of the right caliber. Adventuring parties will take on almost anyone. Companies require a specialist or journeyman. Factions only accept veterans that adhere to faction principles.

For a party, verbal agreement usually suffices. Companies will require the signing of contracts. Factions demand the taking of oaths and perhaps a donation for the training and resources that they provide.

CONTRACTS & NEGOTIATION: Typically, adventuring party contracts are short, written for short stints of work (usually a month or two). Company contracts are longer, lasting six months to a year and maybe longer for advanced classes. Faction contracts last one or more years.

Using company or faction resources is a great advantage for young adventurers but it goes without saying that you should know what you're getting into before you sign your name in ink.

PARTIES

A party of adventurers is a group of individuals with similar goals in mind. Often their skills are complementary so as to fill all requirements that their adventurers may demand.

REQUIREMENTS: [BASE CLASS] In order to establish an adventuring party, you must have some levels in any base class. Those who don't have adventuring class levels can't attract enough talent to form such a group. Skilled individuals without base class levels might become mercenaries, guardsmen, brigands or fulfil other NPC roles.

LEGALITY: There is nothing legally binding about an adventuring party, nor is there any immunity or flexibility on legal matters. Thus, parties of adventurers would be wise to conduct their business outside the cities where they can avoid committing crimes in order to achieve their goals.

INCOME: Strictly speaking, adventuring parties must pay treasure taxes (20% of all spoils). However, the regulation of these laws is poor when it comes to small groups of adventurers—they are difficult to track down and the profits are generally too low to be worth it. Often a party is temporary until there is enough booty to split evenly, then each person goes their separate way.

JOINING A PARTY: Adventuring parties are typically a group of peers, so they prefer to take on people of the same caliber as the

existing members. Because a party is not an established, registered entity, it has no ability to offer employment under the law. So, whatever work is done in an adventuring party is paid with a share of the loot or cold, hard cash.

COMPANIES

An adventuring company is an official, registered group of adventurers with special dispensation and certain legal immunities when working in the best interests of the nation. Citizenship is a requirement for the leader(s) or founder(s) of a registered company.

Guilds are simply companies with specific entry requirements, typically only accepting those of certain professions into their ranks (the bard's guild, for example). Thus, guilds tend to consist of a single type of class, craftsman or worker rather than varied and multi-skilled group of individuals.

REQUIREMENTS: [ADVANCED CLASS] Founding a company requires an adventurer to be of professional caliber—you must have advanced class levels or begin developing your own advanced class. Companies will also train newcomers if they show potential and have the requisites for the job.

There is also legal paperwork, identification papers for each member, a registered base of operations and an official seal. In addition, each year a company must make a report of their achievements to the authorities, and outline their goals to be completed in the coming year. When members of an adventuring company conduct business in a populated area, they must display their company colors at all times.

LEGALITY: Nations place a great deal of trust in their adventuring companies. Adventurers in a company can easily escape prosecution for assault, disruption, manslaughter and trespass as long as they can prove they were working in the best interests of the nation. Companies can apply to local authorities for special permission to commit fraud, murder and occultism if evidence can prove that special objectives will be achieved via their actions—these are known as writs (a death writ, a trespass writ, etc).

INCOME: Companies are expected to accumulate wealth and spoils, though they must pay taxes on whatever treasure they amass. Standard taxes apply to treasure—a full 20% of all wealth discovered during adventures.

The reported earnings of a company are double-checked by government evaluators and auditors who will drop in on company headquarters from time to time. The punishment for unpaid taxes is severe and swift, often invoking the wrath of factions, though it does not stop many companies from trying to evade taxes.

JOINING A COMPANY: Newcomers sign on with the company and receive either a salary, a commission or a share, according to their loyalty, usefulness and skills. The highest ranking members of a company make the decisions on who gets what.

When it comes to dispensation, companies must use their money wisely. Typically, taxes are paid first, then salaries, then shares and the rest is kept as savings or spent on improvements for the company facilities.

- ✦ **JUNIOR:** Junior members of a company receive a salary, paid by the partners from the company fund.
- ✦ **SENIOR:** Senior members of a company receive half a salary and a half-share of profits earned.
- ✦ **PARTNER:** Partners of a company receive no salary but get a full share of the profits earned.

FACTIONS

When a company grows large enough to influence the government, it is considered a faction. Factions can have representatives amongst government councils granting them incredible legal flexibility. However, factions carry massive responsibilities and must answer to the government and all other factions for their actions.

REQUIREMENTS: [FACTION CLASS] Factions provide training to prospective members who wish to join their ranks. These special faction classes have their own special prerequisites.

For establishing a faction, there is a mountain of requisite legal paperwork and other varied requirements. Typically the recognition of a newly established faction must come from at least two other factions. Politics play an integral part of founding new factions, which is a huge adventure in itself.

LEGALITY: Factions are part of a government. Search warrants, death warrants and special permission to violate national law can be gained through the appropriate faction channels. Factions also have the power to rewrite and amend laws, granting them supreme legal power. These changes must go through political channels, so are expected to incur opposition by faction enemies and guilds.

INCOME: Taxation and the earnings of members in a faction is an internal matter for faction leaders to decide upon. Treasure taxes, income taxes, land and building taxes and other forms of taxation apply. Typically, all members earn a salary while the higher members might also receive commissions, profit shares and other perks attached to their station.

JOINING A FACTION: Though factions have many clerks, administrators and other clerical staff under their umbrella, none of them have any weight to throw around. The ranking members of a faction have titles and special privileges. While the titles and their exact responsibilities are different, they fall into three levels of power.

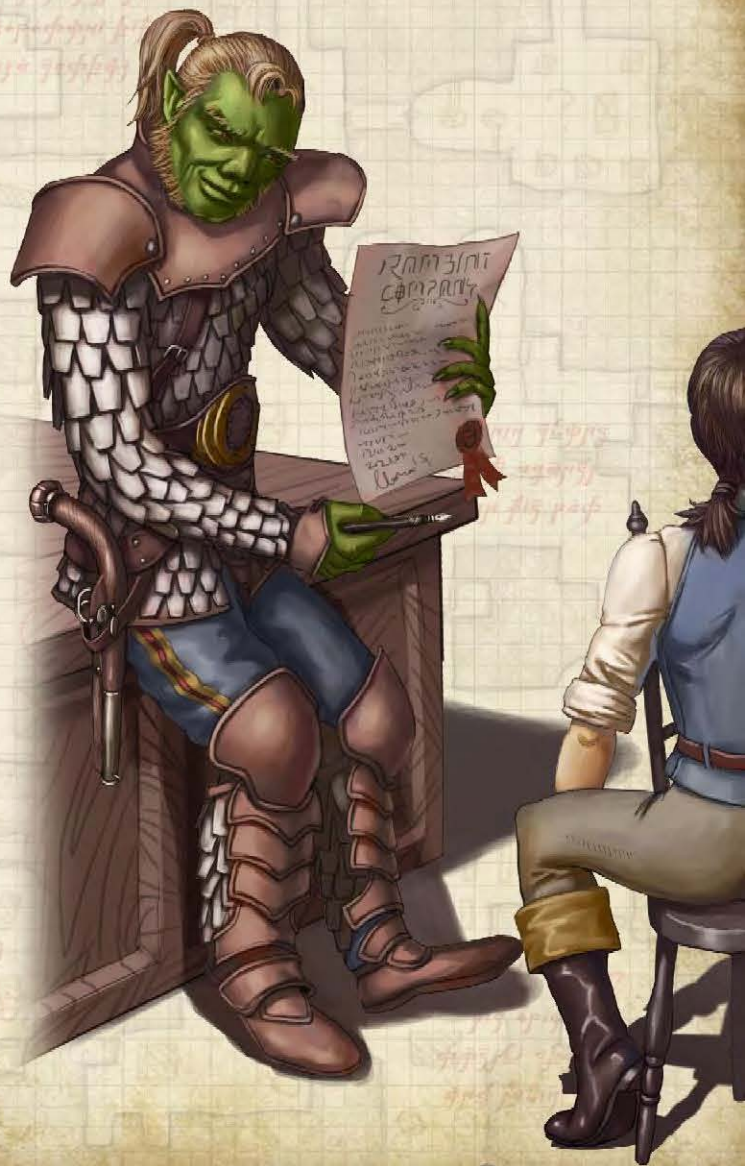
- ✦ **CHAPLAIN/LIAISON/BARON/LEGATE:** The lowest ranking members of factions can commission companies and adventuring parties, receive a salary from the faction, and must complete assignments given by those of higher rank.
- ✦ **VICAR/CONSUL/COUNT/MAGNATE:** The middle ranking members of a faction can sit in government, interact with other factions, deal with the affairs of affiliated guilds and organize faction resources.
- ✦ **BISHOP/MINISTER/LORD/POTENTATE:** The highest ranking members of a faction can speak in the government and make nationwide decisions, command faction armies, and control all faction members of lower rank.

BEYOND

Those who master and surpass a faction class are an almighty power to be reckoned with. The sheer physical and political strength puts them on par with the paradigms of the city-states.

PARADIGMS: A paradigm (pronounced pa-rah-dime) is the next closest thing to a paragon of old in terms of godlike power. This truly epic level of might surpasses anything detailed in the core rules of the New Epoch. Some of the known paradigms are listed below.

- ✦ **THE ARCHMAGUS:** The archmagus is a being of raw arcane energy more than 170 years old. He is the founder and protector of the City-state of Torch and maintains the tower of light at Beacon Point. The archmagus came into being when several powerful arcane magic users somehow merged themselves into one.
- ✦ **THE FIRE TITAN:** The Fire Titan is a twenty foot tall man of the titan race, who abandoned his people during the Residium. The Titan achieved the power of a paradigm by reconstructing himself with the power of combustion, a much more advanced



technology than clockworks or steamworks. He rules the mining city-state of Hollow.

- ✦ **THE SHADE:** The Shade is a mysterious figure, surrounded by rumor and legend. Little is known of the shade other than he or she has a strong presence in the city-state of Locke, and is responsible for making the enemies of this small nation disappear.
- ✦ **THE CLOCKWORK ORACLE:** The Clockwork Oracle is a sentient artifact from the Era of Myth, hidden somewhere in Nexus City. She benefits and defends the city to save herself from the clutches of more demanding enemies. Her power to predict the future and prevent disaster is well known. Though she takes no part in governing, her calculations and foresight turn the small military force of Nexus into an elite tactical army.
- ✦ **NUHL:** Nuhl is a powerful mechanist and necromancer who evaded death through a fusion of alchemy, engineering and black magics. None truly know what Nuhl is today, though he appears in many forms on the battlefields of former Mazrothir, commanding the undead armies that have ravaged the Dwarven nation and expelled the clockwork dwarves from their homeland.



FINDING ADVENTURE



Not every adventure comes looking for you. Often adventurers need to go in search of these adventures by themselves, and meet the friends (and enemies) of a lifetime in doing so.

Adventurers are varied and dissimilar, so how do you get a group of would-be heroes to cross paths and found an adventuring party? Here are some suggestions on how your character could meet others like himself or herself.



SIGN UP: Sometimes, companies of adventurers will recruit young talent or raise adventuring parties until they are skilled enough to be trained in advanced classes. Go to a guild hall or company headquarters and apply for such positions, but be prepared for scrutiny—companies are selective about who they take onboard.

NOTICE BOARDS: Inns, taverns, town halls, city halls, markets or squares will often have notice boards with news of odd jobs that may require the services of an adventurer. If you wait around you may bump into others who are looking for work, too.

TOWN CRIER: Hear ye, hear ye! The town crier is always a good source of scandalous gossip and intrigue, so adventurers can usually be found nearby trying to glean information about local news, problems that need fixing and sources of employment.

NEWSPAPER: The Nexan Chronicle is an excellent source of accurate information for the wealthy folk in the heartlands, though it comes at 3¢ per newspaper. The Heartland Times is an up to date tabloid which is very popular with the middle-class, only 2¢ per paper. Any settlement of town size or larger usually has a local rag too for 1¢, which may contain other clues as to where work can be found.

GO LOOKING FOR TROUBLE: This wouldn't be advisable as your first course of action, but when other options have been exhausted it may be time to go looking for trouble. Loiter around dark alleys at night, go to that dangerous wilderness area everyone talks about, follow shady looking people and see what they're up to. You might stumble across something that evolves into a plot.

THE BARTENDER: The tavern is perhaps the traveler's most regular haunt. Bartenders with good gossip are a magnet for sellswords, mercenaries and globetrotters.

GM WRITE IN: The GM may prepare a special way in which you are introduced. For example, the campaign might start mid-action, with the characters already organized into a group. It might start with a random incident at a location the characters all happen to be visiting, with the results drawing them together. It might start with the characters having been imprisoned or enslaved, and having to escape. It might start with them having been summoned to an audience with a superior. Because these beginnings can mean that characters are railroaded, the GM should ideally consult with his players first so as not to cause hard feelings.

OWN WRITE IN: The GM might let you make up your own reasons for coming to join the party. In other words, you make a reasonable suggestion as to how your character fits into the plot. Make sure you check your ideas are okay with the GM before playing out your introduction to the group.

BE THE VILLAIN: Sometimes, it can be fun to play the villain, but in such cases, the players and GM should agree to this focus beforehand; having a single villainous character in a group without the consent of others can cause for all sorts of undesired difficulties.



2: CITIES



CITIES

THE STENCH OF SEWERS, THE CALL OF TOWN CRIERS, THE HUSTLE OF HURRIED FEET AND THE FLAVOR OF FOREIGN CUISINE ARE SOME OF THE MOST EVOCATIVE SIGHTS, SOUNDS, SMELLS AND TASTES OF THE CITIES. THE EVERYDAY STRUGGLES OF VARIOUS SOCIAL CLASSES CREATES A BUSTLE OF ACTIVITY. SURE ENOUGH, ANYBODY WHO IS SOMEBODY CAN BE FOUND WITHIN.

Adventure doesn't stop at the city gates. In fact, the population density alone pretty much guarantees some form of downtown excitement. Whether it be thieves in the marketplace, murder at the manor house or just clockroaches in your basement, every veteran has a tale to tell about their stints in the city. In fact, many agree that a good stomp around the sewers is character building stuff!

OVERVIEW

EXAMPLE OF PLAY: Roleplaying in the cities usually comes naturally to all. You just do what a citizen of the Industrial Revolution would—visit banks, buy goods, go out for drinks, and so on. If you're not sure how it plays out, see the transcript of a roleplaying session by the game developers.

SETTLEMENTS: The size and scale of a settlement defines its namesake. Whether it is known as a city or just a huge town depends on what civic amenities it has to offer its residents.

CITY LIFE: This tells you what you need to know about the races of the New Epoch and how they integrate in society. It also goes into detail about what can you expect governments to be like and who makes the decisions for a city's welfare. This offers some suggestions on possible government departments that you might have to deal with during your adventures.

INTERACTION: This gives you a good idea of how to roleplay a character in the New Epoch setting. There are factors that set the industrial age apart from other traditional (medieval) fantasy roleplaying games. Furthermore, it gives instructions on how to make decisions as a group and influence other NPCs in the game.

THE LAW: The arm of the law is strongest in the cities, so it deserves mention in this chapter. What kind of prison sentence are you looking at for murder? How long will it take for the guards to send a response? What kind of fine can be paid in order to waive the punishment? What kind of muscle will a storm patrol of guardsmen be armed with? It's all here.

DETAILS, DETAILS...: Common believable rumors and interesting albeit benign city encounters can be generated on the tables given here. Whether or not there is any truth to the rumors is decided by the GM when adventurers go to investigate. Similarly, city encounters could be coincidence or part of the plot.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY: PART 2

Voyl and Nojantu are in the Port Side District of the City State of Locke, and they are making their way down a series of dangerous alleys to find an information broker.

➔ DAVE SECRETLY ROLLS A d20. BUT ANDREW NOTICES

ANDREW: [VOYL] (Andrew guesses they are about to come across a random encounter) “Shhh. There’s something up ahead... or something is about to happen.”

➔ DAVE ROLLED A 17 HE LOOKS UP THE RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE AND READS THE RESULTS. HE CHOOSES “A GANG OF MISFITS TURNS AND WATCHES YOU”. HE DECIDES TO HAVE THESE MISFITS ANNOY THE PARTY.

DAVE: [GM] The small junction ahead is very narrow, sandwiched between shoddy brick walls and flaking paint. In the center of this crossing are a band of dubious characters, brandishing gang tattoos and cheap weapons. Guffaws of laughter waft your way as they turn to watch you. The bolder of the group is an orc with scrappy pieces of leather armor. He shouts:

[ORC GANGSTER] “Oi! This ‘ere alley don’t accept visitors righ’ now. Clear off, you lot!”

ANDREW: [VOYL] Do I recognize their tattoos?

DAVE: [GM] Make a Lore check, TN 15.

➔ ANDREW ROLLS A d20 AND SCORES AN 11, THEN ADDS HIS LORE SKILL BONUS FOR A TOTAL OF 21. IT’S A SUCCESS!

DAVE: [GM] (Improvising on the spot) They belong to a gang that originated in Nexus called Garret’s Glove. It appears they are expanding into the City of Locke.

ANDREW: [VOYL] I will approach them peacefully.

GRANT: [NOJANTU] I’ll be your backup—right behind you.

➔ DAVE DECIDES ON THE GANG’S DISPOSITION: VOYL WILL BE AN ANNOYANCE TO THEM, BUT NOJANTU’S ROUGHNESS MAKES HIM INDIFFERENT.

ANDREW: [VOYL] I’m going to Convince them to let me pass. “We are going to pass through this crossing. I wouldn’t want to make enemies with the esteemed Garret’s Glove!”

➔ ANDREW ROLLS A CONVINCE SKILL CHECK AND SCORES AN ABYSMAL TOTAL OF 11. THE ORC IS UNIMPRESSED.

DAVE: [ORC GANGSTER] “Garret never said nuffin’ ‘bout no snotty grey-skin sniffin’ around my operation. What is this knife-ears saying?”

GRANT: [NOJANTU] I’m going to try a different tactic. I’ll get on their good side. “Hobnob here,” (motioning to Voyl) “doesn’t talk streetwise. All those years in magic school, and all he learned to do was ‘polish his wand’ if you know what I mean.” (Voyl looks unimpressed)

➔ THE GANGSTERS LAUGH, AND GRANT ROLLS HIS CHARISMA CHECK, SCORING A TOTAL OF 17. IT’S ENOUGH TO BEAT THE ORC’S WITS DEFENSE OF 16.

GRANT: [Nojantu] “Look, it’s bad enough that I have to work with grey-skin here. You wouldn’t be happy about it either. We’re just moving through, don’t want any trouble.”

DAVE: [GM] (After a long pause) “Aw right. But don’t come back

SETTLEMENTS

Settlements range in size from the humble estate to the hulking metropolis. Larger settlements have higher populations, more types of civic buildings, wealthier merchants and better trained guardsmen. They’re also dirtier, more corrupt, and overcrowded.

The guidelines given here for settlement sizes are rather general and approximate. They represent what expectations an adventurer should have for a settlement of a given size. For example, when you enter a village, you know there is a pretty good chance of finding a bank or a post office.

SETTLEMENT SIZES: The size of settlements in the New Epoch is measured according to the following specifications. Settlements from smallest to largest are named in this order.

ESTATE = POPULATION 1+
HAMLET = POPULATION 10+
THORP = POPULATION 100+
VILLAGE = POPULATION 1,000+
TOWN = POPULATION 10,000+
CITY = POPULATION 100,000+
METROPOLIS = POPULATION 1,000,000+

Further notes of the size of settlements is given below, along with the requisites a settlement needs in order to be recognized.

MAPS: Whether or not a settlement appears on a map is another matter entirely. Typically, if a settlement is much smaller than others nearby, it’s not worth mentioning.

There might be hundreds of estates surrounding a town, but none of these will be noted on the town map. Similarly, a small village in the shadow of a metropolis doesn’t seem noteworthy enough to bother including on a large road map.

POPULATION: In order to qualify as a settlement of a particular size, there is a population prerequisite that must be met.

BUILDINGS: Settlements also have civic building requisites to service the needs of residents. These are general, to be taken into consideration but not strictly adhered. If a village falls far short of its civic building requirements, it might simply be known as a large thorp. Of course, the ‘village folk’ might think differently about that.

MERCHANTS: For the merchant entries, an entry of 500 ₶ means that the merchant has up to five hundred shillings of cash with which to buy goods from others, and might be willing to. Settlements with a bank and a post office can make orders for more expensive or exotic goods not in a shopkeeper’s normal inventory.

GUARDS: As a settlement grows in size, so does the strength and skill of its law enforcers. Add these as quick levels to any guards, constables, sergeants, investigators or magistrates there are in the city.

ESTATE

An estate is sometimes well-known enough to be noted on a map. It consists of a large plot of land and some building of noteworthy size. Retired adventurers or other wealthy, self-sufficient folk often build estates, usually close to other larger settlements.

POPULATION: 1+

BUILDINGS: A single large building.

MERCHANTS: None, though limited bartering maybe possible.

GUARDS: No change.

HAMLET

Small rural settlements consisting of several families living in a few houses, often surrounding a single well, courtyard, granary, mill, etc. These tiny settlements aim to be self-sufficient, but can easily fall prey to dangers of the wilds. Normally, one or more of the hamlet residents has had martial training and can protect or police the others in times of trouble.

POPULATION: 10+

BUILDINGS: More than one building.

MERCHANTS: None, though limited bartering maybe possible.

GUARDS: +1 Quick Level.

THORP

A sizeable group of houses with a road, an inn for travellers and a place to exchange trade goods or currency. These small settlements usually contribute a large labor force to a single profession. As such, thorps tend to spring up around large mines, farms, mills or factories.

POPULATION: 100+

BUILDINGS: Trading post or marketplace, a street or road, an inn.

MERCHANTS: 100 ¢

GUARDS: +2 Quick Level.

VILLAGE

A settlement that grows large enough to need its own bank, church, school and post office is a village. Such villages also need a speaker who acts with the authority of the nearest lord whenever he is not present. Villages also have their own militia or guards employed by the speaker.

POPULATION: 1,000+

BUILDINGS: As per thorp, bank, church, school, post office.

MERCHANTS: 500 ¢. Post order possible (1 month).

GUARDS: +3 Quick Levels.

TOWN

A town is a very large settlement usually containing a barracks of guardsmen, a railhauler station, a street dedicated to commerce, a mayor and a council, a town hall and at least one major national industry. Many heartland villages became towns after the establishment of a foundry or massive factory operation which required a railway to transport its goods.

POPULATION: 10,000+

BUILDINGS: As per village, barracks, commercial street, railhauler station, town hall, mayor and council, one major industry.

MERCHANTS: 1,000 ¢. Post order possible (3 weeks).

GUARDS: +4 Quick Levels.

CITY

Cities usually form the crossroads of political power in a nation, ruled over by a magistrate who works directly under the government. A city usually has many large manufacturing industries and factories employing thousands of workers. Cities also have a gravity effect on the lands surrounding them as rural workers migrate toward them.

POPULATION: 100,000+

BUILDINGS: As per town, cathedral, seadock, skydock, courtroom and magistrate, sewer system, city hall, guild houses and faction houses.

MERCHANTS: 5,000 ¢. Post order possible (2 weeks).

GUARDS: +5 Quick Levels.

METROPOLIS

A metropolis is a massive, bloated city comprised of many urban districts. Metropolises are terribly polluted and overcrowded, but have access to mass produced goods from all across the heartlands. Such massive settlements always contain a manufacturer of vehicles, a shipyard or airship yard and the headquarters of at least one government faction.

POPULATION: 1,000,000+

BUILDINGS: As per city, vehicle factory, university, public library, at least ten urban districts.

MERCHANTS: 10,000 ¢. Post order possible (1 week).

GUARDS: +6 Quick Levels.



CITY LIFE

The industrial age has brought about many revolutionary changes to the everyday lives of city residents. Electrical street lamps, steam-powered vehicles and fast communication devices have paved the way for huge improvements in living standards.

However, in many ways, the social structure of the city is still entrenched in the ways of old. The lower-classes toil in the city industries to fill the pockets of middle- and upper-class folk, not unlike the feudal monarchies of ages past.

RELIGION: Religion is deep-seated in Ostenia though the prevalence of religion is declining in Avenoss, Stoigmar and especially the heartland city-states. Still, churches are filled at the weekend mornings as churchgoers seek fulfillment at the hands of the Divine Mechanism's chosen clergy. Furthermore, religion is a compulsory subject in public schools across the heartlands.

Smaller nations take after their motherlands. Ijolea is only slightly more religious than Stoigmar, Perivia worships as much as Ostenia and Aglosen is becoming more secular like Avenoss. Most of the city-states are purely secular folk, save for foreign immigrants.

EDUCATION: Education is available to all. However, it is not equal—not between the sexes, the races, nor the classes. The wealthy folk tend to be home schooled by prestigious tutors as public schools are poorly equipped and full of commoners. Girls are not encouraged to excel in any academic areas, as tradition dictates that women have no business acumen, and old beliefs die hard. However, there are occasional examples to the contrary almost everywhere. The number of women in power is ever increasing.

Most of the curriculum is academic in nature, steeped in the ways of the past with no practical application. Subjects are math, law, science, religion, philosophy and history.

Those who cannot afford schooling in their later childhood years find apprenticeships with craftsmen who are willing to take on extra helpers. If no such training can be found then young adults will simply become laborers, doing anything that can bring in a wage.

SCIENCE: Most population centers in the New Epoch are transformed every decade as technologies allow them to develop in leaps and bounds. The motorized mount so common in the crownland superpowers or electric street lamps found only in some city-states are examples of these life-changing inventions. Inevitably, laborers from the rural areas move from the agricultural and horticultural fields into factory positions to facilitate the manufacture of higher-quality goods.

TIERS OF SOCIETY

Society is arranged very much like Victorian England. Each race fills a tier of that society. The following pointers give a good idea of how the social hierarchy of The New Epoch is arranged, though they are very broad generalizations.

UPPER-CLASS: The nobles and aristocrats of the setting are the elves.

They are wealthy, well-educated and arrogant. While the rivens are enterprising and carefree about their money, the draug are suspicious misers that hoard their wealth. Whatever the case, the upper-class generally don't do any work at all, but gain wealth through their investments and inherited estates.

MIDDLE-CLASS: The middle-class have to work for their wages, but they seldom get their hands dirty, typically holding jobs that allow them to apply their mental, not physical, faculties. Humans make up the bulk of the middle-class, most of them churchgoing folk. There is a certain amount of blending in the middle-class—many have a foot in the door of the upper-class, and may have ties back to the lower-class, too. For example, some lowly elves can be found in the middle-class along with the most successful of greenskins.

WORKING-CLASS: The working-class are laborers, comprised mostly of lowly humans, gypsy halflings and greenskins. Orcs of this stratum are thugs and laborers who can only dream of rising above their station. Goblins are gifted with intelligence but trapped in their place because they get lumped in with other greenskins. Hobgoblins are a bit more disciplined than their cousins so end up as foremen, managers or organizers.

ARTISAN CLASS: Dwarves and tinker halflings are perceived differently, as a sort of artisan class for specialist workers. Traditionally, engineering, crafting and science run through dwarven and tinker bloodlines, so they tend to carry the same profession for generations, giving rise to strong racial stereotypes. Thus, humans treat them like a separate class of their own. This is reinforced by the fact that neither tinkers nor dwarves seem to pay notice to the class differences of human societies—they are very much outside the social sphere of others.

Dwarves are the leading authority on engineering, steamworks, clockworks and building machines. Tinker halflings have a creative spark which inspires excellent, albeit eccentric, inventions.

OUTCASTS: There are some who live on the fringes of society, barely contributing anything to their countries or governments and living off the land. Typically, such folk are halfling gypsies, bands of self-sufficient greenskins or exiles (political, criminal, voluntary or otherwise) who roam the borderlands in search of sustenance.

Discontent seems to follow whenever these types intrude upon civilization, especially where they do not conform to the laws of the land.

CITY ORGANIZATION

The age of kings has passed. Even the few remaining monarchs have appointed parliaments and councils to do the real work of governing. There are guilds for different craftsmen, courts for sentencing criminals, lawyers who work for the government, and lots of legal grey areas. Some of the powerful bodies that you might encounter in the cities are:

BANK: Banks are tied to governments. They can grant loans to those with assets, sell land and houses on behalf of the government, and exchange currencies.

BOILERS: Many, though not all cities have power stations that provide steam power to the various districts of a city. A powerful arm of the government stocks furnaces, does maintenance for pipes, and

keeps a massive supply of coal on hand at all times to avoid power outages.

CHURCH: Most lands have an official religion. The leading body of this religion decides which beliefs are within the bounds of the faith and which ones are heretical. Because the Liber Explicatum (the holy book) and its many sects and offshoot religions were derived from writings in the Era of Myth, humans make up the bulk of the church's flock.

COURT: Courts are an important part of a city. Courts are where laws are made, criminals are tried, and legal disputes are settled. Winding up in court is never a good thing, as power tends to swing in favor of the upper-classes.

FOUNDRY: Large foundries employ hundreds or even thousands of workers. These metal-smelting factories supply hundreds of important industries with the metals they need to operate.

HOSPITAL: Medical theory, the use of medicines, legality of drugs, common practices of physicians, and the administration of healthcare are issues addressed by the hospitals of a city.

MINE: Mining guilds conduct prospecting operations, open cast mining and underground mining.

MORTUARY: Cemeteries, morgs, mausoleums and crematoriums take records of deaths and maintain or expand their facilities to accommodate, or dispose of, dead bodies.

POST: The post offices of a city deliver letters and take care of correspondence matters. They are closely tied to the government and must abide by strict regulations.

PRISON: The prisons and labor camps of the New Epoch are largely administrated by the courts of the criminal justice system. This group is also responsible for administering the reeducation of savage orcs that enter the crownlands and heartlands from fragmented tribes in the borderlands.

RAILWAY: Spanning cities and far away lands are the railways of yesteryear. Rail expansion has been slowing in recent years as faster modes of sky travel become available. Nevertheless, the rail system is a massive and complex infrastructure.

ROADS: The roads, highways and streets are all constructed, maintained and policed by municipal transit authorities rather than city security forces or the national guard. Speed limits are not enforced outside cities. Skilled law enforcers patrol highways on high speed mounts to counteract banditry.

SCHOOL: Supposedly, every citizen has the right to an education up until they are thirteen years old. Naturally, there are those who continue studying and reach university level, and those that drop out at the age of nine.

SEADOCK: Maritime authorities manage docks, trade routes, charter ship voyages and deal with maritime transport affairs. Their skilled forces deter piracy in shipping lanes.

SEWER: Sanitation is not the most glorious job in a large city, but an important one nevertheless. Sewers carry condensation from steam power pipes and effluvium to and from cities.

SKYDOCK: Sky traffic, airship registration and air traffic control is under direct control of the national guard and cooperating local government. The national guard also operates a small group of patrolmen that try to stomp out sky piracy.

UNIVERSITY: Universities and research groups operating under the government each have their own independent circles to control them.

WATCH: The city watch is administered by the local government. They tend to the training of guardsmen, solving domestic disputes, protecting citizens against crime, and organizing watch patrols to move throughout the cities.

INTERACTION

The New Epoch avoids many of the tropes of normal high fantasy. Elves don't live in trees, heroes don't ride horses, and goblins aren't barbaric cave dwellers. Prosperity and equality bleeds out of the heartlands, affecting all that it washes across.

When you create a character, you have to consider what they believe in. In past ages, people would crusade about slaying orcs on the preconception that they were inherently evil. In the feudal eras, people who didn't attend their local church were beaten into submission by the so-called 'upstanding citizens'. Just a few decades ago, people thought that if you climbed the Nexus Spire you'd reach heaven.

Now, however, is the age of industry. Everything and everyone in the heartlands is integrated. There is no clearly defined good and evil, no moral black or white, no clear line between what's right and what's not, and the leaps and bounds of magical and scientific progress make it hard to know what tomorrow will bring. Even the agendas of factions and the beliefs that they stand for are up to the interpretation of the individual. The best guide to a character's interactions are their personality traits; use these to decide what they think is right or wrong.

GROUP DECISIONS

If every person made their own decisions, taking nobody else into account, an adventuring group would quickly collapse. Adventurers have to be somewhat flexible and willing to hear out the opinions of others. Bullies and hard-liners are an awful burden to the adventuring party as they try to force others to do things their way, making players and their characters equally miserable.

When making an important decision that affects everyone in the group, consider the three styles noted below. Find one that works for the group, or suggest a different method if your party isn't cooperating very well.

ADVOCATES: Two or more characters represent certain interests of the group. Each tries to win the others over by persuasive argument. This type of decision-making is relatively fair, but takes a long time and relies heavily upon the leadership skills and personal charisma of each individual, otherwise their concerns and viewpoints will not be heard.

SPEAKER: The party chooses a leader through nomination or domination. The leader speaks for the party, trying to take everyone's interests into account. This type of decision-making is fast and efficient, but doesn't necessarily represent the opinions of the entire group, especially if the leader has only her own interests at heart.

COUNCIL: The party votes on any decisions in a democratic style. Each person's vote has equal weight and the majority decision is acted upon. This type of decision-making is quite fair but only where each individual makes their own decisions. If three characters always agree with each other because they don't like the other one, or one character always gives her vote to another ("I'll do whatever Jack chooses to do"), then this system for making decisions fails.

DISPOSITION

From the spire to the teeth of the world, the cities are full of all sorts. All the races of the civilized lands can be found within a settlement's walls: the good, the bad and the ugly.

DISPOSITION: Non-player character friends and enemies (NPCs) have a disposition rating toward you that can be measured on the following scale. In the most extreme cases, an ally will risk injury or even death to help you while an enemy will risk the same to kill or harm you.

When you meet someone for the first time (an NPC), they normally have a disposition of indifferent. If you have a bad reputation or there is some reason to dislike you, then they might regard you as an annoyance. If you have a good reputation or there is some reason to like you, they might regard you as an acquaintance.

When you do something really significant to make someone like you, it can go up permanently. When you do something to make someone dislike you, it goes down permanently. The GM decides what the rating is and when it moves, but you can take a guess when you record their name on your character sheet.

ALLY—FRIEND—ACQU.—INDIFF.—ANNOY.—RIVAL—ENEMY

- **ALLY:** Will actively seek to help you, risking injury or death to do so.
- **FRIEND:** Will actively seek to help you but won't take risks.
- **ACQUAINTANCE:** Will passively help you (if the opportunity arises) and won't take risks.
- **INDIFFERENT:** Typically won't do anything to help or hinder you, nor take any risks.
- **ANNOYANCE:** Will passively hinder you (if the opportunity arises) and won't take risks.
- **RIVAL:** Will actively seek to hinder you but won't take risks.
- **ENEMY:** Will actively seek to hinder you, risking injury or death to do so.

Actively helping or hindering means they will seek out ways to aid or harm you. Passively doing so means they will only act if the opportunity arises. Risks are things that could cause injury or harm and thus, only allies and enemies are willing to take them.

CHARISMA SKILL: If you want to change the disposition of another for a limited time, then you need to make a Charisma skill check against the target's wits. A success indicates you can move their disposition up or down one step for an hour, after which it returns to normal.

THE LAW

Every nation has its own force of public servants who armor up and patrol the streets for the safety of its people. The arm of the law is strongest in heartland centers of population and weakest in the borderlands.

Though law enforcers all take an oath to serve and protect, the way they interpret their duties is determined by the individual. Simply, when justice is served, it might not be the justice you'd expect.

LEGALITIES: The arm of the law doesn't extend past the main travel arteries, settlements and civilians of a nation. In other words, if it isn't a human, dwarf, elf, greenskin or halfling, and it isn't the pet or property of any such race, you won't be breaking any laws by killing it and taking all its worldly possessions. However, just because something technically legal, it doesn't mean people won't steer clear of a warrior bearing a necklace of harpling teeth. The nations of the New Epoch bristle at savagery in all its forms.

Many non-citizens are helpful if given the chance. In fact, some intelligent humanoid species are just waiting to be recognized as citizens by certain governments, so they live in small wilderness communities, fearing adventuring parties more than anything else.

STRUCTURE

Members of the city watch can be divided into five main categories. The magistrate is the head of the law enforcers and the guard is the basic grunt.

- ✦ **MAGISTRATE:** A magistrate is a judge who determines sentencing of criminals and also deals with clerks that record the official paperwork of law enforcement.
- ✦ **INSPECTOR:** An inspector investigates crimes that cannot be solved easily. He fulfils the role of detective and also captain to the men that serve under him.
- ✦ **SERGEANT:** A sergeant trains and organizes guards and can also promote them. He organizes the squads and guard patrols across a suburb. Sergeants have many abilities and well-trained weapon skills, not unlike urban adventurers.
- ✦ **CONSTABLE:** A constable is a leader of the guards, accompanying them on patrols and making decisions on the scene. Constables get access to better equipment and weapons than guardsmen.
- ✦ **GUARD:** A guardsman or guardswoman is a member of the watch, trained to deter crime and confront it wherever it occurs. Unlike militia, guards have a long compulsory training period.



PATROLS

City patrols can save your hide or tan it when necessary. It always pays to stay on their good side. Whenever rowdy behavior breaks out, the guards will arrive to intervene within a few minutes.

Most of the time, guards will ask questions and maybe file a report. Where a situation appears dangerous, guards try to arrest first and ask questions later.

THE REACH OF THE LAW: Though the law applies to all places and citizens within a nation, the enforcement of the law is confined to trade routes, highways, railways, villages, towns, cities, metropolises and their surrounding lands. However, there are still codes of conduct in places where the law enforcement can't reach.

Crimes, dangers, hazards and other problems that occur outside the reach of the law are considered matters for the national guard. These soldiers are bound to the rules of engagement and war, not by the standard laws of the nation. Unlike law enforcers, the national guard will use lethal force to solve problems without hesitation.

URBAN RESPONSE TIME: [2 MINUTES] When something goes awry and the guards are alerted, you have around 2 minutes before they arrive to start issuing arrests. The GM rolls this secretly once there is enough to attract the attention of the guards. Either a citizen goes to inform the guards personally, a large bell is rung on the street, or the guards simply stroll past and notice something is afoot.

If the conflict continues or escalates, a larger and more experienced backup patrol arrives after about 5 more minutes. After that, a storm patrol will arrive within approximately 10 more minutes with special units chosen specially to diffuse the situation. Lastly, if the conflict is unresolved the national guard will be called in after an hour or two.

RURAL RESPONSE TIME: [2 HOURS] The same types of patrols can be found across the rural areas of a nation. In these places, the time it takes for guards to arrive is measured in hours, not minutes. For the arrival of the national guard, it takes a full day. It is also worth noting that guardsmen in less populated areas have lower levels than those from the big cities.

GUARD LEVELS: [+0, +1, +2, +3, +4, +5, +6] Add some quick levels to the guards depending on the size of the settlement you are in. The bigger the settlement, the better training and more experience the guardsmen have.

PATROL SIZE: Patrols are small and relatively efficient in their task.

- ➦ **STANDARD PATROL:** [4 GUARDS, 1 CONSTABLE] A standard patrol of guardsmen consists of three guards and a constable.
- ➦ **BACKUP PATROL:** [12 GUARDS, 3 CONSTABLES, 1 SERGEANT] A backup patrol is usually called in after the first patrol fails to report back.
- ➦ **STORM PATROL:** [36 GUARDS, 9 CONSTABLES, 3 SERGEANTS, 1 SPECIAL] In extreme situations, one or more storm patrols may be called in to deal with tough situations. They may bring in a special unit with them, chosen specifically for the problem at hand. Such a unit could be a steamtoiler machine, armored vehicle, sniper, demolitions expert, or powerful alchemist.
- ➦ **NATIONAL GUARD:** [GM'S DECISION] The national guard can

bring any type of heavy artillery or specialist troops that are required. Airships with mounted armaments are used to fly the national guard in. The national guard are not overly concerned about collateral damage.

Only a tiny portion of an army could be mobilized for this type of purpose, and only those nearby. If there is no military presence within a settlement, then the response time is in hours, not minutes.

CRIMES

Some of the most common crimes are given below with an explanation. The gravity of the crime is often different depending on which nation it is committed in.

ABDUCTION: Kidnapping or imprisoning a person against their will.
ARSON: Burning the property of another person, usually a place of residence.

ASSAULT: Attacking a person can have varied punishments. Much depends on the stature of the person attacked.

BURGLARY: Theft from the victim's residence.

CRUELTY: Cruelty to all those that are not represented by the law—children under the age of fifteen, animals and non-citizens. Sentence varies greatly depending on the situation.

CONSPIRACY: Plotting and organizing to overthrow or harm the current government. Those who were simply accessories to the crime have lower sentences.

DISRUPTION: Disturbing the peace is generally a case of too much liquor, grief or anger. If things were damaged, the cost of these things is added to the fine.

DRUGS: Narcotics that are not legally sanctioned warrant a punishment by the government. If the accused is selling the drugs (not simply in possession of them), the punishment doubles.

EXTORTION: Extortion, blackmail, threats, and related crimes are often difficult to prove. In Stoigmar, these charges cannot be made at a blood relative. In Ostenia, the church has immunity from these charges.

FRAUD: Misleading others, counterfeiting currency, impersonating someone else, or deliberately producing faulty goods are examples that fall into the broad category of fraud. Punishment for fraud varies greatly according to the severity of the crime.

LARCENY: Stealing from someone who is outside their home, such as pick pocketing or mugging.

MANSLAUGHTER: Accidentally killing someone or letting them die from negligence is a crime.

MURDER: Deliberate, often premeditated, taking of the life of another person.

OCCULTISM: Dabbling in sinister or heretical practices deemed illegal by the nation. Sacrifices, necromancy, paragon worship, blight seeding and unholy rituals are examples of such behavior.

PROSTITUTION: Engaging in the sale or purchase of services of a sexual nature. Both the provider and the customer are punished, though seldom equally.

RAPE: Rape punishments vary with the age of the victim, the nature of the crime and the victim's class.

ROBBERY: Any forms of robbery not covered by larceny or burglary fall into this category. It is typically used for high class crimes involving loopholes and money laundering.

TRESPASS: Unlawful entry to the property or lands of another.

PUNISHMENT

The punishment for crimes is determined by a magistrate, recorded by the courts and exacted by the inspectors and their men.

SENTENCES LISTED HERE ARE GUIDELINES ONLY

A court hearing takes 1 hour at most and is immediately followed by sentencing. Most crimes call for only one magistrate, but complicated crimes could have two or more magistrates that must reach consensus.

FINE: [PAY INSTEAD OF PUNISHMENT] If the accused is wealthy enough, they may pay a fine to waive any other punishment. Fines must be paid directly to the court, town hall or city hall within 1 day, otherwise the punishment will be carried out.

WHIP: [50 ₿ PER LASH] Also known as flogging, lashes of the whip are an old punishment that is very painful and scars the accused for life. Some particularly cruel prisons will use special flogs to lash the accused. A fine of 50 shillings can be paid per lash to waive the punishment.

SHAME: [500 ₿ PER WEEK] Public cages, branks (like handcuffs for your neck and arms), stocks or manacles used to humiliate and embarrass offenders in front of the general public. Paying a fine can buy your way out of this punishment, priced at 500 shillings per day.

LABOR: [500 ₿ PER WEEK] The type of labor is decided by the magistrate—most labor takes place on roads, mines or factories. A fine of 500 shillings can be paid in lieu of each week's labor to avoid the punishment.

PRISON: [1,000 ₿ PER MONTH] Prison sentences can go as high as thirty years. Prisons have various levels of security depending on what types of convicts are kept within. The highest security prison in the known world is Widow's Rock, fifteen miles off the coast of Nexus. The price for avoiding prison is 1,000 shillings per month.

AGING: [NONE] Magical aging is sometimes used to instantly deprive

a criminal of his or her youth, strength or beauty, especially if it could prevent a repeat of the crime. The number of years of life taken is decided by the severity of the crime and the average racial life span of the accused. This is done via exposure to myth radiation in lead-lined chambers. This punishment cannot be waived by the payment of a fine.

DEATH: [NONE] A death sentence is given to anyone too dangerous to be kept alive, when the nature of the crime is extreme, or when punishments would exceed 30 years of prison. Methods of execution vary in different locations, some of them more grim than others. This punishment cannot be waived by the payment of a fine.

TORTURE: [NONE] Torture is the most inhumane punishment reserved for the most inhumane of crimes. Torture is usually, though not always, to the death or followed by execution. This punishment cannot be waived by the payment of a fine.

SENTENCING: The punishment for crimes is determined by the beliefs or culture of the surrounding lands. However, it is also influenced by the personality of the magistrate and the nature of the crime.

Each of the great nations has its own punishment trends. In Avenoss, magical aging and prison sentences are used while there are no labor or torture sentences. In city-states, they favor flogging over other types of punishment as it scars the victim so that repeat offenders are easily identified. Torture and shaming criminals are more common in Ostenia than anywhere else. Stoigmar prefers to make its criminals pay in sweat, so long grueling labor punishments are more common.

➔ **PREVIOUS CONVICTIONS:** If the person has already committed other crimes, they are likely to receive a tougher sentence.

➔ **CLASS DIFFERENCE:** Upper-class citizens tend to get lighter sentences while lower-class citizens tend to get more severe ones. Conversely, a crime against an upper-class citizen will be treated more seriously than one against a lower-class citizen.

➔ **REPEAT OFFENDERS:** Punishments are bound to be worse the second time. Either double the length of the punishment or increase the severity by one step.

CRIME	AVENOSS	CITY-STATES*	OSTENIA	STOIGMAR
Abduction	5Y Aging, 5Y Prison	100L Whip, 5Y Prison	1D Torture, 5Y Prison	10Y Labor
Arson	1W Shame, 10Y Prison	10Y Labor	Death	10Y Prison, 5Y Labor
Assault	1Y Aging, 1Y Prison	50L Whip, 1W Shame	1Y Labor	50L Whip, 2Y Labor
Burglary	70L Whip, 2M Prison	40L Whip, 4M Labor	50L Whip, 2M Shame	1Y Labor
Cruelty	1Y Aging, 1Y Prison	10L Whip, 1M Labor	1M Shame, 1M Labor	50L Whip
Conspiracy	Death	30Y Prison	1W Torture, Death	3D Torture, Death
Disruption	30L Whip, 1W Shame	10L Whip, 1W Shame	1M Shame, 1M Labor	6M Labor
Drugs	2Y Aging, 2Y Prison	1Y Aging, 2Y Labor	2D Torture, 3Y Prison	1Y Prison, 1Y Labor
Extortion	100L Whip, 1M Shame	100L Whip, 1W Shame	50L Whip, 6M Labor	1Y Prison
Fraud	1W Shame, 10Y Prison	50L Whip, 5Y Prison	1D Torture, 5Y Prison	50L Whip, 5Y Labor
Larceny	40L Whip, 1M Prison	20L Whip, 2M Labor	40L Whip, 1M Shame	1Y Labor
Manslaughter	10Y Prison	10Y Prison	1M Shame, 5Y Prison	5Y Prison, 5Y Labor
Murder	Death	20Y Prison	15Y Prison	15Y Prison, 10Y Labor
Occultism	10Y Aging, 10Y Prison	100L Whip, 20Y Prison	Death	30Y Prison
Prostitution	10L Whip, 1W Shame	—	100L Whip, 6M Labor	1M Shame, 1M Labor
Rape	5Y Aging, 5Y Prison	5Y Aging, 5Y Prison	3D Torture, 15Y Prison	10Y Prison, 5Y Labor
Robbery	100L Whip, 3M Prison	60L Whip, 6M Labor	60L Whip, 3M Shame	30L Whip, 2Y Labor
Trespass	6M Prison	10L Whip	50L Whip, 1M Labor	3M Labor

CITY-STATES*: This is an average/approximate figure for most city-states (some exceptions exist).

LEGEND: L-LASH / D-DAY / W-WEEK / M-MONTH / Y-YEAR

DETAILS, DETAILS...

As you approach the crossroads of Cobble and Boggens St., you run into a makeshift blockade surrounded by armed guards and a large, tired-looking steamtoiler. The towncrier stands perched on a pedestal directly opposite, heralding the news of the hour. "Hear ye, hear ye! A curfew will be enforced on all Westbrig residents 'till the notorious burglar Winterspark is apprehended! All citizens to be indoors before the clock chimes 8 o'clock and remain indoors 'till 7 o'clock on the morrow!"

Rumors and encounters such as these make city life interesting and dynamic. It gives a city life and depth beyond the immediate needs of your quest—lets you know, for example, that there is more to the city of Delton than your regular stops (the tavern and the general store).

RANDOMIZE: The GM rolls a d20, reads the each possible result and chooses the most appropriate one. He or she then works the random item into the scene (tells you what happens), giving you the opportunity to react, talk, or do something wherever appropriate.

100 RUMORS

You can only get rumors from those who are willing to give them. Therefor, acquaintances, friends and allies are your best source of news. If a rumor turns out to be true, it will probably be printed in the local newspaper within a day, though key details might be embellished or omitted to prote drama or protect certain interests.

- 1 Guardsmen are staking out a site somewhere in town.
- 2 Some new gangs have been robbing people in broad daylight.
- 3 An airship of exotic goods will leave for the borderlands tomorrow.
- 4 A ship just arrived with armed escort carrying an unknown cargo.
- 5 The statue of a national hero was defaced last night.
- 6 A holy relic of the church has gone missing.
- 7 A famous bard will arrive for a one-night performance tonight.
- 8 Gypsies have been seen in great numbers just south of here.
- 9 The servants of a local lord are under domination magic.
- 10 Several guardsmen have gone missing during night watch.
- 11 A noble's daughter was kidnapped three days ago.
- 12 The ale supply will dry up in a few days.
- 13 A fire has started on the opposite side of town.
- 14 A riot is in progress on the docks.
- 15 A powerful hero has turned up dead.
- 16 Dead frogs have been turning up in alarming numbers.
- 17 There is a clockroach/rat/vermin infestation in the settlement.
- 18 Stone gargoyles have been seen moving around at night.
- 19 The unburied dead rise at midnight.
- 20 The ancient mansion on the hill is haunted.
- 1 An ancient myth ruin lies somewhere beneath the settlement.
- 2 The magistrate is in contact with fey creatures.
- 3 A high official makes no secret of his racism.
- 4 A powerful adventurer will join any that can best him.
- 5 A well-known adventuring party moved through yesterday.
- 6 Two adventuring companies are going head-to-head.
- 7 Some faction is experimenting on the locals.

- 8 Three children disappeared yesterday.
- 9 There is a curfew until a mystery is solved.
- 10 An important public figure recently returned to politics.
- 11 The guards rounded up a dozen drunken adventurers last night.
- 12 A faction leader is going to visit the settlement very soon.
- 13 A local merchant's recent success is attributed to trade crimes.
- 14 Several ships have run aground/ashore in a storm.
- 15 A cache of old books was discovered under church flagstones.
- 16 Ethereal creatures have been seen near the river.
- 17 A nearby tower has sunken into the earth.
- 18 Spies recently stole the blueprints of a local inventor.
- 19 A political figure has recently gone into hiding.
- 20 There's a huge discount at a local store frequented by adventurers.

- 1 A well or water source in this settlement was poisoned.
- 2 A terrible storm is on its way.
- 3 Immigrants from abroad are causing trouble.
- 4 Local taxes will double next week.
- 5 A guard captain is abusing a certain group of citizens.
- 6 Underground slavers are operating in the area.
- 7 An ancient map has been discovered.
- 8 Some kind of prototype technology is en route to the settlement.
- 9 An ancient ruin has been discovered, but not explored.
- 10 A team of warders have just departed for a nearby ruin.
- 11 Guards in this area are becoming increasingly corrupt.
- 12 There will be a parade in honor of a local hero.
- 13 An unlicensed arms dealing ring was recently crushed.
- 14 A new civic building will be completed within the week.
- 15 Crime in the marketplace is on the rise.
- 16 An expensive vehicle was recently stolen from a private residence.
- 17 Renowned local personality has decided to leave settlement forever.
- 18 A powerful noble has died without an heir.
- 19 Powerful merchants are at war over a woman.
- 20 Famous town rivals are soon to be wed.

- 1 Burglars have cleaned out a local shop.
- 2 A duel is scheduled to happen nearby at any moment.
- 3 A local person has died under mysterious circumstances.
- 4 A powerful crime lord was arrested, but still awaits sentencing.
- 5 A public execution is going to take place today.
- 6 An established guild recently closed down.
- 7 Dead bodies are being dumped at one of the local sewer entrances.
- 8 Illegal gambling is on the rise.
- 9 Foreigners are being denied entry at the settlement gates.
- 10 There's been a sudden increase in the number of dwarves here.
- 11 Whole families of halflings have been leaving the settlement.
- 12 A local business is celebrating its anniversary tonight.
- 13 A new guild has been established in the settlement.
- 14 The national guard will decommission several powerful vehicles.
- 15 There's a quarantined area nearby due to an outbreak of disease.
- 16 Someone has just come out of a coma at the nearest hospital.
- 17 A shipment of popular novels, music and paintings will arrive.
- 18 Three upstanding citizens were given life sentences in prison.
- 19 Recent renovations broke the seal on an ancient crypt.
- 20 A small fey infestation has cropped up in a nearby wood.

- 1 A wealthy lord was recently assassinated.
- 2 Nearby hamlet found deserted; resident's whereabouts unknown.
- 3 A local mechanist has made a technological/scientific breakthrough.
- 4 Rare creatures have been sighted on the outskirts of town.
- 5 Ravens have been flocking to an old tree near here.
- 6 Ancestral graves have been sacked by grave robbers.
- 7 An astral squall has been seen in the skies for three nights.

- 8 Many aristocrats have been refusing to obey the laws.
- 9 A powerful merchant killed his wife and children.
- 10 Reptile infestations in nearby waters are causing concern to farmers.
- 11 A predatory beast has been entering the settlement by night.
- 12 Dangerous criminals were sprung free from prison this week.
- 13 The latest fashions from abroad are on sale at a nearby store.
- 14 A local lord has contracted a fatal disease.
- 15 An important monument near here will be restored.
- 16 Thieves have stolen the magistrate's gavel.
- 17 A lone berserker has been seen in the settlement.
- 18 Lower-class workers angry at not having been paid for weeks.
- 19 Flowers never seen before in this area have been found.
- 20 Several folk have shared similar nightmares recently.

100 ENCOUNTERS

When walking the streets, a few minor encounters can turn a dull city stop into a rich and descriptive experience. Such an encounter might even develop into a plot device.

- 1 A crazy man points and yells at you.
- 2 A woman feeds an unusual pet.
- 3 A group of men bully another.
- 4 Children watch you in awe.
- 5 A wealthy citizen passes by, trailed by a pickpocket.
- 6 Scaffolding clings to the buildings here.
- 7 A merchant stumbles and falls in front of you.
- 8 A careless scholar bumps into the group and drops everything.
- 9 Animals can be heard barking/howling in the distance.
- 10 A man/woman cranks their clockwork mount.
- 11 A body lies motionless in the gutter nearby.
- 12 Large piles of stinking rubbish encroach into street.
- 13 Pigeons flutter away as you approach.
- 14 A pickpocket tries to steal a player's money.
- 15 A grazing collision of a large vehicle and a building occurs.
- 16 A patrol of guardsmen march through.
- 17 A dirty steam-powered mount comes up behind you.
- 18 A group of protesters chant together around a government office.
- 19 Shop front renovations have spread out onto the street.
- 20 A large airborne vehicle looms above.

- 1 Nearby pipes vent hissing steam.
- 2 Moss and weeds grow through the cobblestones here.
- 3 Rats scurry between your feet.
- 4 Small airborne mounts whiz past overhead.
- 5 Coal and soot have marred the street.
- 6 Local street girls harass the group.
- 7 A family argument is observed by a crowd of onlookers.
- 8 Third floor bridges cross the road here.
- 9 Towncrier gives a rumor.
- 10 The shadow of a tall building crosses your path.
- 11 The group runs into an old annoyance.
- 12 Clockroaches scuttle away as you approach.
- 13 Rusty bolts, screws and metal items are strewn about.
- 14 Whispering hooded people pass by.
- 15 Chimney smoke fills the street ahead.
- 16 The group runs into an old friend.
- 17 Tall buildings block out the light.
- 18 A drunkard throws an empty bottle at the group.
- 19 A guardsman is stopping commuters for questioning.
- 20 An old steamtoiler groans and coughs smoke.

- 1 Person accidentally walks into party, scowls or demands apology.
- 2 Diseased animals growl at the group.
- 3 Large banners hang from the buildings here.
- 4 A wide, low roof covers the road here.
- 5 Someone leads an unusual pet through the streets on a leash.
- 6 The group runs into an old enemy.
- 7 Two riders squabble over their minor collision.
- 8 Acrid alchemical smells fill your nostrils.
- 9 Party encounters a robbery in progress.
- 10 Kid approaches with a scam.
- 11 An overgrown tree has destroyed the pavement here.
- 12 A busy tinker workshop takes up a large part of the road.
- 13 Graffiti covers the walls.
- 14 Misty vapors rise from the sewer grates.
- 15 Guardsmen have created a roadblock.
- 16 Rail hauler horn blasts can be heard in the distance.
- 17 A gang of misfits turns and watches you.
- 18 A man silently plays with a dagger/coin/card on the corner.
- 19 Dwarven engineers discuss building plans and blueprints.
- 20 Kid approaches with a rumor.

- 1 Jobless workers insult and jeer at the party.
- 2 An aerium coin (1 shilling) lies in the mud.
- 3 Elven lords saunter by with a small entourage of servants.
- 4 Mechanical sentries flank a door.
- 5 The group runs into an old rival.
- 6 Beggar asks for a shilling.
- 7 A group of robbers accost the party.
- 8 A magistrate and armored guards march past.
- 9 Drunkard approaches party.
- 10 Roof tiles fall to the ground.
- 11 Halflings gather around a board game nearby.
- 12 Group runs into an old acquaintance.
- 13 Discarded item of clothing lies on the street.
- 14 Fine restaurant nearby.
- 15 Documents/papers blow by in the wind.
- 16 An old person mistakes you for someone else.
- 17 Street vendors have set up here.
- 18 Group runs into an old ally.
- 19 A broken down vehicle causes gridlock.
- 20 Open coal furnaces light and warm the street.

- 1 A hungry dog or cat approaches the party.
- 2 A single robber springs upon the party.
- 3 A baby cries in the distance.
- 4 A criminal is shamed in a cage or stocks.
- 5 A cripple performs minor tricks at roadside.
- 6 Two people arguing in a foreign language.
- 7 A gang has set up an illegal toll gate ahead.
- 8 A shady individual approaches party and wants to trade.
- 9 An arrest is in progress up ahead.
- 10 A customer and a shopkeeper bicker on the street.
- 11 A chamber pot is emptied onto the street from a high window.
- 12 An unusually cool breeze blows by.
- 13 Several street performers dance by and holler at the group.
- 14 An acid-powered vehicle leaks chemicals onto street.
- 15 Glitter bugs flutter down a dark alley.
- 16 Waiting at the roadside are an unusual group of foreigners.
- 17 Brash youngsters chase each other through the streets.
- 18 Angry tavern patrons are cast out onto street.
- 19 A local youth approaches the party.
- 20 Blood stains can be seen around this area.



3: TRAVEL



TRAVEL

JOURNEYS HERALD THE BEGINNING OF EPIC ADVENTURES. THE PERILS OF TRAVELING THROUGH UNEXPLORED MOORS AND MOUNTAINS CAN MAKE OR BREAK YOUR CHARACTER. NO ADVENTURER SHOULD LEAVE THE TAVERN UNPREPARED.

The lists and descriptions in this chapter allow you to add much more excitement and detail to games involving long-distance travel. Travel in the New Epoch doesn't have to be a footnote. What might otherwise be a short passage of descriptive text or a single random encounter could become a whole chapter of adventure in its own right, featuring challenges drawn from the diverse terrain and weather patterns of the untamed frontier.

OVERVIEW

Wilderness locations, home to both pastoral beauty and savage dangers, are an integral part of every great journey.

Developing a working knowledge of each terrain type can give the shrewd adventurer a tactical advantage over the less well-informed. In other words, an experienced traveler can avoid terrain hazards or even use them against his enemies.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY: A transcript of a roleplaying session by the developers, giving you an idea of how to play out a long journey to your desired destination.

JOURNEYS: In order to navigate through this new world, you'll need to know how to read a compass, gauge your travel distance, roll navigation checks and determine the weather conditions. While not strictly necessary, these geographical details can offer fresh challenges to a sometimes-overlooked element of adventure.

TERRAIN TYPES: The maps of the New Epoch distinguish between fourteen types of terrain, each with its own perils. When you are moving through that type of terrain, you may end up running into some of the hazards there. A smart adventurer reads ahead and goes prepared.

The terrain types covered in this chapter are blightwoods, clouds, coasts, deserts, forests, hills, ironwastes, marshes, mountains, plains, rocky badlands, scrublands, stony barrens and water. Although some are not technically terrain, they are used in the same way.

WEATHER: Now that flying and seafaring vehicles have spread throughout the civilized world, weather has never been so important in determining the success or failure of dangerous voyages.

The types of weather detailed in this chapter are clouds, fog, rain, snow, storms, temperature and winds.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY: PART 3

The party has their sights set on three old ruins in the struggling nation of Ijolea. The journey has several stages, and the party is more than halfway there already.

First, the group took an airship from the City State of Locke to the capital of Ijolea, Tor. They arrived in good time.

Now, the party is at Tor's central railhauler station, trying to book passage down to a toothward town on the Avenian border called Zov. Fortunately, their employer, Gaius Payge, has arranged all the travel documents for them.

The last part of the journey is a trek on foot down the old road to the three ruined settlements of the Residium: The town of Bozd, the city of Joza, and the metropolis of Morla.

DAVE: [CLERK] You approach the ticket booth, and are greeted by an old Ijolean man. "Goreth vlorika ban denka?"

ANDREW: [VOYL] "Urrr..." Hey does anyone speak... Stoigmari or Ijolean?

LAUREN: [OZURNIG] I do. What did he say?

DAVE: [GM] He said how many, and which city?

LAUREN: [OZURNIG] I say to him in Stoigmari, "Four travelers going to Joza. We have special luggage papers too."

DAVE: [CLERK] He replies in Stoigmari, "I see. Your papers seem to be in order. The journey is 30 hours and the tickets will cost 25f each."

✦ THE PARTY PURCHASES THE TICKETS AND MOVES TO THE RAILHAULER PLATFORM.

DAVE: [GM] As you step onto the platform, you see the hulking old railhauler. It is a massive iron beast, they type that they stopped making 50 years ago. It has many dents, dings, and even a few tell-tale bullet holes. No doubt it played its part in the Liberation Wars just 15 years ago, but has yet to be retired.

VANESSA: [JACINTH] "Well, I don't want to sit next to some sniffing old codger for the next 30 hours. I'm getting the best seats right now."

ANDREW: [VOYL] "Yes, likewise. It is such a pity there is no first class cabin in these uncivilized nations."

✦ AFTER A BIT OF JOSTLING, THE PARTY SETTLES IN FOR THE LONG JOURNEY. THEN DAVE READS A DESCRIPTIVE PASSAGE HE PREPARED EARLIER TO CAPTURE THE FLAVOR OF THE REGION.

DAVE: [GM] The rail hauler is a greedy, noisy beast, and the tracks are neither well laid nor particularly straight. Buckles in the rails cause the cabin to lurch to and fro as the hauler picks up speed.

Out the grimy window you see a depressing industrial city of brick and mortar, depots and warehouses, shingle roads and iron monuments. As the rail hauler leaves the city, a light drizzly rain begins, making the iron cabin cold and wet.

The landscape outside is decidedly grey, discolored by the pollution in the air. People can be seen working the fields—these Ijolean folk are not as hard as Stoigmari, but seem to have endured a lot. You look at the faces of the common folk as you move from station to station. They are pale, sooty faced and tired.

Sleep eventually calls to you, though it is broken by the shuffling of other passengers, the horns of the rail hauler and the eventual rise of the dawn sun. And as soon as the sun has risen above the horizon, you have arrived—a cold and crisp morning in the town of Zov.

✦ THE PARTY DISEMBARKS AND SEEKS OUT A WARM MEAL. AFTER THAT, THEY WANDER INTO TOWN FOR A TIME, HAVING DIVERSIONARY ENCOUNTERS AND MINOR MISADVENTURES—

JACINTH PICKPOCKETS A MERCHANT AND GIVES THE COINS TO STREETKIDS. NOJANTU FINDS A SPECIALTY STORE AND PURCHASES SOME SCENTED SMOG-WEED THEY HAVE IN THESE PARTS. OZURNIG ACQUIRES MORE PROVISIONS FOR THE JOURNEY AND VOYL FINDS SOME MORE RECENT, MORE RELIABLE MAPS.

THE NEXT MORNING, THEY EXIT THE TOWN GATE AND THE CHALLENGES OF THE JOURNEY BEGIN.

DAVE: [GM] As you journey toothward, the roads split, dividing over and over into smaller and smaller trails. Eventually, there is no road left to follow and you must rely on your navigation skills for the next 50 miles to reach the ruins of Joza.

ANDREW: [VOYL] (Clearing his throat loudly) "We find ourselves in need of your barbaric expertise, Nojantu. Sniff the ground, watch the clouds or do whatever else it takes. We'll be right behind you, so long as we're not downwind."

GRANT: [NOJANTU] "So long as it's not a trailing wind." (Grant rebuts) "All that woman scent you spray on yourself disturbs my nose." Okay, I observe the terrain and weather.

ANDREW: [VOYL] (Scoffs) "It's the finest Ostenian Bartelli perfume!" (Looks around incredulously) "Woman scent.... really?"

✦ THE TERRAIN IS MOSTLY PLAINS AND IT IS EARLY SPRING. DAVE ROLLS A d20, SCORES A 16 AND THEN LOOKS UP THE CHART UNDER THE TERRAIN DESCRIPTION FOR PLAINS. IT'S VERY WINDY, INCREASING THE NAVIGATE TN.

DAVE: [GM] Ahead of you are plains, originally farmland, but now overgrown. The previous night's rainfall has quickly been dried up by the gusty winds that sweep across the tall grey grass. Here and there, old stone walls, scrublands and small hills break up the terrain. The constant buffeting of strong winds makes the TN 20.

GRANT: [NOJANTU] We avoid the hills and stay on the open ground. I'll take the +3 teamwork bonus from their help and add my Navigate bonus.

✦ GRANT ROLLS A 15, ADDS THE +3 TEAMWORK BONUS AND HIS +6 NAVIGATE BONUS. IT'S A SUCCESS!

DAVE: [GM] You move through the terrain without problem, heading toward the ruins of Joza. How far do you move?

LAUREN: [OZURNIG] Well, my character is the slowest, at Speed 4. So that's 24 miles for today.

DAVE: [GM] Okay, you are approximately halfway there. As night approaches the winds die down and you come across a likely spot to rest. It seems like the last opportunity to make camp, because the landscape beyond gives way to dusty scrublands.

✦ DAVE WANTS AN INTERESTING CAMPSITE BECAUSE HE IS GOING TO HAVE A PACK OF SCAVENGING GNOLLS ATTACK THE PLAYERS IN THE NIGHT. HE ROLLS THREE d20S AND LOOKS AT THEIR RESULTS UNDER THE FEATURES FOR PLAINS. THERE IS A CRASH SITE, A SHELTERBELT AND AN OLD WELL. DAVE READS OUT THE DESCRIPTION FOR EACH ITEM.

GRANT: [NOJANTU] (Sniffs the air. Cautiously notes) "Hrmph. Seems to good to be true." I search the area for tracks.

✦ GRANT ROLLS HIS SEARCH CHECK AND SCORES AN 11. IT'S TOO LOW TO DISCOVER ANYTHING, BUT DAVE THROWS HIM OFF, MAKING HIM THINK HE SUCCEEDED BY TELLING HIM HE DISCOVERED FRESH WATER IN THE WELL. THIS WAY, THE AMBUSH AT NIGHT WILL STILL BE A SURPRISE.

VANESSA: [JACINTH] (Pessimistically) "Well, is it safe to camp here?"

GRANT: [NOJANTU] "No tracks and fresh water. This journey is off to a good start." (Turns to Jacinth) "What can you cook, gypsy?"

JOURNEYS



Soon after an adventuring career begins, most aspiring adventurers find it necessary to do some exploration in order to complete their quests, goals or contracts. The speed at which you can travel through different terrain or weather types plays an important part in determining which route you should take to reach your destination.



OVERLAND MOVEMENT: When traveling over terrain for extended periods of time, you need to make a Navigate check and plot your day's movement. Different terrains will slow your progress, so you may want to choose your path carefully.

When you want to move through some terrain during an action sequence, you don't need to make any Navigate checks. Obstacles might slow you down, or offer valuable cover, but the terrain speed modifier does not apply during action sequences.

- ➔ **ON FOOT / BY VEHICLE:** When it comes to overland travel, vehicles and creatures have significant speed and stamina differences. However, the same rules apply to both types of transport.
- ➔ **NAVIGATE TN:** The navigation difficulty is decided by either the terrain or the severity of the weather—whichever is worse.
- ➔ **SPEED MULTIPLIER:** Your movement is slowed by either the terrain or the severity of the weather—whichever is worse.

POINTS OF THE COMPASS



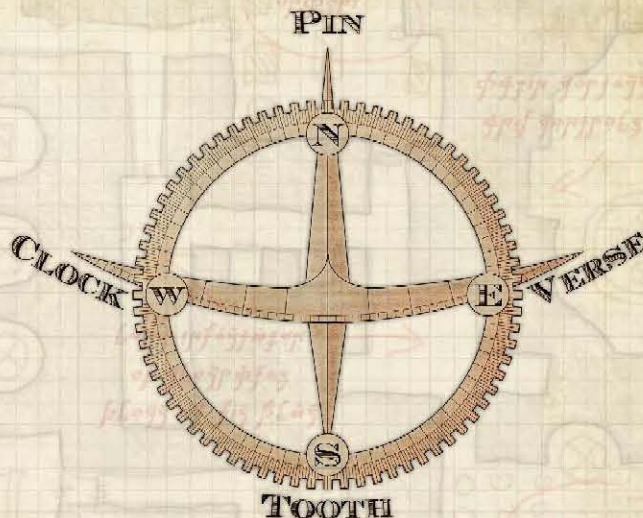
The world of The New Epoch is one built around a giant machine called the Divine Mechanism. Each gear in the Mechanism rotates synchronously with all others. The annuli and ancillae of the World Machine are flat discs without north, south, east or west. If the new terminology annoys you, however, just substitute the real-world directions as noted below.

- ➔ **NORTH:** [PIN] The pinward direction points toward the center of the current world gear.
- ➔ **SOUTH:** [TOOTH] The toothward direction points toward the outer rim of the world gear and the teeth around its edge.
- ➔ **EAST:** [VERSE] The verseward direction curves around the world gear in an anti-clockwise circle.
- ➔ **WEST:** [CLOCK] The clockward direction curves around the world gear in a clockwise circle.



WORLD STRUCTURE: The Divine Mechanism is a machine of multiple gears that spin round and round. On each gear is a microcosm of skies, oceans and lands. Each of these world gears are constantly moving, so the sun doesn't always rise in the verse, nor does moss only grow on the clockward side of trees.

On the Major Plate (home to the great nations) Elemental Spokes carry the seasons around and the Celestial Ribbon ferries the Radiance (sun) and the Umbra (night) around the world. Assumptions based on a globe world won't work here. For example, if you try to travel east by following the rising sun, you'll eventually travel in a circle and end up where you started.



NAVIGATION



Unlike tactical movement which usually needs no checks at all, traveling overland requires you to test your navigation skills regularly. Whenever you want to travel through the unpaved wilderness, you have to make Navigate checks to find your way.



CHECK: The person with the highest Navigate skill makes the check. The TN will be either the terrain difficulty or the weather difficulty, whichever is higher. Naturally, airships and ocean tankers don't compete with terrain, so will always be pitted against the weather.

EITHER TERRAIN TN OR WEATHER TN
(WHICHEVER IS HIGHER)

FOLLOW TRACKS — 1 HOUR ACTION
TRAVEL OVERLAND — 1 DAY ACTION

SUCCESS: Successful checks are rewarded with an hour or day of good progress in the right direction (you move the full distance). If following fresh tracks, you get closer, coming within visual range if close enough. If the mark moves faster than you, it may be impossible for you to catch up. Usually, a mark moves at about half speed if it doesn't know it's being pursued.

FAILURE: If traveling overland, you travel in a random direction as determined by the GM based on what is most likely to provide an interesting departure, moving only half as far as usual. If following tracks, the mark gets further away.



ENCOUNTER: You encounter a creature whenever you successfully follow tracks, or sometimes when you fail a Navigate check—an encounter is one of the possible hazards for each terrain type.

The GM has encounter tables in the Master's Codex that are used to determine the type, number and levels of enemies that you come across.

You typically won't encounter incredibly weak opponents—if the enemy group is too weak, they wouldn't bother attacking the player characters.

BASIC OVERLAND SPEED

ON FOOT: Typically, the party will only travel on foot when there is no other form of transport available. Moving on the ground requires avoiding impassable terrain features, as well as efficiently following changes in altitude; the hazards and contours of the wilderness makes actual travel distances longer than they appear on a map.

The party travels at the lowest Speed in the group. Consider vehicle transport if some characters are slowing everyone else down.

For hourly movement, you can only sustain this for an hour. If you want to keep going, every additional hour costs every member of the group 10 Steam.

For daily movement, this is a comfortable and slow but consistent 10 hour movement rate. You don't lose any Steam.

CHARACTER SPEED	PER HOUR	PER DAY
3 yards	3 miles	23 miles
4 yards	4 miles	24 miles
5 yards	5 miles	25 miles
6 yards	6 miles	26 miles
7 yards	7 miles	27 miles
8 yards	8 miles	28 miles
X yards	X miles	20+X miles

BY VEHICLE: By and large, travelling by vehicle is always going to be faster than going on foot. Airborne vehicles may seem slow, but remember that these vehicles take to the air with phlogiston buoyancy, not wings—they have a lot of drag.

A day of movement is usually 10 hours but vehicles don't need to rest, so they can sustain maximum speed as long as they have enough fuel to consume and enough crew to rotate shifts.

VEHICLE SPEED	PER HOUR	PER DAY
15 yards	15 miles	150 miles
20 yards	20 miles	200 miles
25 yards	25 miles	250 miles
30 yards	30 miles	300 miles
35 yards	35 miles	350 miles
X yards	X miles	X×10 miles

DIFFICULTY	TRAVELING BY LAND	TRAVELING BY AIR/WATER	NAVIGATE TN	SPEED MULTIPLIER
Basic	Plains, Scrubland	Fine, Clouds	TN 10	1 × Speed
Standard	Coast, Hills, Stony Barrens	Fog, Rain, Wind	TN 20	¾ × Speed
Challenging	Desert, Forest, Marshlands	Hail, Snow	TN 30	½ × Speed
Formidable	Rocky Badlands, Mountains	Storm	TN 40	¼ × Speed
Legendary	Blightwood, Ironwaste	—	TN 50	⅒ × Speed

SPEED PENALTY

Either the severity of the weather or the lay of the land will slow the party down. You don't apply both Speed penalties to your overland movement—only the most severe one.

EITHER TERRAIN OR WEATHER
(WHICHEVER IS SLOWER)

YOUR SPEED × MULTIPLIER =
DISTANCE TRAVELLED ON A SUCCESSFUL CHECK

Naturally, airborne or waterborne vehicles don't take terrain into account. They only need to gauge the weather when making Navigate checks and plotting journeys.

OBSTACLES: These cost extra movement to get through in an action sequence. Each yard of such an obstacle requires several yards of Speed to clear. See Chapter

- ✦ **MAJOR:** Requires 4 yards of Speed for every yard of distance.
- ✦ **AVERAGE:** Requires 3 yards of Speed for every yard of distance.
- ✦ **MINOR:** Requires 2 yards of Speed for every yard of distance.

TERRAIN TYPES

Each terrain type has tables for features and weather that could be encountered when traveling through that type of terrain.

FEATURES: A number of common features are listed which occur frequently throughout the terrain. These add flavor to an action sequence, a special area or a campsite.

✦ **DIMENSIONS:** The dimensions of features are decided by the GM based on the descriptive text for that item.

WEATHER: You check the weather of that terrain every time you finish a day's rest or whenever you move into this terrain type. The GM will need to describe weather changes over a period of a few days if the new, randomly-generated weather is a large change.

BLIGHTWOOD

NAVIGATE TN 50 / SPEED $\times \frac{1}{10}$



Blightwood is a type of forest choked by gargantuan, thorny vines and briars. It is an incredibly hostile environment filled with horrid creatures, traps, poisonous plants and humid heat. There are three stages of blightwood: outskirts, thickets and deeps. As characters travel into the blightwood, they pass through these layers.

Blightwood outskirts are dry, thorny, nettled bushes that can reach up to 10 feet tall. A mile into the outskirts and the briars are well over the characters heads, making progress difficult. However, five miles in, the briars become so large that the characters can walk beneath them, and a large shaded canopy of vines grows above.

Blightwood thickets are five to ten miles in from the outskirts, forming a wide band around the inner deep blightwood. The blighted trunks here are between one and two feet wide, twisting in all directions up to a thick canopy about 100 feet overhead. Enough light filters through here to make travel possible during daylight hours.

The deep briars have the largest and oldest blighted plants, with trunks ten feet wide or more. The canopy is far above, completely blocking out the sun, and only clusters of luminescent fungi or insects shed light here. The terrain becomes a microcosm, with all other terrain types existing under the deep briar's shadow—hills, bogs, cliffs, badlands, marshes, fungal plains and mushroom forests all exist here; it is an alien landscape that few have laid eyes on.

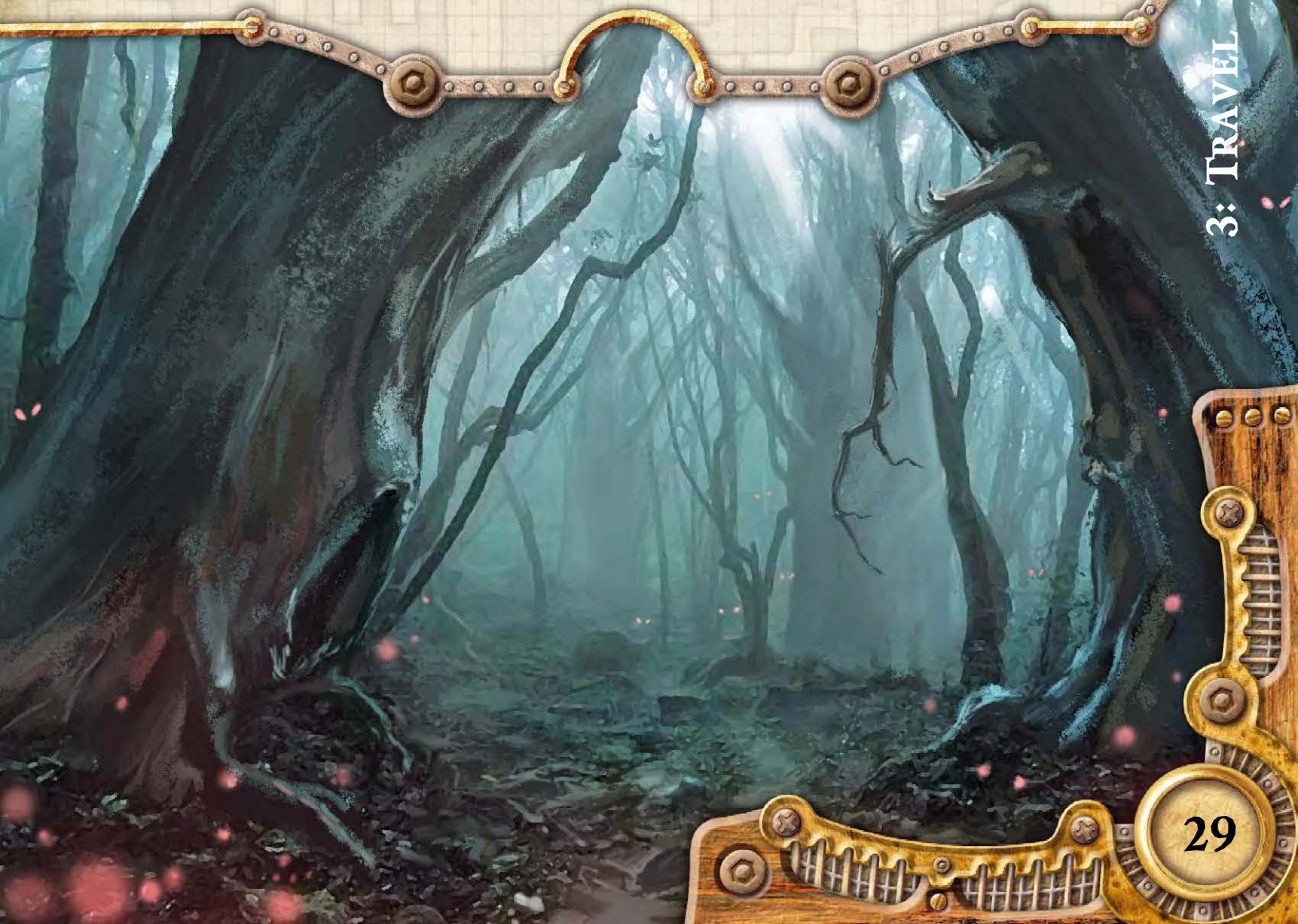
Blightwoods are considered completely unnavigable. Thus, they

must be circumnavigated or burned back, bit by bit. The hostility of this environment and its dangerous denizens are largely undocumented, but there are plenty of horrific tales that give good reason not to travel here. While some consider a journey into blightwoods to be the stuff legends are made of, most would consider it suicide.



FEATURES: [ROLL 1d20] Ancient ruins, voracious plant life and dangerous landscapes are sprinkled throughout a blightwood.

- 1—**TREES, LARGE:** [MEDIUM COVER AND/OR HIGHER GROUND, CLIMB TN 25] Large trees are difficult to climb and grant medium cover.
- 2—**SHRINE:** [MEDIUM COVER] An ancient, small and damaged shrine to paragons of old. The shrine has a low wall around it and a worn stone-slab table at the center.
- 3—**TREES, BLIGHTED:** [HEAVY COVER AND/OR HIGHER GROUND, CLIMB TN 35] Blighted trees are incredibly solid, covered in thorns and very difficult to climb.
- 4—**BOGGY GROUND:** [AVERAGE OBSTACLE] Bog water from below the earth creates several mucky ponds in the landscape. They are only knee deep.
- 5—**FUNGAL PLAIN:** [MINOR OBSTACLE, -2 DEX DEFENSE, -5 SPRINT] Tiny fungi, tangling vines, mushroom stalks, puffballs and grasslike mosses grow in a blanket layer which obscures the solid ground beneath.
- 6—**MYTH PYLON:** [HEAVY COVER, AVERAGE OBSTACLE] A



huge pylon reaches for the sky, beneath which rubble and debris litter the ground. These massive structures are arranged in a line with hundreds of yards between them. They used to support the skyways of the Era of Myth, but are now nothing more than crumbling remnants.

- 7—**UNDERGROWTH:** [MAJOR OBSTACLE, -5 SPRINT, -5 STEALTH] Vines, roots, and short bushes cover much of the ground.
- 8—**INFESTATION:** [MINOR OBSTACLE, -5 ALL CHECKS] A small, contained area has been infested by a swarm of insects. While mostly harmless, it is difficult ground to cross and causes penalties to all who stand in the area.
- 9—**SLOPE:** [HALF SPEED UPHILL, HIGHER GROUND, -5 SPRINT] A slope is hard to sprint up or down and slows any kind of movement uphill. Anything steeper than this requires a Climb check.
- 10—**RAZED GROUND:** At the center of a tiny clearing, the ground has been thoroughly burned and salted, with ancient stone bricks just visible beneath the earth. Nothing has grown here for centuries.
- 11—**VINE CURTAIN:** [+5 STEALTH, CLIMB TN 20, BREAK TN 25] Vines growing along tree boughs have dropped aerial roots which create a curtain along the line of the branch.
- 12—**DENS:** Large empty dens can be found here, dug near the base of large blighted trees, though no animals can be found.
- 13—**RUINS:** [AVERAGE OBSTACLE, MEDIUM COVER, JUMP TN 15] Low walls, ancient building sites, collapsing stonework and derelict houses are filled with small, defensible positions.
- 14—**CRASH SITE:** [MAJOR OBSTACLES] Chunks of a large vehicle litter the area around a barren clearing. The wreckage is old, comprised of pitted, rusted iron and dry, warped hardwood. Blightwood vines cover the area, making progress even slower.
- 15—**HEDGEROWS:** [MAJOR OBSTACLE, JUMP TN 25] Hedgerows are tangles of stones, soil, and dense bushes a couple of yards high that can obscure vision and hinder movement.
- 16—**STRANGE FLORA:** Luminescent flowers grow in abundance here. Listening carefully, they also have an audible, eerie song of sorts made by whining and clicking.
- 17—**TRENCH:** [MEDIUM COVER OR HIGHER GROUND, HALF SPEED UPHILL, JUMP TN 25] Perhaps a streambed several yards wide, or maybe the slump at the foot of two adjacent hills. You can jump over the trench yourself, or try to leap it with a vehicle.
- 18—**SPRING:** Fresh water bubbles up into a small pool and is carried away by a tiny, winding brook.
- 19—**MOSS:** [MINOR OBSTACLE, -5 CLIMB, -10 SPRINT] A patch of moss and lichen growing on any surface can make it more slippery.
- 20—**WEeping TREE:** [STEALTH +5] A massive tree drops a curtain of weeping branches, concealing the area within.

WEATHER: [ROLL 1d20] Blightwoods are plagued by rains, fog and dark, cloudy days. Even when a blightwood gets fine weather, the light won't filter down past the thick canopy above.

WEATHER	SPRING	SUMMER	AUTUMN	WINTER
Fine	—	1	—	—
Clouds	1-4	2-8	1-6	1-3
Fog	5-10	9-11	7-12	4-9
Rain	11-15	12-16	13-17	10-16
Wind	16-19	17-19	18-19	17-19
Snow	—	—	—	—
Storm	20	20	20	20
Temperature	Comfortable	Hot	Warm	Cold

CLOUDS

NAVIGATE TN 10 / SPEED VARIES WITH WEATHER

The dark rolling clouds of the New Epoch herald much more than just rain. They bring ether wells, clouds of phlogiston debris, magnetic arcs and astral squalls. Although clouds are not a form of terrain, they are treated as such for the purposes of determining hazards and travel speeds. Traveling above the cloud layer is fast and efficient, though it has navigation challenges that the pilot must be aware of.

The movement of the clouds is unlike that in a globe world. There are three main types of cloud: moisture, pollution and astral. Clouds that form as a result of moisture are between white and dark grey, cause precipitation and tend to shuffle toward the edges of the world gears. Pollution produces a dark and shapeless fog that hangs over large settlements. Astral clouds are tinged with color, and are made by friction between the astral orb and the movement of the world. These clouds have magical properties, can ignore prevailing winds, and sometimes descend to ground level.

Airships typically require some form of aerial blades (wings) to ascend past the cloud layer, so it is impossible to moor or float here—the highest altitudes possible with phlogiston buoyancy are below the clouds. However, pieces of phlogisticated wreckage (phlotsam) could ascend higher on their own because they are free from the weighty vehicles or structures they once belonged to. Airship graveyards can be encountered at all altitudes, though they tend to get smaller and lighter as you ascend past the clouds.

Navigating through the skies is a simple task thanks to both the celestial ribbon that can be seen overhead and the impossibly tall pinward spires at the center of each world gear.

FEATURES: [ROLL 1d20] The skies above are filled with interesting and unusual features. Many of the larger, colorful astral and ethereal phenomena are yet to be explained by science, so are seen as good or bad omens by various cultures.

- 1—**DENSE CLOUD:** [VISION OBSCURED] Dense, opaque clouds obscure one or more areas.
- 2—**PHLOTSAM:** [MINOR OBSTACLES] Small pieces of phlogisticated wreckage float through the sky. The tiny impacts felt when moving through such a debris field can slow, but not damage airships and flying creatures.
- 3—**STRANGE CLOUDS:** Tiny, man-sized clouds with color-tinged tendrils are present here. The clouds lose their color and disperse when touched.
- 4—**ETHER WELL:** [MAJOR OBSTACLE] Occasionally, a very dense and solid bubble of ether pressure sinks down from the outer astral orb and usually rests just above the clouds. Ether wells have less elemental pressure, causing ship engines to be sluggish.
- 5—**ABANDONED SHIP:** [HEAVY COVER] An ancient, abandoned shipwreck floats freely among the air currents.
- 6—**MAGNETIC ARC:** [-5 ATTACKS] An invisible arc traces through the area that baffles airship sensors and causes armament controls to become less effective or fail outright. This has no effect on flying creatures or personal weapons.
- 7—**MINOR OBSTACLE:** [PILOT TN 20] The air is clogged with small lumps of shipwreck debris or floating rocks from the steam spoke.
- 8—**ASTRAL MIDGES:** Tiny glowing insects form winding lines that flutter through the air.
- 9—**MAJOR OBSTACLE:** [PILOT TN 40] Sometimes, large unstable shipwreck debris or large floating rocks from astral orb can be

encountered in the skies.

- 10—DISTANT SHIP:** An airship in the distance belches thick black smoke into the air and blasts its fog horn.
- 11—ROCK CLOUD:** [LIGHT COVER, PILOT TN 30] As the name suggests, this long and thin, grey cloud is incredibly dense, offering light cover to any vehicle or creature that can use it. However, it is also an obstacle that needs to be flown around.
- 12—RIBBON:** The celestial ribbon is much clearer than usual today, creating a beautiful snaking trail that runs from horizon to horizon through the sun or moon.
- 13—GLARE:** [-5 ATTACK PENALTY] The sun causes a blind spot. Attacks made in the sun's direction suffer a -5 penalty to hit.
- 14—ASTRAL SONG:** [+2 ALL CHECKS] The wind carries the song of the World Machine, an eerie, glowing mixture of faint tones and harmonies. Everyone benefits from the sound.
- 15—INFESTATION:** [MINOR OBSTACLE] A small area has been infested by a swarm of high-altitude insects. While mostly harmless, they impede travel nonetheless.
- 16—FOG LAYER:** A thin layer of fog completely obscures the skies above or below.
- 17—ROUGH PATCH:** [-5 PILOT] A choppy patch of air with areas of varying pressure makes it hard to pilot through the area.
- 18—UMBRAL MIST:** [-2 ALL CHECKS] A screeching, gear-grinding wail calls out from a black cloud a few miles away. The noise puts everyone at a disadvantage.

19—CLEAR SKIES: If this is rolled it cancels all previous features.

The skies are clear, do not roll for any more features.

20—MURK: [VISIBILITY HALVED] Soupy, grey pollution greatly reduces visibility in this area. Flying at half speed is strongly advised.



WEATHER: [1d20] When flying below the cloud layer, you use the weather table for the terrain that you are flying over. When flying above the clouds, use this table.

Rain in the clouds is not yet shaped as droplets, but more like a saturating mist. Fog results on this table represent high-altitude moisture or pollution clouds.

WEATHER	SPRING	SUMMER	AUTUMN	WINTER
Fine	1-4	1-6	1-4	1
Clouds	5-7	7-9	5-8	2-4
Fog	8-9	10	9-12	5-7
Rain	10	11	13	8-9
Wind	11-19	12-19	14-19	10-18
Snow	—	—	—	19
Storm	20	20	20	20
Temperature	Freezing	Cold	Freezing	Frigid

COASTS

NAVIGATE TN 20 / SPEED $\times \frac{3}{4}$



In murals and writings that date back to the Era of Myth coasts are depicted as white sand beaches that fade into gentle sloping hills. In modern times coasts are flecked with reddish-brown iron dust and black sand beaches.

Most coasts have a few industrial eyesores that mar their beauty such as shipwrecks, toxic spills, abandoned shipyards, wharfs, ruins or junkyards. Looming clouds roll in from the seas where astral squalls brush the atmosphere with fog and ethereal energies. Oil rigs, ironclads and steam powered fishing trawlers belch smoke into the air, adding a smoky haze to the horizon.

The coasts of industrial nations are dirty, strewn with steam age clutter, polluted and inhospitable. Cold waves break upon the coastal rocks, washing ashore wreckage and flotsam.

The crownland coasts are little better, as seafarers have begun to taint the natural beauty of these places. Flora and fauna can be found upon these shorelines, surviving despite the pollution and influx of men. In the borderlands, coasts are the most natural and untouched,

though they suffer extreme seasonal changes because of their proximity to the elemental spokes.



FEATURES: [ROLL 1d20] Boulders, cliffs and jagged rocks line the coasts. Between them are the abandoned remains of industrial endeavors that spanned over decades of war. All are scraped and scoured by the corrosive seas and stained by the oils and rust of wrecks.

- 1—BOG:** [MAJOR OBSTACLE] Bogs are sink holes, where water drains away beneath the earth. Sodden earth and pools of water cover the ground, slowing movement.
- 2—SCREE:** [-5 CLIMB, -2 JUMP, -5 SPRINT] Uneven rocks, shifting stones and rough gravel covers the ground.
- 3—BOULDERS:** [HEAVY COVER OR HIGHER GROUND, CLIMB TN 15, HEAVE TN 40] A cluster of large natural rocks, menhirs or great rounded stones.
- 4—WRECKAGE:** [MINOR OBSTACLES, LIGHT COVER] Driftwood, pieces of a ship's hull, barrels washed ashore and other flotsam can offer cover to resourceful adventurers.
- 5—BOGGY GROUND:** [AVERAGE OBSTACLE] Bog water from below



the earth creates several mucky ponds in the landscape. They are only knee deep.

- 6—DUNE:** [HALF SPEED UPHILL, HIGHER GROUND, -5 SPRINT] Steep windblown hills of deep sand are tough going, even for mounts.
- 7—CRASH SITE:** [MAJOR OBSTACLES] Chunks of a large vehicle litter the area around a barren clearing. The wreckage is old, comprised of pitted, rusted iron and dry, warped hardwood.
- 8—LEDGE:** [HIGHER GROUND, CLIMB TN 20, JUMP TN 30] A vertical rocky ledge, a few yards in height, is a harmless but difficult climb. Usually, a ledge has sloped entry points that are slightly easier to climb every hundred yards or so.
- 9—RUINS:** [AVERAGE OBSTACLE, MEDIUM COVER, JUMP TN 15] Low walls, ancient building sites, collapsing stonework and derelict houses are filled with small, defensible positions.
- 10—SHALLOW CAVE:** A raised rocky patch and a depression in the earth creates a shallow cave.
- 11—JUNK PILE:** [MINOR OBSTACLE] A pile of junk has been dumped here, picked clean of all valuable objects and abandoned.
- 12—SLOPE:** [HALF SPEED UPHILL, HIGHER GROUND, -5 SPRINT] A slope is hard to sprint up or down and slows any kind of movement uphill. Anything steeper than this requires a Climb check.
- 13—MYTH PYLON:** [HEAVY COVER, AVERAGE OBSTACLE] A huge pylon and remnants of an ancient skyway emerge from the water. These massive structures are arranged in a line with hundreds of yards between them.
- 14—DEAD TREES:** Several rusted drums have been dumped on the coast, spilling their toxic contents and killing off the trees and grass in a wide radius.
- 15—BLOWHOLE:** An unusually massive blowhole causes an eruption of water once every minute.
- 16—STRANGE FLORA:** Luminescent barnacles and sea urchins grow in abundance across the rocks. Every now and then, they chatter as they open and close.
- 17—LAPPING WAVES:** [MINOR OBSTACLE] Waves constantly breaking over the shoreline.
- 18—DISTANT SHIP:** A seaborne ship in the distance belches thick black smoke into the air and blasts its fog horn.
- 19—FENCE:** [AVERAGE OBSTACLE, JUMP TN 10] The remains of a low fence. It must be vaulted to move through, but offers no protection.
- 20—LEAN-TO:** A crude lean-to has been erected here to protect a stockpile of something. The GM decides what that something is (wood, bricks, sacks of lime, stone, coal).

WEATHER: [ROLL 1d20] Coastal weather depends mostly on whether it is a heartland, crownland or borderland coast. The pollution and weather differences of the heartlands make the seas bleak and grey while the extreme weather of the borderlands are unforgiving to sailors.

WEATHER	SPRING	SUMMER	AUTUMN	WINTER
Fine	1-4	1-7	1-3	1
Clouds	5-8	8-10	4-9	2-5
Fog	9-10	11	10-12	6-8
Rain	11-13	12	13-16	9-13
Wind	14-19	13-19	17-19	14-18
Snow	—	—	—	19
Storm	20	20	20	20
Temperature	Warm	Hot	Cool	Cold

DESERTS

NAVIGATE TN 30 / SPEED $\times \frac{1}{2}$



Deserts are wild, untamed arid lands with sparse vegetation and little or no rainfall, typically devoid of life. Desertification is caused by autumn dust storms, winds and airborne silt. However, the misuse of land, destruction of forests and exploitation of natural resources are the greatest catalysts that give rise to the spread of deserts.

Deserts are dangerous, inhospitable places, best to be avoided unless the destination lies in its center. Various hazards such as embersands, dehydration and sandthorns can cause grief to even the most experienced journeymen. Similarly, the creatures of the desert are unforgiving scavengers that prey of any life foolish enough to cross the sands.

Deserts are the bane of civilization. Once they exist, almost nothing can be done to prevent their spread. Non-ideal farmland can turn to desert within decades if overused or mismanaged, hence the existence of large ruined cities in the center of deserts. The only inhabited civilizations in the deserts occur near rivers or near the coast.

The dunes of deserts are constantly moving, such that sunken land wrecks, vehicle graveyards, and lost ruins continue to surface and submerge under the shifting sands. Mixed in with the sands are screws, washers, nuts and bolts, small stones and other debris accumulated from centuries of conflict and industrial endeavor.



FEATURES: [ROLL 1d20] Small areas of interest can be found in the desert, breaking up the monotonous seas of sand that continue from horizon to horizon.

- 1—BOULDERS:** [HEAVY COVER OR HIGHER GROUND, CLIMB TN 15, HEAVE TN 40] A cluster of large natural rocks, menhirs or great rounded stones.
- 2—SHALLOW CAVE:** A raised rocky patch and a depression in the sand creates a shallow cave.
- 3—SCREE:** [-5 CLIMB, -2 JUMP, -5 SPRINT] Uneven rocks, shifting stones and rough gravel covers the ground.
- 4—GLASS PLAIN:** [-5 SPRINT] Only a thin covering of sand hides a sunbaked crystalline plate which has been polished by sands to a slippery finish.
- 5—PAINTED SANDS:** The sands here have patches of stained red, black and white. The wind has whipped these sands into beautiful patterns across the desert.
- 6—DUNE:** [HALF SPEED UPHILL, HIGHER GROUND, -5 SPRINT] Steep windblown hills of deep sand are tough going, even for mounts.
- 7—RUINS:** [AVERAGE OBSTACLE, MEDIUM COVER, JUMP TN 15] Low walls, ancient building sites, collapsing stonework and derelict houses are filled with small, defensible positions.
- 8—SUNSHROUD:** [VISION PARTIALLY OBSCURED, -5 ALL ATTACK CHECKS] Waves of heat rise from the sand, acting as a semitransparent mirror. Those on opposing sides of the area cannot see the other clearly because the heat bends the light between them. This is known as a sunshroud.
- 9—TOWERS:** [CLIMB TN 35, BREAK TN 25] Several tall, thin towers of rock casts long shadows across the desert. They are not tall enough to make a good vantage point, but could be felled upon enemies like trees.
- 10—LEDGE:** [HIGHER GROUND, CLIMB TN 20, JUMP TN 30] A vertical rocky ledge, a few yards in height, is a harmless but difficult climb. Usually, a ledge has sloped entry points that are slightly easier to climb every hundred yards or so.

- 11—**STRANGE FLORA:** Tall, swaying grass grows in patches here. It hums as the wind brushes it, changing pitch as the wind changes direction.
- 12—**DESERT GLUE:** [MAJOR OBSTACLE, -10 SPRINT] The sand is deep and easily parted, reducing movement to a crawl, as if wading through mud that is knee deep.
- 13—**JUNK PILE:** [MINOR OBSTACLE] A pile of junk has been dumped here, picked clean of all valuable objects and abandoned.
- 14—**INFESTATION:** [MINOR OBSTACLE] A small, contained area has been infested by a swarm of insects. While mostly harmless, it is difficult ground to cross.
- 15—**GLARE:** [-5 ATTACK PENALTY] The sun causes a blind spot. Attacks made in the sun's direction suffer a -5 penalty to hit.
- 16—**DENS:** Large empty dens can be found here, dug into the sandstone near the base of rocks, though no animals can be found.
- 17—**SILT FOG:** [GROUND OBSCURED] A low wind stirs fine sands at foot level, concealing the ground in fast moving waves of sand.
- 18—**ANCIENT CAMPSITE:** A defensible, sheltered area that has been worn by centuries of travelers. A fire pit exists here and a damp, shady area indicates that water may be present during wetter seasons.
- 19—**KARST:** [HEAVY COVER] Where desert sands spread into and

over rocky or stony areas, karst can still be seen jutting out of the sand. These tall, flat stone formations are usually a few yards high and almost impossible to climb, but provide good cover and shelter from storms or wind.

- 20—**SHAFT:** [CLIMB TN 25] A solid rocky area features a deep hole that descends far into the earth below. The bottom of the shaft is beyond the reach of your light.

WEATHER: [ROLL 1d20] As expected, desert weather is dry, barren and inhospitable. Fog in a desert is more of a sandy haze caused by airborne silt. Rain is a light drizzle at most. Day temperatures can be hotter than shown below and night temperatures can be much cooler.

WEATHER	SPRING	SUMMER	AUTUMN	WINTER
Fine	1-8	1-11	1-7	1-3
Clouds	9-12	12-14	8-13	4-7
Fog	13	15	14	8
Rain	—	—	—	9
Wind	14-19	16-19	15-19	10-18
Snow	—	—	—	19
Storm	20	20	20	20
Temperature	Warm	Scorching	Warm	Cold

FORESTS

NAVIGATE TN 30 / SPEED $\times \frac{1}{2}$



The dark and sinister woods of the New Epoch brood with evil. Before the Era of Myth, the realm of the fey creatures was great, extending to the boundaries of the forests. As the ambitions of the great nations grew, the fires of industry continued to carve massive holes out of the forests. Now, the forest denizens hate and despise mankind for their relentless destruction of the woodlands, though are powerless to stop it.

Not all forests are destroyed by men. Some contested areas are lost to the forests as fey creatures overrun lumber mills, borderland forts and woodland buildings. Many ruins can be found on the boundaries of larger forests such as these.

The loathing of the forests can be felt as one walks through them. The trees groan and creak, cold winds stir the leaves, tree roots destroy man-made paths and very little light penetrates through the canopy. Plants have adapted to defend against the advances of civilization and can sometimes be very dangerous.

Forest terrain could be coniferous, deciduous or jungle. Coniferous forests are fast-growing, evergreen and resistant to weather. Deciduous forests are slow-growing, change color with seasons and prefer temperate climates. Jungle is semi-deciduous, growing mostly in hotter, wetter

areas. All three types of forest terrain could be sparse or dense.



FEATURES: [ROLL 1d20] The deep forests are home to tangling vines, nettles, thorns and blade-edged leaves.

- 1—**UNDERGROWTH:** [MAJOR OBSTACLE, -5 SPRINT, -5 STEALTH] Vines, roots, and short bushes cover much of the ground.
- 2—**INFESTATION:** [MINOR OBSTACLE] A small, contained area has been infested by a swarm of insects. While mostly harmless, it is difficult ground to cross.
- 3—**TREES, SMALL:** [LIGHT COVER AND/OR HIGHER GROUND, CLIMB TN 15] Small branching trees are easy to climb and can grant cover against ranged weapons.
- 4—**JUNK PILE:** [MINOR OBSTACLE] A pile of junk has been dumped here, picked clean of all valuable objects and abandoned.
- 5—**TREES, LARGE:** [MEDIUM COVER AND/OR HIGHER GROUND, CLIMB TN 25] Large trees are difficult to climb and grant medium cover.
- 6—**STRANGE FLORA:** Strange flowers grow here, opening and closing their petals around glowing, pollen-covered stamen.
- 7—**SMALL GAME TRACKS:** [NAVIGATE TN 30] Very small animal tracks run through this area. They are difficult to track.
- 8—**LEDGE:** [HIGHER GROUND, CLIMB TN 20, JUMP TN 30] A



vertical rocky ledge, a few yards in height, is a harmless but difficult climb. Usually, a ledge has sloped entry points that are slightly easier to climb every hundred yards or so.

- 9—MOSS:** [MINOR OBSTACLE, -5 CLIMB, -10 SPRINT] A patch of moss and lichen growing on any surface can make it more slippery.
- 10—FALLEN LOG:** [LIGHT COVER OR HIGHER GROUND, JUMP TN 15, HEAVE TN 30] A fallen log can provide a small tactical advantage but also gets in the way of road vehicles.
- 11—SPRING:** Fresh water bubbles up into a small pool and is carried away by a tiny, winding brook.
- 12—RUINS:** [AVERAGE OBSTACLE, MEDIUM COVER, JUMP TN 15] Low walls, ancient building sites, collapsing stonework and derelict houses are filled with small, defensible positions.
- 13—HEDGEROWS:** [MAJOR OBSTACLE, JUMP TN 25] Hedgerows are tangles of stones, soil, and dense bushes a few yards high that can obscure vision and hinder movement.
- 14—TRENCH:** [MEDIUM COVER OR HIGHER GROUND, HALF SPEED UPHILL, JUMP TN 25] Perhaps a streambed several yards wide or maybe the slump at the foot of two adjacent hills. You can jump over the trench yourself, or try to leap it with a vehicle.
- 15—FENCE:** [AVERAGE OBSTACLE, JUMP TN 10] The remains of a low fence. It must be vaulted to move through, but offers no protection.
- 16—BIG GAME TRACKS:** [NAVIGATE TN 20] Large animal tracks run through this area. They can be easily tracked.
- 17—RAZED GROUND:** At the center of a tiny clearing, the ground has been thoroughly burned and salted, with ancient stone bricks just visible beneath the earth. Nothing has grown here for centuries.
- 18—SLOPE:** [HALF SPEED UPHILL, HIGHER GROUND, -5 SPRINT] A slope is hard to sprint up or down and slows any kind of movement uphill. Anything steeper than this requires a Climb check.
- 19—LEAN-TO:** A crude lean-to has been erected here to protect a stockpile of something. The GM decides what that something is (wood, bricks, sacks of lime, stone, coal).
- 20—DEAD TREES:** Several rusted drums have been dumped here, spilling their toxic contents and killing off the trees and grass in a wide radius.

WEATHER: [ROLL 1d20] Forests are sheltered from winds but still endure their share of rain and snow. The temperature in a forest varies greatly depending on the region, the altitude, the type of forest and more.

WEATHER	SPRING	SUMMER	AUTUMN	WINTER
Fine	1-6	1-8	1-3	1-2
Clouds	7-9	9-12	4-9	3-6
Fog	10-11	13-14	10-12	7-10
Rain	12-14	15-16	13-15	11-12
Wind	15-18	17-19	16-18	13-14
Snow	19	—	19	15-19
Storm	20	20	20	20
Temperature	Comfortable	Warm	Comfortable	Cold

HILLS

NAVIGATE TN 20 / SPEED $\times \frac{3}{4}$

A hill can exist in most other types of terrain, but hills can also dominate the landscape. Hills terrain could feature gentle rolling hills or lumpy rugged hills, or a combination of both. Small copses of trees are common throughout hilly terrain, and valleys often have active streams or dry streambeds in them.

Hills are good places for settlements as they don't take up space on plains that can be farmed and offer some defense against intruders. In times of old, those who wanted to stake their claim to a plot of land in the wilderness needed two things above all else—good horses and defensible hill forts. The ruins of these forts, as well as deserted boom towns and their abandoned mines, factories or lumber mills are commonplace throughout the hills in crownlands.

Valleys also attracted the attention of people in the past. In particular, heartland valleys became a place to bury the dead during the Residuum, and many have become saturated with necrotic energies that wake the dead from their rest.

FEATURES: [ROLL 1d20] Hills abound with stony, rocky outcroppings, small, hardy plants and the remains of ancient ruins.

- 1—SLOPE:** [HALF SPEED UPHILL, HIGHER GROUND, -5 SPRINT] A slope is hard to sprint up or down and slows any kind of movement uphill. Anything steeper than this requires a Climb check.
- 2—UNDERGROWTH:** [MAJOR OBSTACLE, -5 SPRINT, -5 STEALTH] Vines, roots, and short bushes cover much of the ground.
- 3—JUNK PILE:** [MINOR OBSTACLE] A pile of junk has been dumped here, picked clean of all valuable objects and abandoned.
- 4—DENS:** Large empty dens can be found here, dug near the base of large blighted trees, though no animals can be found.
- 5—HEDGEROWS:** [MAJOR OBSTACLE, JUMP TN 25] Hedgerows are tangles of stones, soil, and dense bushes a few yards high that can obscure vision and hinder movement.
- 6—STRANGE FLORA:** Tufts of low grass make sighing sounds and flatten themselves as you approach.
- 7—SHRINE:** [MEDIUM COVER] An ancient, small and damaged shrine to paragons of old. The shrine has a low wall around it and a worn stone-slab table at the center.
- 8—BOULDERS:** [HEAVY COVER OR HIGHER GROUND, CLIMB TN 15, HEAVE TN 40] A cluster of large natural rocks, menhirs or great rounded stones.
- 9—SHALLOW CAVE:** A raised rocky patch and a depression in the earth creates a shallow cave.
- 10—LEDGE:** [HIGHER GROUND, CLIMB TN 20, JUMP TN 30] A vertical rocky ledge, a few yards in height, is a harmless but difficult climb. Usually, a ledge has sloped entry points that are slightly easier to climb every hundred yards or so.
- 11—RUINS:** [AVERAGE OBSTACLE, MEDIUM COVER, JUMP TN 15] Low walls, ancient building sites, collapsing stonework and derelict houses are filled with small, defensible positions.
- 12—FENCE:** [AVERAGE OBSTACLE, JUMP TN 10] The remains of a low fence. It must be vaulted to move through, but offers no protection.
- 13—CRASH SITE:** [MAJOR OBSTACLES] Chunks of a large vehicle litter the area around a barren clearing. The wreckage is old, comprised of pitted, rusted iron and dry, warped hardwood.

- 14—RAZED GROUND:** At the center of a tiny clearing, the ground has been thoroughly burned and salted, with ancient stone bricks just visible beneath the earth. Nothing has grown here for centuries.
- 15—KNOLLS:** [-5 PILOT] Lumpy hillocks or uneven mounds, sometimes earthen or stone and at other times rubble and buried brickwork left over from razed empires of the past.
- 16—SPRING:** Fresh water bubbles up into a small pool and is carried away by a tiny, winding brook.
- 17—CREST:** [VISION OBSCURED, HIGHER GROUND] A hill crest in the center of the area provides a natural wall of sorts. The crest is a few yards high and up to ten yards deep. It is not steep enough to count as a slope.
- 18—ANCIENT CAMPSITE:** A defensible, sheltered area that has been worn by centuries of travelers. A fire pit exists here and a damp, shady area indicates that water may be present during wetter seasons.
- 19—TRENCH:** [MEDIUM COVER OR HIGHER GROUND, HALF SPEED UPHILL, JUMP TN 25] Perhaps a dry streambed several yards wide, or maybe the slump at the foot of two adjacent hills. You can jump over the trench yourself, or try to leap it with a vehicle.

- 20—SHELTERBELT:** [LIGHT COVER, CLIMB TN 15] A line of trees, bushes or scrub that provides shelter against buffeting winds and weather. Typically has more vegetation on the leeward side.

WEATHER: [ROLL 1d20] While the occasional snow could fall from autumn to spring, hills have quite amicable weather. Clouds, fog, rain, wind and snow come in relatively equal proportions.

WEATHER	SPRING	SUMMER	AUTUMN	WINTER
Fine	1-3	1-4	1-3	1-2
Clouds	4-6	5-9	4-8	3-6
Fog	7-9	10-11	9-12	7-9
Rain	10-12	12-13	13-15	10-12
Wind	13-18	14-19	16-18	13-16
Snow	19	—	19	17-19
Storm	20	20	20	20
Temperature	Cold	Warm	Cold	Freezing

IRONWASTE

NAVIGATE TN 50 / SPEED $\times \frac{1}{10}$

In some rare places, the earthen layer of a world gear has been scraped away, exposing the granitelike metallic landscape that lies beneath. Ironwastes are not entirely composed of iron. Rather, they are an uneven admixture of rock, alloys and earth. The conglomerate clusters of different alloys that make up the terrain are varied and interesting, forming unusual greyish shades of every color, some dull, others polished.

The surface of the ironwaste is characterized by the types of metals present and the direction in which the metal has formed. Some areas are sharp and crystalline while others are smoothed and scoured by winds and rivers. Dust gathers in the cracks of all such ironwaste landscapes, eventually resulting in patches of soil that can support shrubs and other hardy vegetation.

While ironwastes are incredibly valuable to a large nation, mankind is not the only race trying to get their hands on them. The titans, a tyrannical, half-mechanical, giant race inhabit all the known ironwastes and covet the resources within them. The titans are relatives of dwarves, conceived during the Era of Myth. They have an insatiable thirst for the metals of the divine mechanism so operate mines night and day to extract rare and valuable alloys from the world gears. While the titans are extremely powerful and technologically advanced, they

seem to have no interest in the affairs of others and are simply too far from the heartlands to pose a threat.

Aside from the titans, ironwastes have many hazards that turn travelers away. Impossibly steep cliffs, dissonance wells, rust basins and barrerglass are but some of the inherent dangers. In general, ironwastes are deemed unnavigable and should only be circumnavigated or passed over by air.

FEATURES: [ROLL 1d20] Ironwastes are tough lands to meet your enemies in, even tougher to find a good campsite. While the titans are large enough to ignore many of the cliffs and obstacles that crop up in ironwastes, other humanoid travelers have much more difficulty.

- 1—**SCREE:** [-5 CLIMB, -2 JUMP, -5 SPRINT] Uneven rocks, shifting stones and rough gravel covers the ground.
- 2—**CRASH SITE:** [MAJOR OBSTACLES] Chunks of a large vehicle litter the area around a barren clearing. The wreckage is old, comprised of pitted, rusted iron and dry, warped hardwood.
- 3—**FENCE:** [AVERAGE OBSTACLE, JUMP TN 10] The remains of a low fence. It must be vaulted to move through, but offers no protection.
- 4—**SLOPE:** [HALF SPEED UPHILL, HIGHER GROUND, -5 SPRINT] A slope is hard to sprint up or down and slows any kind of

movement uphill. Anything steeper than this requires a Climb check.

- 5—STRANGE FLORA:** Several large, mouthed plants grow on the iron here. They have dark red leaves and make a clicking noise at random intervals.
- 6—MYTH PYLON:** [HEAVY COVER, AVERAGE OBSTACLE] A huge pylon reaches for the sky, beneath which rubble and debris litter the ground. These massive structures are arranged in a line with hundreds of yards between them. They used to support the skyways of the Era of Myth, but are now nothing more than crumbling remnants.
- 7—BOULDERS:** [HEAVY COVER OR HIGHER GROUND, CLIMB TN 15, HEAVE TN 40] A cluster of large natural rocks, menhirs or great rounded stones.
- 8—LEDGE:** [HIGHER GROUND, CLIMB TN 20, JUMP TN 30] A vertical rocky ledge, a few yards in height, is a harmless but difficult climb. Usually, a ledge has sloped entry points that are slightly easier to climb every hundred yards or so.
- 9—IRON RIDGE:** [LIGHT COVER, BREAK TN 25, JUMP TN 25] A thin sheet of brittle rusty metal protrudes from the ground in a low, crooked wall.
- 10—RUINS:** [AVERAGE OBSTACLE, MEDIUM COVER, JUMP TN 15] Low walls, ancient building sites, collapsing stonework and derelict houses are filled with small, defensible positions.
- 11—TRENCH:** [MEDIUM COVER OR HIGHER GROUND, HALF SPEED UPHILL, JUMP TN 25] Perhaps a dry streambed several yards wide, or maybe the slump at the foot of two adjacent hills. You can jump over the trench yourself, or try to leap it with a vehicle.
- 12—JUNK PILE:** [MINOR OBSTACLE] A pile of junk has been dumped here, picked clean of all valuable objects and abandoned.
- 13—RUST GROVE:** [LIGHT COVER, JUMP TN 15] Cracks of rust have dug deeply into the gears of the divine mechanism here, but the rust has met resistance of different alloys. The resulting landscape is one with nonferrous “rust bushes” where the iron alloys around them have rusted away. Everything is covered in fine red grains of rust and the ground crunches like snow as it breaks beneath your feet.
- 14—STOCKPILE:** Old crates, barrels, slabs of stone and stacks of brick are some of the resources that have been left here. They are not of good quality nor particularly expensive and the owners are nowhere to be seen.
- 15—SHALLOW CAVE:** A raised rocky patch and a depression in the earth creates a shallow cave.
- 16—TITAN MINE:** [HUGE HOLE] An abandoned titan mine leaves a massive gaping hole in the area. The hole is vaguely circular and has tiers of depth moving down one side like giant stairs.
- 17—SHAFT:** [CLIMB TN 25] A solid rocky area features a deep hole that descends far into the earth below. The bottom of the shaft is beyond the reach of your light.
- 18—SPRING:** Fresh water bubbles up into a small pool and is carried away by a tiny, winding brook.
- 19—MIRRORSLATES:** [HEAVY COVER, HEAVE TN 35, -10 STEALTH] Massive chunks of polished stone litter the landscape here. These are good as cover, but their dark reflective finish makes it much harder to sneak up on others unnoticed.
- 20—DENS:** Large empty dens can be found here, dug into porous rock near the base heavy slates, though no animals can be found.

WEATHER: [ROLL 1d20] Ironwastes can produce some very harsh weather patterns. The terrain is scoured by harsh winds, baked by the summer sun and frozen by the winter chill. In addition, the lack of

organic life in an ironwaste makes them very inhospitable.

WEATHER	SPRING	SUMMER	AUTUMN	WINTER
Fine	1-3	1-5	1-2	1
Clouds	4-6	6-10	3-7	2-4
Fog	7-10	11-12	8-11	5-9
Rain	11-14	13	12-15	10-14
Wind	15-19	14-19	16-19	15-18
Snow	—	—	—	19
Storm	20	20	20	20
Temperature	Warm	Hot	Cold	Freezing

MARSHLAND

NAVIGATE TN 30 / SPEED $\times \frac{1}{2}$



Marshlands occur around rivers, lakes and coastal deltas. This type of terrain encompasses moors, bogs, swamps, and other wetlands, and varies with altitude and longitude. High altitudes tend to have peaty moors, often overgrown with heath and scrub. Low altitudes are marshes with sodden earth, reeds and rushes. Both types are filled with sinking ruins, creature lairs, wrecks, streams and hazards.

Some marshes, particularly swamps, have trees just as forests do, usually clustered in small stands, though most vegetation is small and dense around the edges of bog areas. Paths leading through marshlands are often broken and subject to change when the swamp shifts with rain.

Coastal deltas down river from settlements often form marshlands because the city waste kills off water absorbing vegetation and the earth becomes waterlogged. Other marshlands are created by the dumping of hazardous materials, which brings a whole new spectrum of dangers to the terrain.

Marshlands can be even worse to travel through than deserts. Deepings, bogs, dikes and woods hinder the movement of vehicles and mounts while leeches, quicksand, fey reeds and disease make marshland journeys a navigation nightmare.



FEATURES: [ROLL 1d20] Marshes are sodden lands of boggy ground, damp weather and depressing weather.

- 1—BOG:** [MAJOR OBSTACLE] Bogs are sink holes, where water drains away beneath the earth. Sodden earth and pools of water cover the ground, slowing movement.
- 2—UNDERGROWTH:** [MAJOR OBSTACLE, -5 SPRINT, -5 STEALTH] Vines, roots, and short bushes cover much of the ground.
- 3—DEAD TREES:** Several rusted drums have been dumped here, spilling their toxic contents and killing off the trees and grass in a wide radius.
- 4—BOGGY GROUND:** [AVERAGE OBSTACLE] Bog water from below the earth creates several mucky ponds in the landscape. They are only knee deep.
- 5—KNOLLS:** [-5 PILOT] Lumpy hillocks or uneven mounds, sometimes earthen or stone and sometimes rubble left over from razed empires of the past.
- 6—INFESTATION:** [MINOR OBSTACLE] A small, contained area has been infested by a swarm of insects. While mostly harmless, it is difficult ground to cross.

- 7—STRANGE FLORA:** Oddly-shaped, tower-like mushrooms grow here. The stems emit light and the mushroom heads cover the top, not unlike that of a lampshade.
- 8—FENCE:** [AVERAGE OBSTACLE, JUMP TN 10] The remains of a low fence. It must be vaulted to move through, but offers no protection.
- 9—TREE, SMALL:** [LIGHT COVER AND/OR HIGHER GROUND, CLIMB TN 15] Small branching trees are easy to climb and can grant cover against ranged weapons.
- 10—SNAG NETTLES:** Spiky plants grow in patches here. Moving nearby them causes clothes to get caught and tear.
- 11—TREE, LARGE:** [MEDIUM COVER AND/OR HIGHER GROUND, CLIMB TN 25] Large trees are difficult to climb and grant medium cover.
- 12—VINE CURTAIN:** [+5 STEALTH, +5 CLIMB, BREAK TN 25] Vines growing along tree boughs have dropped aerial roots which create a curtain along the line of the branch.
- 13—DENS:** Large empty dens can be found here, dug near the base of large blighted trees, though no animals can be found.
- 14—FALLEN LOG:** [LIGHT COVER OR HIGHER GROUND, JUMP TN 15] A fallen log can provide a small tactical advantage.
- 15—LEAN-TO:** A crude lean-to has been erected here to protect a stockpile of something. The GM decides what that something is (wood, bricks, sacks of lime, stone, coal).
- 16—STEAM/SMOKE:** [VISION OBSCURED] Harmless steam, fog or smoke obscures the area. Winds clear the cloud, but it returns as

soon as it is still enough.

17—GAME TRACKS: [NAVIGATE TN 25] Animal tracks run through this area. They can be tracked to hunt the beasts.

18—MOSS: [MINOR OBSTACLE, -5 CLIMB, -10 SPRINT] Moss and lichen growing on any surface can make it more slippery.

19—SPRING: Fresh water bubbles up into a small pool and is carried away by a tiny, winding brook.

20—HEDGEROWS: [MAJOR OBSTACLE, JUMP TN 25] Hedgerows are tangles of stones, soil, and dense bushes a couple of yards high that can obscure vision and hinder movement.



WEATHER: [ROLL 1d20] Swamps usually occur in temperate areas so they don't evaporate or freeze. Humidity is often high in these areas so heat is cloying and cold is bitter and damp.

WEATHER	SPRING	SUMMER	AUTUMN	WINTER
Fine	1-2	1-3	1-2	1
Clouds	3-6	4-9	3-7	2-5
Fog	7-10	10-12	8-12	6-9
Rain	11-13	13-14	13-15	10-15
Wind	14-19	15-19	16-19	16-19
Snow	—	—	—	—
Storm	20	20	20	20
Temperature	Comfortable	Warm	Comfortable	Cold

MOUNTAINS

NAVIGATE TN 40 / SPEED $\times \frac{1}{4}$



In times of old, men and other creatures took to mountains as a place to defend themselves against the wars of the residuum, giving rise to a number of monasteries, mountain forts, subterranean hideaways and independent fiefdoms, many of which have survived to the present day. However, the inhabitants of these places have often changed.

The presence of mines, dwarven settlements and smelting foundries continue to rape the earth of its precious lode. Low mountains are soot stained and dangerous, filled with disgruntled wildlife and other creatures that have been evicted from their abodes because of industrial expansion. Higher altitudes remain untouchable but are uninhabitable, populated only with the necessary settlements required to maintain the roads, mines, tunnels and toll gates that weave across the frigid mountain passes.

High altitudes can be fatiguing—or even deadly. Cold becomes extreme, and the lack of oxygen in the air can wear down even the most hardy of travelers. Winter only makes this worse, so mountain climbing expeditions are governed by the seasons.



FEATURES: [ROLL 1d20] Slopes, snowdrifts, ice and perilous climbs are what you should expect when traveling into mountainous terrain.

- 1—**SCREE:** [-5 CLIMB, -2 JUMP, -5 SPRINT] Uneven rocks, shifting stones and rough gravel covers the ground.
- 2—**LEAN-TO:** A crude, snow-covered lean-to has been erected here to protect a stockpile of something. The GM decides what that something is (wood, bricks, sacks of lime, stone, coal).
- 3—**BOULDERS:** [HEAVY COVER OR HIGHER GROUND, CLIMB TN 15, HEAVE TN 40] A cluster of large natural rocks, menhirs or great rounded stones.
- 4—**SHRINE:** [MEDIUM COVER] An ancient, small and damaged shrine to paragons of old. The shrine has a low wall around it and a worn stone-slab table at the center.
- 5—**ICE:** [MINOR OBSTACLE, -10 PILOT, -5 CLIMB, -10 SPRINT] Icy ground makes any surface more slippery. Mounts or vehicles may break the ice if they are too heavy.
- 6—**SHAFT:** [CLIMB TN 25] A solid rocky area features a deep hole that descends far into the earth below. The bottom of the shaft is beyond the reach of your light.
- 7—**STRANGE FLORA:** Glowing moss can be found here, growing in the shelter of boulders and rocky crannies.
- 8—**RUINS:** [AVERAGE OBSTACLE, MEDIUM COVER, JUMP TN 15] Low walls, ancient building sites, collapsing stonework and derelict houses are filled with small, defensible positions.
- 9—**SHALLOW CAVE:** A raised rocky patch and a depression in the earth creates a shallow cave.



- 10—LEDGE:** [HIGHER GROUND, CLIMB TN 20, JUMP TN 30] A vertical rocky ledge, a few yards in height, is a harmless but difficult climb. Usually, a ledge has sloped entry points that are slightly easier to climb every hundred yards or so.
- 11—JUNK PILE:** [MINOR OBSTACLE] A pile of junk has been dumped here, picked clean of all valuable objects and abandoned.
- 12—SPRING:** Fresh water bubbles up into a small pool and is carried away by a tiny, winding brook.
- 13—TRENCH:** [MEDIUM COVER OR HIGHER GROUND, HALF SPEED UPHILL, JUMP TN 25] Perhaps a dry streambed several yards wide, or maybe the slump at the foot of two adjacent hills. You can jump over the trench yourself, or try to leap it with a vehicle.
- 14—ANCIENT CAMPSITE:** A defensible, sheltered area that has been worn by centuries of travelers. A fire pit exists here and a damp, shady area indicates that water may be present during wetter seasons.
- 15—SLOPE:** [HALF SPEED UPHILL, HIGHER GROUND, -5 SPRINT] A slope is hard to sprint up or down and slows any kind of movement uphill. Anything steeper than this requires a Climb check.
- 16—CRASH SITE:** [MAJOR OBSTACLES] Chunks of a large vehicle litter the area around a barren clearing. The wreckage is old, comprised of pitted, rusted iron and dry, warped hardwood.
- 17—SNOW DRIFT:** [MAJOR OBSTACLE] A one-to-two yard deep drift of snow crosses the center of the area.
- 18—GLARE:** [-5 ATTACK PENALTY] The sun causes a blind spot. Attacks made in the sun's direction suffer a -5 penalty to hit.
- 19—DENS:** Large empty dens can be found here, dug near the base of large blighted trees, though no animals can be found.
- 20—ROCK HAVEN:** [HEAVY COVER] Large black rocks jut out from the snow in a small rocky outcropping. It makes an excellent defensible position for a small group and also provides shelter from cold, storms or wind.

WEATHER: [ROLL 1d20] Snow falls all year round on higher mountains. Rain might also fall which melts some of the snow but also creates dangerous ice sheets. Winds in high mountains are strong and unforgiving.

WEATHER	SPRING	SUMMER	AUTUMN	WINTER
Fine	1-2	1-3	1-2	1
Clouds	3-5	4-9	3-6	2-3
Fog	6-7	10-12	7-9	4-6
Rain	8	13-14	10	—
Wind	9-16	15-18	11-16	7-12
Snow	17-19	19	17-19	13-19
Storm	20	20	20	20
Temperature	Freezing	Cold	Freezing	Frigid

PLAINS

NAVIGATE TN 10 / SPEED × 1

Plains encompass all types of flat arable grasslands from farms to savannah. Some are vast and untamed while others are scored with irrigation canals. Many plains are home to ancient battlefields, some still containing artifacts from the clashes of yesteryear. Whatever the case, most plains are reclaimed by expanding cities, the spread of forests or the farmer's plow.

Plains occur at all altitudes throughout the heartlands, crownlands, borderlands and even upon lost gears of the World Machine. They are diverse and distinguishable, especially as they inherit features from the surrounding lands—they have smooth transitions with rolling hills, stony barrens, forests, coasts and so on. Highways and roads throughout civilized lands can make travel across plains very fast, though they typically include toll gates and taxes to maintain them.

Ruins, ancient skyways, and myth architecture are most common in plains because their sturdy construction makes them difficult to clear away, even in modern times. Residuum ruins are crumbling mounds, so can go unnoticed by travelers. More recent ruins are easy pickings for local creatures short on building supplies, so don't last much longer than a decade.

FEATURES: [ROLL 1d20] The plains themselves are flat, even and easy to travel. However, years of cultivation, irrigation and use by people of all races leaves many common obstacles that can block your path.

- 1—SLOPE:** [HALF SPEED UPHILL, HIGHER GROUND, -5 SPRINT] A slope is hard to sprint up or down and slows any kind of movement uphill. Anything steeper than this requires a Climb check.
- 2—RUINS:** [AVERAGE OBSTACLE, MEDIUM COVER, JUMP TN 15] Low walls, ancient building sites, collapsing stonework and derelict houses are filled with small, defensible positions.
- 3—STRANGE FLORA:** Several large-leaved plants grow above the grass, covered is a sweet-smelling, sticky oil.
- 4—KNOLLS:** [-5 PILOT] Lumpy hillocks or uneven mounds, sometimes earthen or stone and sometimes rubble left over from razed empires of the past.
- 5—LEAN-TO:** A crude lean-to has been erected here to protect a stockpile of something. The GM decides what that something is (wood, bricks, sacks of lime, stone, coal).
- 6—FENCE:** [AVERAGE OBSTACLE, JUMP TN 10] The remains of a low fence. It must be vaulted to move through, but offers no protection.
- 7—RAZED GROUND:** At the center of a tiny clearing, the ground has been thoroughly burned and salted, with ancient stone bricks just visible beneath the earth. Nothing has grown here for centuries.
- 8—TRENCH:** [MEDIUM COVER OR HIGHER GROUND, HALF SPEED UPHILL, JUMP TN 25] Perhaps a dry streambed several yards wide, or maybe the slump at the foot of two adjacent hills. You can jump over the trench yourself, or try to leap it with a vehicle.
- 9—OLD WELL:** An old well, dry and without a bucket, sits in the center of a dry and grassless patch of terrain.
- 10—JUNK PILE:** [MINOR OBSTACLE] A pile of junk has been dumped here, picked clean of all valuable objects and abandoned.
- 11—MYTH PYLON:** [HEAVY COVER, AVERAGE OBSTACLE] A huge pylon reaches for the sky, beneath which rubble and debris litter the ground. These massive structures are arranged in a line

with hundreds of yards between them. They used to support the skyways of the Era of Myth, but are now nothing more than crumbling remnants.

12—CRASH SITE: [MAJOR OBSTACLES] Chunks of a large vehicle litter the area around a barren clearing. The wreckage is old, comprised of pitted, rusted iron and dry, warped hardwood.

13—BERM: [LIGHT COVER, JUMP TN 10] A common defensive structure, a berm is a low, earthen support wall that slows movement and provides a measure of cover.

14—BOULDERS: [HEAVY COVER OR HIGHER GROUND, CLIMB TN 15, HEAVE TN 40] A cluster of large natural rocks, menhirs or great rounded stones.

15—HEDGEROWS: [MAJOR OBSTACLE, JUMP TN 25] Hedgerows are tangles of stones, soil, and dense bushes a couple of yards high that can obscure vision and hinder movement.

16—CATTLE: A herd of animals is moving through the area. They may be wild, or escaped from a nearby farm.

17—SHRINE: [MEDIUM COVER] An ancient, small and damaged shrine to paragons of old. The shrine has a low wall around it and a worn stone-slab table at the center.

18—CREST: [VISION OBSCURED, HIGHER GROUND] A hill crest in the center of the area provides a natural wall of sorts. The crest is a few yards high and up to ten yards deep. It is not steep

enough to count as a slope.

19—SHRUBS: [+2 STEALTH] Small shrubs do not hinder movement nor vision, but can give a small advantage when trying to hide.

20—SHELTERBELT: [LIGHT COVER, CLIMB TN 15] A line of trees, bushes or scrub that provides shelter against buffeting winds and weather. Typically has more vegetation on the leeward side.

WEATHER: [ROLL 1d20] The most mild weather can be experienced on the plains. Large continental plains also get light snows during winter months and thick blankets of fog.

WEATHER	SPRING	SUMMER	AUTUMN	WINTER
Fine	1-4	1-8	1-4	1-2
Clouds	5-7	9-12	5-8	3-6
Fog	8-10	13	9-12	7-10
Rain	11-13	14-15	13-16	11-12
Wind	14-19	16-19	17-19	13-17
Snow	—	—	—	18-19
Storm	20	20	20	20
Temperature	Comfortable	Warm	Comfortable	Cold

ROCKY BADLANDS

NAVIGATE TN 40 / SPEED $\times \frac{1}{4}$

Rocky badlands are a type of temperate desert that have little rain but are scored by dry riverbeds and abound in massive slabs of sedimentary rock. Typical rocky badlands contain deep canyons, natural stone towers, boulders and mesas consisting of flat ground surrounded on all sides by cliffs. Most rocky badlands are colored between tan and reddish brown because of the high iron content in them.

The direction of the stone plates in a rocky badland determines its main geographical features: vertical stone plates jut upward out of the ground and create many rock walls; angled stone plates are worn by wind and have sandy walkways between; flat badlands are more like a red painted desert with mesa plateaus and rocky outcrops. Most rocky badlands are a combination of different plates at different angles to each other.

The lack of arable soil in these areas means that the native flora is similar to that of scrublands—tough and adapted to nutrient poor soil. Water is found only in canyon rivers and typically contested by the local creatures. Most of these denizens are cave dwellers, as the walls of rocky barren canyons are sedimentary and easily carved into makeshift abodes.

Massive open cast mining operations have been formed that strip badlands of their copper, tin, iron, coal and other alloys. So

badland cities and settlements are usually found near rivers where the land is arable and can be plowed.

FEATURES: [ROLL 1d20] The winding, twisting trails through badlands are filled with defensible positions, cliffs, chasms and obstructing rock formations.

- 1—**SCREE:** [-5 CLIMB, -2 JUMP, -5 SPRINT] Uneven rocks, shifting stones and rough gravel covers the ground.
- 2—**CRASH SITE:** [MAJOR OBSTACLES] Chunks of a large vehicle litter the area around a barren clearing. The wreckage is old, comprised of pitted, rusted iron and dry, warped hardwood.
- 3—**STRANGE FLORA:** A horrid odor wafts from a bed of ugly, brown flowers.
- 4—**JUNK PILE:** [MINOR OBSTACLE] A pile of junk has been dumped here, picked clean of all valuable objects and abandoned.
- 5—**KARST:** [HEAVY COVER] These tall, flat stone formations are usually several yards high and almost impossible to climb, but provide good cover and shelter from storms or wind.
- 6—**CHASM:** [JUMP TN 25] A thin but dangerous rift, several yards wide and a dozen or so yards long.
- 7—**SHALLOW CAVE:** A raised rocky patch and a depression in the earth creates a shallow cave.
- 8—**KNOLLS:** [-5 PILOT] Lumpy hillocks or uneven mounds, sometimes earthen or stone and sometimes rubble left over from

razed empires of the past.

- 9—SHAFT:** [CLIMB TN 25] A solid rocky area features a deep hole that descends far into the earth below. The bottom of the shaft is beyond the reach of your light.
- 10—TOWERS:** [CLIMB TN 35, BREAK TN 25] Several tall, thin towers of rock cast long shadows across the desert. They are not tall enough to make a good vantage point, but could be felled upon enemies like trees.
- 11—TERRACES:** [HIGHER GROUND, JUMP TN 10] Podium-like terraces give different levels of elevation depending on their height of one to a few yards.
- 12—BOULDERS:** [HEAVY COVER OR HIGHER GROUND, CLIMB TN 15, HEAVE TN 40] A cluster of large natural rocks, menhirs or great rounded stones.
- 13—TRENCH:** [MEDIUM COVER OR HIGHER GROUND, HALF SPEED UPHILL, JUMP TN 25] Perhaps a dry streambed several yards wide, or maybe the slump at the foot of two adjacent hills. You can jump over the trench yourself, or try to leap it with a vehicle.
- 14—ANCIENT CAMPSITE:** A defensible, sheltered area that has been worn by centuries of travelers. A fire pit exists here and a damp, shady area indicates that water may be present during wetter seasons.
- 15—SLOPE:** [HALF SPEED UPHILL, HIGHER GROUND, -5 SPRINT] A slope is hard to sprint up or down and slows any kind of movement uphill. Anything steeper than this requires a Climb check.
- 16—LEDGE:** [HIGHER GROUND, CLIMB TN 20, JUMP TN 30] A vertical rocky ledge, a few yards in height, is a harmless but difficult climb. Usually, a ledge has sloped entry points that are slightly easier to climb every hundred yards or so.
- 17—KARST CLUSTER:** [MAJOR OBSTACLE, HEAVY COVER, OBSCURES VISION] Thick, tall and dense karst occurs only in rocky and stony terrain. The winding narrow passages and height of the karst rock obscures vision, slows movement and provides excellent cover.
- 18—LEAN-TO:** A crude lean-to has been erected here to protect a stockpile of something. The GM decides what that something is (wood, bricks, sacks of lime, stone, coal).
- 19—MINES:** You come across a series of small mines dug into a rock wall. Some have been boarded up, others simply abandoned.
- 20—ROCK ARCH:** A large, natural stone arch looms overhead, a few dozen yards wide. It makes an excellent sniping or surveying position but doesn't look strong enough to support any more than one character.



WEATHER: [ROLL 1d20] While the weather is not particularly dangerous, the terrain itself is tough to get through. As badlands are a type of desert, the temperature can get much colder at night and warmer during the day.

WEATHER	SPRING	SUMMER	AUTUMN	WINTER
Fine	1-5	1-7	1-4	1-3
Clouds	6-8	8-12	5-10	4-6
Fog	9-10	13	11-12	7-8
Rain	11-12	14	13-15	9-12
Wind	13-19	15-19	16-19	13-18
Snow	—	—	—	19
Storm	20	20	20	20
Temperature	Warm	Hot	Comfortable	Cold

SCRUBLANDS

NAVIGATE TN 10 / SPEED × 1



Scrublands, also known as heathlands are usually found in the transition between many types of terrain: fertile and infertile, forests and plains, deserts and hills, and so on. However, where people have come to live, scrublands are typically converted to farmlands over a decade or two.

This terrain also tends to crop up where civilizations are destroyed and other types of terrain are moving in to reclaim the land. Steppes, dry plains and hills that border on mountains are areas in which scrubland occurs naturally. Deforestation has also given rise to a large number of small and rugged scrublands—a common feature in the industrial heartlands.

In addition to the mounds of ancient rubble that seem to adorn these places, scrublands are sparsely populated with clusters of small, hardy plants that survive on little or no nutrients. The earth here is hard and often rocky with occasional crags, trenches and rugged hills. Winds tend to be strong and gusty in scrublands as they lack the vegetation necessary to grow shelterbelts or forests.

While scrublands are not accommodating to life, they are a good terrain to travel across. Hazards and encounters are few and far between, with most such disturbances easily spotted from far away.



FEATURES: [ROLL 1d20] Scrublands are populated with tough plant life, ancient ruins and the waste of industrial nations.

- 1—BOULDERS:** [HEAVY COVER OR HIGHER GROUND, CLIMB TN 15, HEAVE TN 40] A cluster of large natural rocks, menhirs or great rounded stones.
- 2—SHRUBS:** [+2 STEALTH] Small shrubs do not hinder movement nor vision, but can give a small advantage when trying to hide.
- 3—SCREE:** [-5 CLIMB, -2 JUMP, -5 SPRINT] Uneven rocks, shifting stones and rough gravel covers the ground.
- 4—LEAN-TO:** A crude lean-to has been erected here to protect a stockpile of something. The GM decides what that something is (wood, bricks, sacks of lime, stone, coal).
- 5—SLOPE:** [HALF SPEED UPHILL, HIGHER GROUND, -5 SPRINT] A slope is hard to sprint up or down and slows any kind of movement uphill. Anything steeper than this requires a Climb check.
- 6—UNDERGROWTH:** [MAJOR OBSTACLE, -5 SPRINT, -5 STEALTH] Vines, roots, and short bushes cover much of the ground.
- 7—STRANGE FLORA:** Tangled vines weave their way across the ground here, sprouting leaves of mottled red, green, yellow and black.
- 8—KNOLLS:** [-5 PILOT] Lumpy hillocks or uneven mounds, sometimes earthen or stone and sometimes rubble left over from razed empires of the past.
- 9—FENCE:** [AVERAGE OBSTACLE, JUMP TN 10] The remains of a low fence. It must be vaulted to move through, but offers no protection.
- 10—HEDGEROWS:** [MAJOR OBSTACLE, JUMP TN 25] Hedgerows are tangles of stones, soil, and dense bushes a couple of yards high that can obscure vision and hinder movement.
- 11—MYTH PYLON:** [HEAVY COVER, AVERAGE OBSTACLE] A huge pylon reaches for the sky, beneath which rubble and debris litter the ground. These massive structures are arranged in a line with hundreds of yards between them. They used to support the skyways of the Era of Myth, but are now nothing more than crumbling remnants.

- 12—TREE, SMALL:** [LIGHT COVER AND/OR HIGHER GROUND, CLIMB TN 15] Small branching trees are easy to climb and can grant cover against ranged weapons.
- 13—CRASH SITE:** [MAJOR OBSTACLES] Chunks of a large vehicle litter the area around a barren clearing. The wreckage is old, comprised of pitted, rusted iron and dry, warped hardwood.
- 14—TRENCH:** [MEDIUM COVER OR HIGHER GROUND, HALF SPEED UPHILL, JUMP TN 25] Perhaps a dry streambed several yards wide, or maybe the slump at the foot of two adjacent hills. You can jump over the trench yourself, or try to leap it with a vehicle.
- 15—JUNK PILE:** [MINOR OBSTACLE] A pile of junk has been dumped here, picked clean of all valuable objects and abandoned.
- 16—RAZED GROUND:** At the center of a tiny clearing, the ground has been thoroughly burned and salted, with ancient stone bricks just visible beneath the earth. Nothing has grown here for centuries.
- 17—SHRINE:** [MEDIUM COVER] An ancient, small and damaged shrine to paragons of old. The shrine has a low wall around it and a worn stone-slab table at the center.
- 18—SPRING:** Fresh water bubbles up into a small pool and is carried away by a tiny, winding brook.

19—CREST: [VISION OBSCURED, HIGHER GROUND] A hill crest in the center of the area provides a natural wall of sorts. The crest is a few yards high and up to ten yards deep. It is not steep enough to count as a slope.

20—SMALL GAME TRACKS: [NAVIGATE TN 30] Very small animal tracks run through this area. They are difficult to track.

WEATHER: [ROLL 1d20] There are many different types of scrubland. Each occurs at different altitudes and different latitudes, so adjust the temperature and weather effects accordingly.

WEATHER	SPRING	SUMMER	AUTUMN	WINTER
Fine	1-4	1-7	1-4	1-3
Clouds	5-8	8-10	5-10	4-7
Fog	9	11	11-12	8-10
Rain	10-13	12-13	13-16	11-16
Wind	14-19	14-19	17-19	17-18
Snow	—	—	—	19
Storm	20	20	20	20
Temperature	Comfortable	Warm	Comfortable	Cold

STONY BARRENS

NAVIGATE TN 20 / SPEED $\times \frac{3}{4}$



Wastelands, crumbled rock, stony deserts, and the mounds of rubble left behind by ancient cities that were razed to the ground. On the surface, barrens are typically devoid of activity, cold, silent, lifeless and just as uninhabitable as deserts, though with colder weather. Under the ground, barrens are warmer, riddled with caverns and natural caves where dangerous denizens lurk—especially where ancient civilizations used to exist.

Above ground, most barrens are stony plains, without rain or water. Whenever rain occurs it does little to seed the area with life. Typically, barrens have shrubs and hardy bushes, and are inhabited only by small reptiles and insects. The growth of civilization here is stunted by the lack of natural resources—nomadic tribes are the most advanced creatures that dwell here.

Under the ground, however, water is present in small streams which cut through rock beds, and pool into underground lakes after a fall of rain. The presence of such water is also a telltale sign of extensive subterranean caverns, which are more common in barrens than any other terrain type. Such underground areas contain most of the life in rocky badlands, providing shelter from the weather, underground rivers for water and various forms of subterranean food.



FEATURES: [ROLL 1d20] Stony barrens are void of life, cold and

empty. The only things to be encountered on the surface are different types of stone formations, dusty hills, canyons and craters.

Beneath the surface of a barren, however, the natural caverns, water caves and dungeons are thriving.

- 1—**BOULDERS:** [HEAVY COVER OR HIGHER GROUND, CLIMB TN 15, HEAVE TN 40] A cluster of large natural rocks, menhirs or great rounded stones.
- 2—**QUARRY:** You come across a large abandoned stone quarry. Some of the older, less salvageable equipment has simply been left behind.
- 3—**SCREE:** [-5 CLIMB, -2 JUMP, -5 SPRINT] Uneven rocks, shifting stones and rough gravel covers the ground.
- 4—**STAIRS:** [AVERAGE OBSTACLE, -5 SPRINT, JUMP TN 25] Natural stair formations frequently occur in barren terrain. In fact, they are more common than slopes.
- 5—**UNDERGROWTH:** [MAJOR OBSTACLE, -5 SPRINT, -5 STEALTH] Vines, roots, and short bushes cover much of the ground.
- 6—**CRASH SITE:** [MAJOR OBSTACLES] Chunks of a large vehicle litter the area around a barren clearing. The wreckage is old, comprised of pitted, rusted iron and dry, warped hardwood.
- 7—**LEDGE:** [HIGHER GROUND, CLIMB TN 20, JUMP TN 30] A vertical rocky ledge, a few yards in height, is a harmless but difficult climb. Usually, a ledge has sloped entry points that are slightly easier to climb every hundred yards or so.
- 8—**DUST HILLS:** [HALF SPEED UPHILL, HIGHER GROUND, -5 SPRINT] Steep windblown hills of dust and silt are tough

going, even for mounts.

- 9—RUINS:** [AVERAGE OBSTACLE, MEDIUM COVER, JUMP TN 15] Low walls, ancient building sites, collapsing stonework and derelict houses are filled with small, defensible positions.
- 10—SHALLOW CAVE:** A raised rocky patch and a depression in the earth create a shallow cave.
- 11—TRENCH:** [MEDIUM COVER OR HIGHER GROUND, HALF SPEED UPHILL, JUMP TN 25] Perhaps a dry streambed several yards wide, or maybe the slump at the foot of two adjacent hills. You can jump over the trench yourself, or leap it with a vehicle.
- 12—ANCIENT CAMPSITE:** A defensible, sheltered area that has been worn by centuries of travelers. A fire pit exists here and a damp, shady area indicates that water may be present during wetter seasons.
- 13—TERRACES:** [HIGHER GROUND, JUMP TN 10] Podium-like terraces give different levels of elevation depending on their height of one to a few yards.
- 14—CARAVANS:** Ransacked caravans lie in disarray along with the old bones of those that once drove them. The vehicle that drew the caravans is gone, and no survivors can be found.
- 15—CHASM:** [JUMP TN 25] A thin but dangerous rift, several yards wide and a dozen or so yards long.
- 16—CRATERS:** Several large, shallow craters here suggests a battle took place in ages past.
- 17—GLAZEPLAIN:** [MINOR OBSTACLE, -5 CLIMB, -10 PILOT, -10 SPRINT, -5 STEALTH] An incredibly smooth plain of bedrock, covered in a layer of round polished stones. Glazeplains are extremely slippery as the stones roll and shift beneath your feet.
- 18—SPRING:** Fresh water bubbles up into a small pool and is carried away by a tiny, winding brook.
- 19—SNOWSTONES:** [-10 STEALTH] Patches of snowstones are strewn about the area. These stones are nothing but hollow shells of soft, white sandstone that crunch like snow when walked upon.
- 20—SHAFT:** [CLIMB TN 25] A solid rocky area features a deep hole that descends far into the earth below. It descends beyond the reach of your light.

WEATHER: [ROLL 1d20] Barrens tend to be a colder type of desert, especially during the night—reduce overnight temperatures by one step. However, if underground, the temperature is more comfortable—move it one step toward comfortable.

WEATHER	SPRING	SUMMER	AUTUMN	WINTER
Fine	1-3	1-6	1-4	1-2
Clouds	4-7	7-9	5-9	3-6
Fog	8-9	10-11	10-11	7-8
Rain	10	—	12	9
Wind	11-17	12-19	13-18	10-15
Snow	18-19	—	19	16-19
Storm	20	20	20	20
Temperature	Cold	Warm	Cold	Freezing

WATER

NAVIGATE TN 10 / SPEED VARIES WITH WEATHER



The seas of the New Epoch run thick with oil, iron and blood. Before the invention of phlogiston airships, the seas were battlegrounds

for the great nations. Hundreds of war vessels trawled the seas and were lost in border conflicts, storms and navigation errors. The arterial sea alone is thought to have more than a thousand military shipwrecks, and that is only counting the submerged ones. Most of these are waiting to be explored as submarine travel has only just been invented.

Also of some interest to explorers are the abundance of sunken ruins, usually cities, and their subterranean caverns below the ocean floor. These myth ruins are thought to have submerged during the shattering earthquakes of the cataclysm and are home to both dangers and treasures great.

In addition to flotsam, shipwrecks and ruins, the ocean floor holds many marvels, including undersea analogues of any of the terrain elements described earlier in this chapter. Calm water is still enough to have no significant movement penalty and is the easiest to swim through (TN 20). Most large trade rivers and coasts are either choppy or flowing water and move at about 5 yards per round so some characters will be able to swim against it (TN 25). Rough water or rapids move at about 10 yards per round, which makes swimming very difficult (TN 30), and swimming against the current futile. Stormy water could move faster than other types or could have swirling and unpredictable currents, making it incredibly hard to swim (TN 35). Turbulent water is almost impossible to swim through (TN 40), and will drown characters with ease.

The temperature of water is another dangerous factor. Usually it is a step colder than the surroundings, which can be deadly in colder climates.



FEATURES: [ROLL 1d20] The great oceans are rife with industrial eyesores, wrecks and sunken ruins. Oil slicks, blow holes, mist weed, silt clouds and myth pylons are but some of the features common to watery areas.

- 1—WATER MOSS:** [MINOR OBSTACLE, -5 CLIMB, -10 SPRINT] Moss and lichen growing on the water surface slows vehicles and also makes it more slippery.
- 2—CRASH SITE:** [MAJOR OBSTACLES] Chunks of a large vehicle litter the area around a calm patch of water. The wreckage is old, comprised of pitted, rusted iron and dry, warped hardwood. It juts dangerously out of the water, so is best avoided.
- 3—TRENCH:** [MEDIUM COVER OR HIGHER GROUND] Perhaps a coral bed a couple yards high, or maybe the slump at the foot of two underwater hills.
- 4—RUINS:** [MEDIUM COVER, BREAK TN 30] Beneath the waves, sunken walls, ancient building sites, collapsing stonework and shipwrecks are filled with small, defensible positions.
- 5—JUNK PILE:** [MINOR OBSTACLE] A pile of junk has been dumped here, picked clean of all valuable objects and abandoned to be tossed and turned by the waves.
- 6—ABANDONED SHIP:** An ancient, abandoned shipwreck floats freely among the waves.
- 7—SILT CLOUD:** [VISION OBSCURED] Silt stirred up in the water creates an underwater cloud that obscures an area below the water's surface.
- 8—ANCHOR POINT:** A small, calm area gives an excellent anchor point. The waves are less choppy at the center of the area and a warm breeze soothes the anchor point.
- 9—MYTH PYLON:** [HEAVY COVER, AVERAGE OBSTACLE] A huge pylon emerges from the water here. These massive structures are arranged in a line with hundreds of yards between them. They used to support the skyways of the Era of Myth, but are now nothing more than crumbling remnants.
- 10—MIST WEED:** [VISION OBSCURED] Mist weed is a common type of seaweed that excretes a mist into the water. When there is

no wind the fog rises above the water.

11—FOG LAYER: A thin layer of fog completely obscures the skies above.

12—DISTANT SHIP: A seaborne ship in the distance belches thick black smoke into the air and blasts its fog horn.

13—INFESTATION: [MINOR OBSTACLE] A small, contained area has been infested by a swarm of water-loving insects. While mostly harmless, it is difficult ground to cross.

14—STRANGE FLORA: Bright green or blue algae can be found on the ocean floor. Some forms of this algae float to the surface during winter or summer if the water gets too hot or too cold. This illuminates an area of the water, both above and below the surface.

15—REFLECTION: [-5 STEALTH] A still and reflective quality gives one area of water a different look.

16—OIL SLICK: [MINOR OBSTACLE, -10 SWIM, FLAMMABLE (40 FLAME DIM)] Small patches of thick, sticky oil can be found floating through the oceans. Battles and shipwrecks are common enough that these can be encountered anywhere. They slow vehicles and are dangerously flammable.

15—BLOWHOLE: A rocky protrusion breaks through the surface of the water. An unusually massive blowhole in the rocks causes an eruption of water once every minute.

18—HIGH WAVES: [-5 CLIMB, -5 JUMP, -5 SPRINT, -5 SWIM] High waves rock any large vehicles in the area, making it hard to

swim or keep your footing.

19—MURK: [VISIBILITY HALVED] Soupy, grey pollution greatly reduces visibility in this area. Piloting at half speed is strongly advised.

20—GLARE: [-5 TO ATTACKS] The sun causes a blind spot. Attacks made in the sun's direction suffer a -5 penalty to hit.



WEATHER: [ROLL 1d20] The seas of the New Epoch are cold and rugged. Near coasts, the weather is rough but manageable. In the center of deeper, more distant oceans, the winds, rain and waves are powerful and unrelenting.

WEATHER	SPRING	SUMMER	AUTUMN	WINTER
Fine	1-5	1-7	1-6	1-2
Clouds	6-9	8-10	7-11	3-7
Fog	10-11	11	12-14	8-11
Rain	12-13	12	15-17	12-14
Wind	14-19	13-19	18-19	15-18
Snow	—	—	—	19
Storm	20	20	20	20
Temperature	Cold	Comfortable	Cold	Freezing

WEATHER

Weather is perhaps the most overlooked aspect of journeying. These rules are optional and you can feel free to ignore them—in fact, we recommend that beginners do, as it reduces the complexity of the game. Weather only becomes important when you start buying vehicles so you can hold off if you're still learning the game. However, it is worth considering before you set off on a long journey because it can hold up an expedition for weeks.

Weather in the New Epoch doesn't follow all the rules of a globe. The world gears are flat, with elemental and ethereal spokes moving around the edges causing seasons to happen. The strongest weather is toward the teeth of the gear and the mildest weather is near the pin. In fact, Nexus (center of the world plate) has very little seasonal weather change all 360 days of the year which is why the pollution never seems to leave. The elemental gears are the same season all year round and the outer ring has a completely different 600 day yearly cycle. The ethereal spokes and minor plate are different again with their own phases of magical disturbance. It's all part of a complex system that makes the divine mechanism keep turning.

Many environments not listed here have subtle changes in their seasonal weather, such as aridity and humidity in dungeons and caverns. For the most part, the weather provided in this chapter gives details for the above ground weather only. Other areas don't have quite so obvious changes and their seasonal effects can be considered negligible.

HOW TO DETERMINE WEATHER: If weather was totally random, it just wouldn't be believable. The GM can determine the weather by rolling a few d20s and consulting the weather table under that type of terrain, but it still requires improvisation to work it into a scene.

- ✦ **SEVERITY:** The GM decides upon the severity of the weather. For example, he chooses whether the fog is thin, thick or impenetrable. The severity of the weather can't be totally randomized.
- ✦ **SEASONS:** Seasons on the major plate, the minor plate and rim are caused by proximity to the elemental and ethereal spokes that roll around them. For the core rules, only the major plate is of consequence to us. Seasons on this world gear carry a general weather trend, but not daily weather effects.
- ✦ **REGIONS:** There are three major regions in the major plate: the heartlands, the crownlands and the borderlands. Even when using the weather tables under the appropriate terrain, you may still need to modify your results (move them one step up or down) to suit your current location.

In the heartlands, the weather is mild and less likely to be severe because it is so far from the elemental spokes. In the crownlands the weather is hotter in the lowlands and colder in high altitudes. In the borderlands you can encounter the most extreme forms of weather because these climes are close to the elemental spokes.

- ✦ **DURATION:** Usually a weather trend lasts for a day or two, but it doesn't have to. It can subside after a few hours, go on and off all day, or even continue for up to a week (the GMs decision).

CLOUDS

NAVIGATE TN 10 / SPEED × 1

Clouds of different types form in each season due to precipitation, temperature, winds and also pollution. While smoke or steam clouds are not true weather effects, they are common in huge cities and industrial areas.

FOG

NAVIGATE TN 20 / SPEED × ¾

Whether in the form of a low-lying cloud or a mist rising from the ground, fog obscures vision and contributes to very difficult navigation checks. Draug earsight, hobgoblin scent and the tremorsense of other creatures are not affected by fog—they can use these types of vision unobscured up to their maximum range.

FOG: [½ VISION RANGE] Creatures have their vision range halved. Those with earsight, scent or tremorsense vision are immune to this.

RAIN

NAVIGATE TN 20 / SPEED × ¾

Rain frequently slows or halts travel and makes it virtually impossible to navigate from one spot to another. Most rain is light enough to be ignored—small showers and short rains won't slow or hinder you. When rain is heavy enough to be of consequence, it is listed here.

RAIN: [½ VISION RANGE] Heavy rain reduces visibility ranges by half, even for draug because the noisy patter of raindrops baffles their hearing. Rain on the ground can make some surfaces very slippery (−2 on Climb, Heave, Jump and Sprint checks).

- ✦ **HAIL:** [½ VISION RANGE, 1 SPECIAL / ROUND] Hail causes 1 special damage per round in addition to the effects of the rain noted above.

SNOW

NAVIGATE TN 30 / SPEED × ½

Snow can obscure vision and impose speed penalties on those caught in it. Snow usually goes hand in hand with cold weather, sleet and strong wind. When snow falls heavily enough, travelers are advised to remain indoors, take cover from the cold (for defense and armor bonuses) and postpone journeys.

SNOW: [½ VISION RANGE, OBSTACLES] Heavy snow restricts visibility as fog does. A day of heavy snow leaves a deep layer on the ground. Trudging through such snow is like moving through a minor obstacle.

- ✦ **SLEET:** [1 SPECIAL / ROUND] A driving wind can turn snow into sleet, causing 1 special damage per round in addition to the effects of the snow noted above.

STORMS

NAVIGATE TN 40 / SPEED $\times \frac{1}{4}$

There are four types of storm on the major plate, each coming from one of the elemental spokes during its high season: lightning storms in spring; firestorms in summer; dust storms in autumn and snowstorms in winter. Most heartland areas suffer none of these storms, but they are common in the borderlands. Storms are a combination of other weather effects, usually cold, heat, rain, snow and wind. They last for a few hours before giving way to less severe weather.

If a storm is particularly dangerous, adventurers should postpone travel and take cover (for defense and armor bonuses) so that they won't continuously take damage every round. The special damage caused by these extreme weather effects penetrates all kinds of armor, so they need to get inside, or be completely shielded from the storm.

- **DUST STORM:** [$\frac{1}{2}$ VISION RANGE, 1 SPECIAL ROUND] The most powerful and dangerous type of autumn weather is a dust storm. It scours buildings, tears flesh from the bone and obscures vision like fog.
- **FIRE STORM:** [$\frac{1}{2}$ VISION RANGE, 1 SPECIAL ROUND] Fire storms the most powerful and dangerous type of summer weather, usually experienced only in arid borderlands.
- **LIGHTNING STORM:** [$\frac{1}{2}$ VISION RANGE, 1 SPECIAL ROUND] A lightning storm brings torrential rain and winds during the spring. The lightning isn't a hazard unless one stands upon hilltops or building spires.
- **ICE STORM:** [$\frac{1}{2}$ VISION RANGE, 1 SPECIAL ROUND] Bitterly cold, very windy and laden with snow, an ice storm drives people indoors for hours.

COVER/SHELTER: [COVER NEGATES EFFECTS] Taking cover from a storm reduces both the damage inflicted by a storm. Resting in light, medium or heavy cover reduces the damage to zero.

When you get behind cover, you may be able to ignore the penalties of the storm. Light cover negates the penalties of a squall.

WINDS

NAVIGATE TN 20 / SPEED $\times \frac{1}{4}$

Winds in the world of the New Epoch are blustery, rarely keeping to a single direction of a fixed speed. They typically spray in all different directions over a 90–180° arc. Constant, directional winds don't count as weather effects at all, because pilots, riders or navigators can compensate for them.

WINDS: [–2 RANGED ATTACKS] Strong winds can break tree branches off, cause minor damage to buildings and force small flying creatures to the ground. Medium cover negates the penalties of a storm. Heavy cover negates the penalties of a tempest.

These ranged penalties are applied to any weapons that use slow or large projectiles, but not small firearms or magical rays.

TEMPERATURE

DOESN'T AFFECT NAVIGATION OR SPEED

The temperature of the weather is determined by a combination of winds, air pressure, elemental seasons, proximity to an ocean or desert and many other factors. You could encounter extreme cold even in the summer, as long as you climbed high enough. In the tropical low altitudes of the borderlands, high air pressure could make it hot even in late autumn or early spring.

Cold or heat slowly saps your character's health and steam, forcing you to rest more often in order to replenish your stamina. The best way to survive these temperatures is to wear appropriate clothes and keep in the shade or shelter. When rest is required, you need to find cover that will provide sufficient armor bonuses to cancel out the damage of the weather.

These are average temperatures, so you can expect it to be colder during the night, and maybe even hotter during the day. Icy winter nights at high altitude can easily reach –20° Fahrenheit or colder.

ICY: [1 SPECIAL / ROUND] Icy cold is about 0° Fahrenheit (–18° Celsius). Characters take 1 point of special damage every round. There is no greater level of cold.

VERY COLD: [1 SPECIAL / MINUTE] Freezing weather is about 30° Fahrenheit (–1° Celsius), just enough to freeze still water but not enough to effect running water. This weather causes 1 point of special damage each minute.

COMFORTABLE: [NONE] A nice average temperature, warm during day and cool at night, with temperatures around 60° Fahrenheit (16° Celsius).

VERY HOT: [1 SPECIAL / MINUTE] Hot weather is about 90° Fahrenheit (32° Celsius). This temperature causes fatigue, dealing 1 special damage per minute.

FIERY: [1 SPECIAL / ROUND] Extreme fiery weather is about 120° Fahrenheit (49° Celsius). Characters take 1 point of special damage every round.



4: EXPLORE



EXPLORE

TRESPASS, INFILTRATION AND DELVING INTO THE UNKNOWN DEPTHS ARE CENTRAL TO THE PROFESSION OF ADVENTURING. THE THRILL OF EXPLORATION, DISCOVERY AND UNCOVERING TREASURES IS SOMETHING THAT A DUNGEON DELVER LIVES FOR.

Exploring a dangerous environment is one of the main tasks of the adventurer. It is a dangerous, slow type of exploration where the progress is not measured by the day, but by the room. Where overland explorers consider encounters, traps, pitfalls, obstacles and injuries a possibility, in an exploration environment they are a certainty.

OVERVIEW

Exploration isn't complicated, but there are a number of things you ought to know before delving into the deep. Brief overviews of the topics covered in this chapter are given below.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY: Read the transcript from one of the developers exploratory test sessions to get an idea of how exploration is played out. It also gives good advice for GMs and players on how to speed up and share the tasks involved in exploration.

EXPLORATION: When exploring a detailed environment, obstacles can crop up such as doors, chasms, locks, water, traps, puzzles and pitfalls. This section describes what it's like to deal with these common obstacles and details any rules that go with them.

ORGANIZATION: Making accurate maps requires the skills of a lantern bearer and a cartographer working together. In addition, the party needs a sentry to be on the lookout for enemies. Establishing a party marching order with these things in mind gives a strategic advantage right from the first round of action.

ENVIRONMENTS: The environments that are regularly explored in the New Epoch: catacombs, caverns, dungeons, gear grottos, labyrinths, mines, the netherdeep, ruins (forgotten, myth and residuum), warrens, water caves and world arteries.

Details about the construction, light, traps, doors, walls and other features are given here to let adventurers prepare ahead. This is not special GM knowledge—everyone in the adventuring trade knows about the types of ruins and dungeons they might encounter.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY: PART 4

After passing through the sundered gates to the ruins of Joza, the party ventures deeper. They are searching for a structure called the Toln, described as a large domed structure. However, the ruins are larger than they thought and finding this structure proves challenging.

✦ VOYL MAPS THE AREA AND ACTS AS THE TACTICIAN. JACINTH SCOUTS AHEAD WHENEVER THEY SUSPECT ENEMIES, TRAPS OR SECRETS TO BE HIDDEN. OZURNIG AND NOJANTU PROTECT THEM, TAKING TURNS AT GUARDING THE LEAD AND THE REAR.

DAVE: [GM] You follow a road of fallen columns and rubble, leading to another open courtyard of about ten-by-ten yards. This one is covered in creeping vines and moss. Blinking fireflies twinkle in the dark corners of the yard and you get the feeling you're being watched.

There are two exits apart from the one you just entered through. A leaning stone arch to the left side of the entrance leads down to into darkness. The other exit climbs several flights of stairs on the right.

✦ VOYL SKETCHES THE NEW AREA ONTO THE MAP AND DAVE NODS—HE GOT THE MEASUREMENTS CLOSE ENOUGH IN HIS DRAWING.

GRANT: [NOJANTU] "Are we hopelessly lost?"

ANDREW: [VOYL] "Quiet! I'm thinking."

LAUREN: [OZURNIG] "We should explore that underground area. Maybe there are dwarven roads underneath that will lead to the Toln." I'd like to peer into the dark entrance.

DAVE: [GM] THWACK! As you approach the sinister arch, arrows shoot out from the darker corners of the courtyard. They attack you, Ozurnig.

✦ DAVE ROLLS THE TRAP ATTACK ON OZURNIG, HE ROLLS A 17, ADDS THE TRAPS ATTACK BONUS OF +9 AND SCORES A TOTAL OF 26. IT EASILY BEATS OZURNIG'S DEX DEFENSE OF 16. OZURNIG TAKES DAMAGE.

THE TRAP'S BASE DAMAGE IS 15 PHYSICAL, BUT THE CHECK ADDS AND EXTRA +10 DAMAGE TO THAT.

DAVE: [GM] Old iron barbed arrowheads dig into your armor. You take 25 Physical damage.

LAUREN: [OZURNIG] Ouch! That means 11 points gets through my armor.

VANESSA: [JACINTH] "Stand back everyone." (Jacinth gestures to the group) "Professional help has arrived."

✦ VANESSA ROLLS A SEARCH SKILL CHECK AND SCORES A TOTAL OF 21. SHE BEATS THE TN FOR TWO TRAPS IN THE SEARCH AREA.

DAVE: [GM] In addition to the obvious arrow trap, you discover a nasty blade trap which lies directly in the arch. It has been concealed behind the supports.

✦ VOYL UPDATES HIS MAP TO INCLUDE A TRAP TRIGGER OVER THE AREA.

VANESSA: [JACINTH] (Satisfied) "Okay, we have a treasure stash somewhere down there. It's trapped and nobody has been here for a long time. That means there's something worthwhile in the hole, wherever that leads."

GRANT: [NOJANTU] (Annoyed) "Disarm it already, girl. Then we can investigate the hole."

ANDREW: [VOYL] "Trapped and dangerous, now you're dreaming up some hidden treasure!? Did you leave your sensibilities back in

Locke? It's a wild goose chase into certain peril. The Toln is in the opposite direction." (Andrew points toward the other exit)

LAUREN: [OZURNIG] "Wait a minute. I think it's worth a quick delve. The trap does not guarantee any treasure to be found, but our location certainly increases the chances."

VANESSA: [JACINTH] "Exactly! This is an opportunity to get some of those spoils Gaius promised us. It's not going to happen by accident—we have to go and claim it!" (And further scowls) "I'm not going home empty handed."

GRANT: [NOJANTU] "I'm with them. Quit your whining and light the lantern. I thought draug liked the underground?"

ANDREW: [VOYL] (Andrew folds his arms) "Fine, then! It seems I'm out-voted. Well then Jacinth, lead the way to our deaths then. I'll be standing at a safe distance in the rear."

✦ VANESSA ROLLS HER TRAPS SKILL CHECK AND SCORES A TOTAL OF 23. SHE SUCCEEDS.

DAVE: [GM] You expertly disarm the crude trap. The way is clear.

VANESSA: [JACINTH] "Ozurnig, you lead. Nojantu get behind. Lets haul up some electrum spoils! We need to prove sourpuss wrong and hit the motherload!" (Vanessa laughs, Andrew groans and mumbles)

LAUREN: [OZURNIG] Right then, I'll go first. I don't need a light down there. Voyl, you're at the back so you get the lantern out.

✦ THEY MAKE A QUICK NOTE OF THE NEW PARTY FORMATION AND THEN MOVE DOWN THE DARK ENTRANCE TO THE UNDERGROUND. THIS IS NOT A PLANNED AREA—IT'S A STANDARD RESIDUUM RUIN LIKE ANY OTHER. DAVE LOOKS UP THE NOTES ON THESE RUINS IN THE MASTER'S CODEx. HE USES THE RANDOM DUNGEON SYSTEM TO DETERMINE WHAT THE ROOM IS, THEN READS THAT ENTRY TO THE PLAYERS.

DAVE: [GM] You move cautiously down the stairs and come to a dark, empty room. The room is about 8 yards long and 4 yards wide. Dust has settled in a thick layer on the floor. Rusty iron doors fill the stone arch doorways to the right, left and center.

GRANT: [NOJANTU] How do the doors open?

DAVE: [GM] You investigate one of the doors. They seem to be rusted shut, flaking and crumbling. Whatever mechanism used to open them perished long ago.

LAUREN: [OZURNIG] I'll bash this one open first. Get ready in case anything comes out.

✦ LAUREN ROLLS HER BREAK CHECK AND SUCCEEDS. DAVE ROLLS FOR ANOTHER RANDOM ROOM AND CHECKS THE MASTER CODEx. THEN HE DESCRIBES THE RESULT.

DAVE: [GM] The iron doors creaks and buckles, then gives way with a screeching wail. CLANG! It rings as it hits the stony floor in the room beyond.

Then, the sound of a long rasping breath can be heard, and the sliding of metal against metal. A chill comes over each of you, like a sudden hoarfrost on an early winter's night.

Appearing in the doorway before you is a spectral warrior, dressed from head to toe in gleaming armor and carrying a savage, grimy looking flail. It screams, revealing rows of sharp boney teeth and a desire to destroy those that disturb it.

ANDREW: [VOYL] (The creature needs no other introduction. Andrew recognizes it immediately) "A wraith! What did I say about this place?"

DAVE: [GM] The wraith is upon you. Combat begins! Ozurnig, determine the order of turns...

PLAYER TIPS

Survival doesn't just depend on your character's combat statistics. The way you play your character, the precautions you take and the ideas you come up with will help you win the day.

1. **WAIT, LISTEN:** When exploring a dangerous environment, always listen carefully to the GM's description of each room. He or she may leave clues for smart players to use to their advantage.
2. **LIGHT THE WAY:** Make sure your party has a stalwart and reliable lantern bearer and sentry. Ambushes can devastate your group. If you are plunged into darkness, it may be the end of you all.
3. **MAP CAREFULLY:** Draw a careful map of what you see. When you need to backtrack in a hurry, you'll want to remember the way quickly, step around any traps you've found and avoid a wrong turn.
4. **MARCHING ORDER:** Nominate your party marching order with care. You may need to change it to protect the weak or wounded.
5. **TREAD LIGHTLY:** When there is time to spare, take every precaution: search for traps when you suspect them, consider puzzles carefully before making your move and observe your enemy's tactics to learn about them.

MASTER TIPS

Exploration is an art that GMs must also hone. A great roleplaying session doesn't come about by chance. It's the product of a skilled GM, active players and good preparation...

1. **DDD:** Dimensions, description, denizens. That's the order of the information given when the players enter a new room. Dimensions come first so the cartographer (if any) can update their sketch. A description of the room comes second so players can visualize the scene and note points of interest. The creatures in a room are always given last because this triggers the start of a combat.
2. **ROOM NUMBERS:** Keep a table of random room numbers, random dressing numbers and any other numbered features in the room (traps, doors, creatures, treasures, locks, etc.). Have the players record the room number on their map if necessary.
3. **NOMINATE:** Name one player the cartographer—he sketches the map and updates it as the players uncover more. Nominate another player the ordinator, who jots down the reflex scores of everyone when an action sequence begins. Give another player the title adjudicator and ask them to check the rules whenever it comes into question.
4. **IN ROLE:** Sometimes it's good to have party tag-along NPCs give some of the information to the players instead of just reading it out aloud from the descriptions—"Look! There's a chest beneath that pile of rubble," says Masden, peering into the darkness. Or "Harpies! Ready your weapons!" Zylph cries as three swooping cronies dive from above.
5. **KEEP IT SECRET:** Don't give information away for free. Make the players search every corner, use lore checks or investigate when they don't have all the answers. Keep the GM's information locked up tight!

EXPLORATION

The obstacles and challenges of explorations are as varied as the terrain. However, some features are common to many environments so have received special mention in the sections that follow.

TIME & MOVEMENT

Moving through an explorative environment doesn't require exact measurement. Usually, the party moves as a group and each individual's Speed is irrelevant. Only combat measures the passing of rounds. You don't need to take turns, you do whatever you feel by telling the GM whenever you like. If two people want to do something at the same time, they do it together.

DOORS

When exploring man-made dungeons and buildings, you'll often be posed with the problem of getting through doors that are locked, stuck, broken or otherwise sealed shut.

STUCK DOORS: [BREAK SKILL] Eventually, the weather and environment will wear away at man-made things—wood warps, iron rusts and stone crumbles. Doors like this end up getting stuck. A Break skill check can offer passage through a door that has become stuck, though it will need to be repaired if you want to close it again.

HEAVY DOORS: [HEAVE SKILL] Stone blockages, massive gates, iron portcullises and vault-like gear doors are examples of doors that are immensely heavy. These portals are usually operated by a mechanism, and when that mechanism fails, only a Heave check can bypass them.

HINGED DOORS: [REPAIR SKILL] Some doors can be removed with a Repair check if their hinges are exposed. However, in any defensible structure, door hinges are nested into the walls (not exposed).

LOCKED DOORS: [THIEVERY SKILL] A successful Thievery check can unlock a door, leaving no trace of interference.

SECRET DOORS: [SEARCH SKILL] Hidden and secret doors have a Search TN that you need to beat in order to find it. Of course, the door itself may also be locked, stuck or closed in some other manner.

TRAPDOORS: Trapdoors in the floor will pose no challenge. Trapdoors in the ceiling, however, are problematic. If it is several yards up, nothing short of a ladder or levitation can access it. Naturally, the ladder or rope is always at the top, lowered down to those below when permission to enter is granted.

DESTROYING DOORS: When all else fails, destroying a door completely may be an option. Destroying a door takes time and is often very noisy. The residents of an environment will know what you're doing long before the last hammer blow.

Bladed weapons other than axes, firearms and other projectile

weapons are useless against structural features—the door will resist or damage such a weapon. Axes, and bludgeoning weapons like scepters and hammers, are ideal for the task. Fire is effective against wood if it is dry enough. Acid is effective against metal if it is pure enough.

IGNORING DOORS: Doors can also be circumvented by the use of certain abilities. However, they may not allow everyone in your group to pass through.

LOCKS



If there's something valuable inside it, or something dangerous behind it, expect it to be locked. Think about why something is locked before you try to open it; it's not always to prevent something getting in as much as something getting out...



OUTER LOCK: [THIEVERY OR BREAK SKILL] These locks are attached to a ring or hook, and hang from the locked object like a padlock.

An outer lock can be removed forcibly if needed. Use your Break skill against the TN of the lock.

EMBEDDED LOCK: [THIEVERY SKILL] A typical lock fitted into a door, chest, window or other portal. This type of lock can't be ripped off without first destroying the object it is embedded in.

COMBINATION LOCK: [THIEVERY OR LORE SKILL] Combination locks are the types you find on safe boxes, mechanical doors or secure lockers. These can be opened by an experienced thief, but stealing the combination is also an option. Tinker locksmiths make fine combination locks with turning knobs, levers and buttons all playing a part in the combination.

A Lore check may be able to crack the combination by a process of elimination. This takes ten times longer than trying to pick the lock normally. When the time is up, you make a Lore check against the lock TN to see if you were successful.

DWARVEN LOCK: [THIEVERY SKILL *] Dwarven locks are the final word in security—they are the toughest type to crack, found only on armored doors, bank safes and vault portals. A dwarven key has three unique key-pins attached to a single mechanism which synchronously turns each at a calculated rate.

A dwarven lock employs counter tampering measures when intruders probe it—it gets even harder to open. Furthermore, persistent tampering causes the lock to clamp shut permanently, so it must be reset by a secret method known only to the locksmith himself.

* Dwarven locks require three successful Thievery checks to open. Add an additional +10 to the lock's TN for every failed lock picking attempt. When the master key opens the lock, the TN resets to its original value.

TRAPS



Traps are something that you have to expect when you're walking into a populated den of evil. The defenses of your enemies are very effective at weakening and killing off unwary adventurers.



HOW TRAPS WORK: To set a trap, you need to make a Traps skill check. Traps are difficult to spot once set and won't be noticed by

accident.

When a creature crosses a trap's trigger (a single square in Tactical Combat or an equivalent size in Freestyle Combat), it activates and attacks as an interrupt action. The only way to prevent this is by using your Search skill to find the trap and your Traps skill to disarm it.

Failed disarm checks cause traps to activate immediately. You may wish to avoid traps rather than tamper with them and risk injury. The trap's attack bonus, the difficulty for disarming and the target number for setting a trap all come from the same number—the trap's rating.



TRIGGERING A TRAP: If a creature crosses the trigger of a trap, it immediately activates as an interrupt action. A trap attack is like a character ability. It has an area or target, an attack check (against Dex, Guts or Wits) and some sort of damage or effect.

SETTING A TRAP: [TRAPS SKILL] It takes a lot of time to rig a good trap. You need to think about where you will lay the triggers, how the trap attacks and what kind of area to cover. See the Equipment Codex for the options on traps.

FINDING A TRAP: [SEARCH SKILL] To find a trap, you have to use the Search skill. It would take forever to search every room. You just have to search when you have a hunch that a trap could be present—thin corridors, tempting lures, treasure chests and secure doors are your typical hotspots.

DISARMING A TRAP: [TRAPS SKILL] Disarming a trap is slow, difficult and requires patience. However, it is something that you can work together on. Try to take advantage of teamwork when disarming a trap. The price for failure is quite severe, as the trap immediately activates as if triggered.

MAPPING



Mapping your exploration is very important, especially if you are clearing the way for others or planning on a return trip. Adventuring companies and factions employ historians, cartographers and annalists to keep written records of their deeds.

Even if you prefer the freestyle type of play, you'll still want to make some note of where you've been and where you're going.



STANDARDIZED CARTOGRAPHY: Adventurers of the New Epoch agree upon some standard map symbols. These are easy to draw, different enough to be distinguished and save on ink.

Factions and companies even supply logbooks to their members with a digrammatic index of these symbols. One such example is presented here for reference. Use this in your own maps, or refer to it whenever you have trouble identifying a feature on a map.

LIGHT



Light is important for making use of eyesight, the clearest and best type of vision. Without light, it is impossible to make maps no matter what type of vision you are capable of. One member of the adventuring group must take on the responsibility of lantern bearer.



LIGHT SHAPE & DISTANCE: Each light source has an Aura of light, a Cone of light or a Lance (beam) of light. The distance of a light source determines how far you can see.

Cones, Auras or Lances are exactly the same shape as the

ability areas of the same name. You can check these shapes by looking at Chapter 5: Action.

BRIGHT ILLUMINATION: Bright illumination is needed for writing, reading, mapping, searching, appraisal or anything that requires looking at detail. If the light is dim, you can't do any of these.

DIM ILLUMINATION: Dim illumination is good enough for combat, climbing, sneaking, swimming, breaking, heaving or typical movement. You don't need to use your eyes for these tasks, so the best lighting is not important.

VISION



Vision is important to consider when exploring a dark environment. Elves, dwarves and greenskins are better equipped to deal with subterranean, lightless places. Humans and halflings must rely on

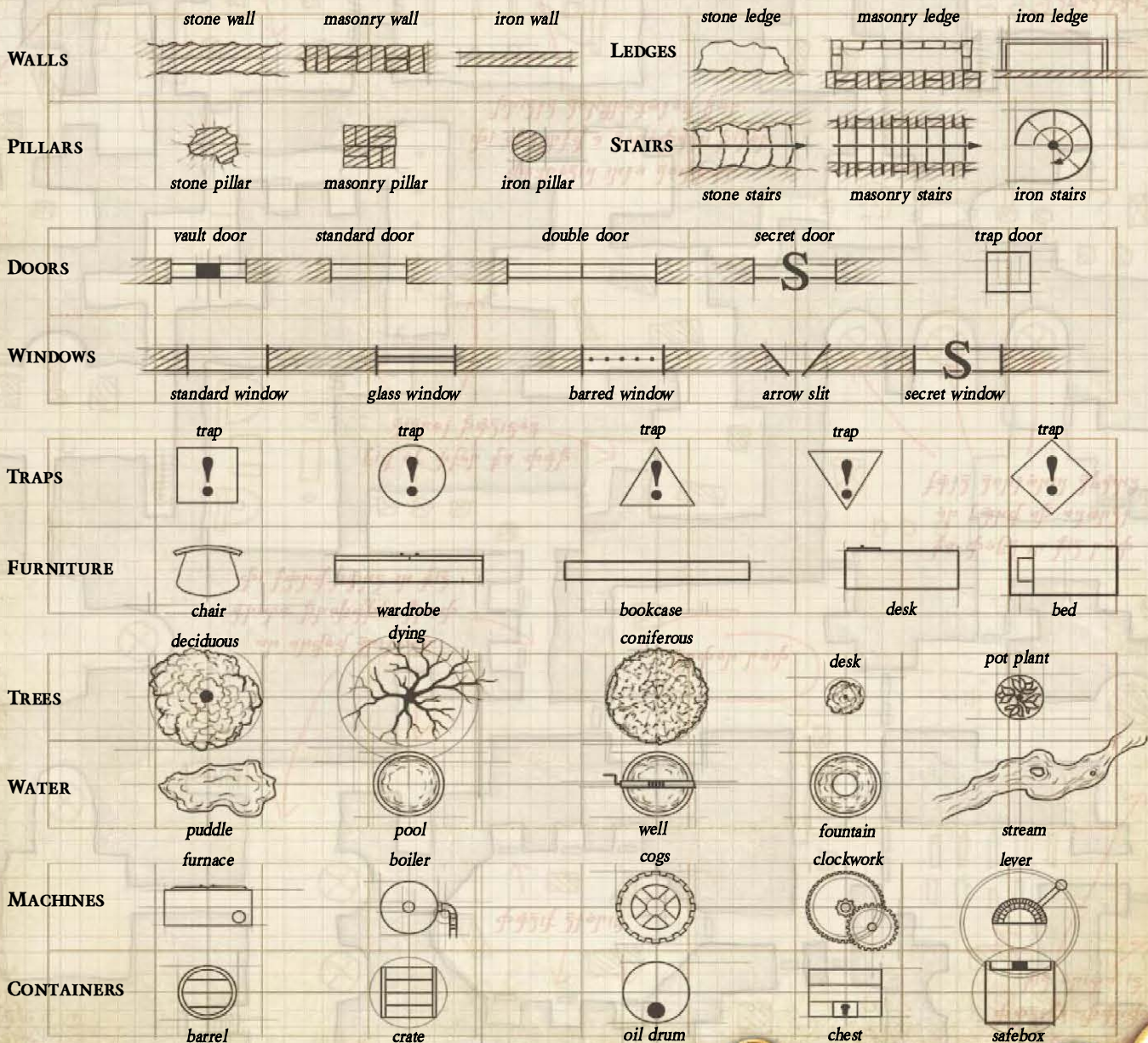
torches and lanterns to light their way.

There are no skill checks to determine if you can see, hear or smell something. If there is something there to see, hear or smell you perceive it automatically if you have that type of vision. However, if someone wants to elude your perception, they will make a wits attack upon you.



EYESIGHT: Normal vision could be one, two or three times as far as your light source would allow. The advantage of eyesight is that it can perceive all things that light touches with great clarity. However, without light, it cannot perceive anything at all.

EARSIGHT: Highly developed, sensitive hearing can be used as a type of vision. The advantages of this type of vision are many. It pierces through any obscuring gasses, works irrespective of blinding light or deep darkness and is not fooled by non-tactile illusions. However, this type of vision cannot perceive color, cannot see into water or through glass, and can't perceive incorporeal creatures



such as ghosts or shadows. Furthermore, it cannot distinguish the words on a page, the motif on a flag, nor what a painting looks like—it can perceive only the shape and texture of such objects.

DARKSIGHT: Vision that perceives the infrared and/or ultraviolet spectrum of light. This can reveal heat signatures and differences in temperature with very fine detail. This type of vision can be used without any light source, even in absolute darkness but cannot perceive color.

SHARP SCENT: A sense that distinguishes people, objects and other things via their smell. This type of vision is very good at recognizing illusions, disguises and false apparitions that don't have the right smell. It can also recognize the smell of someone up to 1 hour after they have gone. However, it is very short range, can't make out color, cannot be used to read or see pictures, and it cannot penetrate through water or glass.

TREMORSENSE: The ability to sense tiny vibrations that travel through the ground, the walls or any other solids. This type of perception penetrates through any solids, walls, floors or ceilings and can hear at maximum range at all times. However, this type of vision can only perceive weight and vague shape, not color nor pattern. Furthermore, any creature that hovers, doesn't touch the ground, or has no physical body is invisible to this sense.

HAZARDS

There are other natural hazards that you need to watch out for, such as drowning, starvation and diseases. Some of these dangers are noted here. Use these examples as a starting point whenever you have a hazard that is not listed—choose the most similar danger here or modify as necessary.

CRUSHING: Things falling from above can be fatal. Many such attacks require an appropriate skill check (Heave versus Dex to push a boulder off a ledge onto someone, Jump versus Dex to land on an enemy, etc.). A small rock that falls a long way is often just as dangerous as a large rock that falls a few yards. Armor reduces the damage.

PHYSICAL DAMAGE = OBJECT SIZE × YARDS FALLEN
DAMAGE MAXES OUT AT 10 YARDS
SOFT COLLISION = HALF DAMAGE

A soft collision is anything that can absorb and diffuse a significant amount of momentum—water, deep mud, a thick hedgerow, etc.

WATER: Sometimes you have to get your feet wet. Making a successful swim check allows you to move half your speed through water for a full minute without further checks. Failing a check means you don't move. Failing on a retry means you go underwater.

HOLD BREATH = 5 ROUNDS
ON THE 6TH ROUND YOU DROWN
REVIVE CHARACTER = MINUTE ACTION

All characters can hold their breath for 5 rounds. After that time, you drown. A drowned character can be revived if they are rescued within three minutes. Reviving a drowned character is a minute action and doesn't require a skill check of any sort.

PROJECTILE UNDERWATER ATTACKS = IMPOSSIBLE
ALL OTHER UNDERWATER ATTACKS = -5 CHECK PENALTY

Combat in water also slows the character's attacks, causing a penalty to all attacks and making ranged projectile attacks impossible.

FALLING: Characters who slip and fall may be subject to physical damage if they land on a hard surface. You roll one damage die for each yard of the fall, adding your size modifier to or subtracting it from each die (to a minimum of zero damage for each die). Literally, the bigger they are the harder they fall. Armor reduces the damage.

PHYSICAL DAMAGE = $(5 + \text{Size}) \times \text{YARDS FALLEN}$
SOFT LANDING = HALF DAMAGE

A soft landing is anything that can absorb and diffuse a significant amount of momentum—water, deep mud, a thick hedgerow, etc.

FIRE: Every round of exposure to intense heat or open flames causes flame damage each round. If you catch on fire, it takes a long utility action to smother the flames. Special damage ignores armor.

NEAR HEAT SOURCE = 3 SPECIAL DAMAGE PER ROUND
CATCH ON FIRE = 10 SPECIAL DAMAGE PER ROUND
SMOTHER FLAMES = LONG UTILITY ACTION

GAS: The buildup of gas pockets underground is common. This is also true in foundries, forges and factories that lie above ground. Modern structures have ventilation systems but older ones may be blocked or simply perished with age.

OXYGEN: If torchlight dims unexpectedly, there may be a shortage of oxygen. Where there is a lack of oxygen, characters immediately become beaten after 1 minute with no attack roll necessary. Where there the levels of oxygen are fatally low, 1 minute causes death.

PROVISIONS

Food and water should be the first thing you consider when setting up camp. While this is something you can search for in the wilderness, the food and water sources in an explorative environment could be hard to find, or simply not present at all.

FOOD: A person has to eat at least the equivalent of two meals per day to stay fed (barely). Larger characters eat more and smaller characters eat less. Appetite is mostly determined by size.

After 1 week without food, characters are Beaten and can't remove the status effect until they get something to eat. After 1 month of starvation, you die.

A hearty meal, full Health and full Steam are required to end the Beaten status effect.

WATER: Characters might find themselves without water during their travels. In order to stay hydrated, a person must drink roughly several pints of water per day (a gallon of water will last a few days).

After 3 days without water, you are Beaten and can't remove the status effect until your thirst is quenched. After 1 week without water, you die.

A long drink of water, full Health and full Steam are required to end the Beaten status effect.

DRESDIN'S DELVE

A DEFINITIVE GUIDEBOOK TO EXPLORATION HAZARDS



Dresdin Wyrns, a retired adventurer from the city state of Delton made his fortune not by discovering treasure in Myth ruins in the borderlands, but by selling books.

His popular, albeit rather cynical, guide to adventuring practices has saved the lives of many adventurers with its pessimistic yet cautious outlook. Every guild, company and faction seems to own a copy or two and usually several of Wyrns' later works, which are more light-hearted.

Rumor has it that an incredible string of misfortunes inspired writing this best-seller, Dresdin's Delve. It is said that Mr. Wyrns is the only one who survived the ordeal.



Excerpts from the book have some good advice, noted below.

Page 10, on mapping:

"...and thus, he who always turns left at a junction knows how to flee quickly by backtracking only with right turns."

When dealing with gear grottos that turn and change as you explore, flight from peril begets death. Stand your ground..."

Page 23, on rooms:

"...fear the quiet room, avoid the dusty empty one, expect resistance but no surprises in the dirty or noisy one. Where you turn your back on a room without investigation, double the rear guard..."

Page 41, on corridors:

"...corridors that bottleneck traffic lead to ambushes and those that divert traffic will present choices of which only one is safe. All others lead to pitfalls and no good. Traps are most common at the beginning of a corridor, or at two-thirds of the corridor's length where search attempts start to get sloppy."

A corridor that leads to a dead end is a safe one, or conceals a secret door..."

Page 64, on floors:

"...a clean floor is frequented by its protectors—those who resent trespass; a dirty floor is where traps lie in wait—the local inhabitants don't walk nor clean that space; a recent massacre or battleground is relatively safe—though only for a week or so before disease begins to fester; bone strewn floors are candy for necromancers—smash them with stones or hammers before the dead rise."

Certainly, the only safe ground is directly beneath the feet of those native to these parts..."

Page 96, on ceilings:

"...high ceilings are likely to drop things, or conceal creatures that like to drop things. Though in retrospect, low ceilings are worse as bumps and back pains are even more common..."

Page 132, on walls:

"...if a wall is suspected to be dangerous (trapped, alive or otherwise), liberal use of explosives can neutralize the threat..."

Page 140, on doors:

"...and before you consider burning it, think about the air you breathe first. Acid in the keyhole is foolish, acid on the hinges is better. Where doors are stone, they won't have moved in centuries. Leave them that way."

Some amount of success has been experienced by simply knocking—Family knock. Friends knock. Enemies and infiltrators tamper with locks and break things..."

Page 160, on chests:

"...he who rushes to claim treasure gets two things very quickly: riches and death. When approaching a locked chest, operate from behind the trunk. Trap makers predated 200 NE seldom considered opening a chest from behind..."

Page 178, on water:

"...if it's dark, don't go in it. Don't even go near it. If you can see something sparkling at the bottom, ignore it. That sparkle is a lure for fools. Nine out of ten times, dark pools spell death. Leave swimming to the fishes and stay on dry land."

If it's well lit and shallow enough to wade through, you can take your chances."

But, if it's dark and murky, it conceals a predator. If you really must go in, lob grenades into it first and draw out the dangers that lurk beneath. Better yet, electrocute the water several times before you jump into it..."

Page 203, on light:

"...some types of creatures resent light, or are smart enough to realize the explorer's dependence on it. Each should carry a flare or chem-light for such a situation..."

Page 219, on fire:

"...maniacal geniuses love a showdown over a pit of acid or fire. They are gamblers: the higher the stakes, the more enjoyment they get."

Whenever fire comes from an opening, throw an iron door over it, or disable the gas leaks first. Some adventurers think they can time their jump just right. I think not..."

Page 235, on pits:

"...then, after aiding your companion in climbing out, you are still posed with the problem of getting over it. Leaping is rather dramatic and accident prone, especially where the distance is greater than 5 yards. Consider spiking the walls and climbing across, or laying a long beam across it..."

Page 255, on magical wards:

"...visible magical warding is intended visible for one of three reasons: the first, it is a facade; the second, because the ward is so effective it needn't be concealed; the third, arrogance or advertising on the ward-maker's part..."

ORGANIZATION

It's handy to have an already established party marching order prepared for when the unexpected happens. Who's the last one in the line when the enemy ambushes from behind? Who's at the front when the enemy comes charging down the corridor? Who's at the center when the pit trap triggers?

ARCANIST: An arcanist favors the middle or rear of the party depending on what disciplines and abilities he has to hurl at his enemies. He needs protection against combat tanks so seldom takes the front line, and some enemies will try to target him to be rid of his deadly magics. If necessary, he can rearrange his allies and erect defensive barriers to protect himself against his enemies.

BARD: The bard is best in the center of the party, because he needs the versatility to move in and out of combat. Bards do well as leaders and supporters and are sturdy combatants too. They have powerful assist abilities that aid the melee combatants in the party.

BERSERKER: The front line is the only position suitable for a berserker. They need to fly into a rage and tear apart their enemies at first sight. A berserker in the second or third rank may be a waste of potential.

CHANNELER: Channelers can defend themselves if pushed into combat, but are better as supporters to the front line combatants. They can switch people in and out of combat, heal allies, curse enemies and twist the odds in favor of their allies. They could be at the front, center or rear depending on what abilities they have and the range of those abilities.

EXPLORER: Explorers are not built to withstand punishment, but have the ability to coordinate others, using powerful assist abilities that aid the party's artillery and support characters. Explorers are best with ranged weapons and scientific magics, so would do well to avoid melee combat.

GUNNER: The gunner must try to keep his adversaries at range so he won't take any penalties from firing at melee range. He enjoys the rear of the party, or anywhere he can get a clear shot on his enemies. Gunners prefer a fight in which his enemies can't even get close to him.

MECHANIST: The mechanist is a warrior class who has a good balance of offensive and defensive melee combat capabilities. He prefers to be at the front of the marching order where he can protect the central party members or charge his enemies.

NECROLYTE: The necrolyte is a feared magic user who needs to use his abilities wisely. Necrolytes never seek a fair fight because their abilities are poorly suited to dueling. The necrolyte needs preparation and protection to be effective so prefers the party rear or middle. Necrolytes tend to raise pawns who can protect them or engage enemies at range.

ROGUE: When rogues aren't off on their own scouting or otherwise, they enjoy the middle of the marching order as it offers security against enemy attacks. However, if there are ample shadows to hide in, rogues prefer to get a few yards of distance between themselves and their allies where they can be discreet and attract less attention.

WARDER: The warder is a heavy combat tank, but better suited to defense than others. Where berserkers throw themselves into the fray, warders take measured steps and protect those coming up behind them.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Within your group, you may want to assign different characters certain responsibilities. There are many such roles which are important to the survival of your group. The most important of these are listed below:

CARTOGRAPHER: DRAWS MAPS AS YOU EXPLORE

CHRONICLER: RECORDS A LOG OF PROGRESS

LANTERN BEARER: CARRIES THE LANTERN

PROVISIONER: RATIONS WATER AND FOOD

SENTRY: KEEPS A LOOK OUT FOR TROUBLE

TREASURER: COUNTS AND DIVIDES TREASURE

CARTOGRAPHER: The cartographer needs to jot down sketches and maps of where the party has been and which areas lie unexplored. Useful notes about the location of traps, levers and locked doors can make exploration much safer. This requires two hands, so makes it impossible to wield any weapon without first stowing the easel and writing tools.

Obviously, it is far too dangerous to stroll about unarmed in every location. The only choices you have are to either invest in a cartographer's belt and mapping easel which automatically retract when you drop them (Equipment Codex), drop your map to the floor when you need a weapon in your hand, or don't map the area and rely on the descriptions of each room to remember your way back (a risky strategy).

➤ **STOW/READY:** [LONG ACTION] Putting away a map in a hurry is difficult. It takes a long action to properly stow or ready a map.

➤ **PUT DOWN:** [FREE ACTION] In dry areas, it may be more convenient to cap your fountain pen and just drop the mapping easel.

CHRONICLER: The chronicler records the deeds and stories of the group. Typically, an arcanist, bard or explorer takes on this responsibility. It requires a simply entry into a logbook each day, which means keeping track of time, dates and place names.

LANTERN BEARER: The lantern bearer in the group holds the light source and illuminates the way for the others. He or she has to be ready to set their light source down upon the ground quickly, or continue to hold it throughout a combat. This means one of their hands is going to be tied up holding the lantern.

The lantern bearer needs to facilitate the work of the sentry and cartographer by keeping the light positioned well—usually high and bright. If the adventuring group is large, two or more lantern bearers may be appropriate and poles can be used to give the light sources extra elevation.

➤ **READY/STOW:** [UTILITY ACTION] It takes about three seconds to light or extinguish a lantern, candle or any other light source and stow it in your pack or ready it.

➤ **PUT DOWN:** [FREE ACTION] Putting down a lantern is a free action. If you want to draw a weapon as a free action, then putting down a lantern can be a utility action.

PROVISIONER: The provisioner has a record of food and water supplies for the group, and rations it out to each member in order to make it last. When provisions are getting low, it is the provisioner's

responsibility to go out and find some more, by means of foraging, hunting wild game, purchasing from a store, and so on.

SENTRY: The sentry in the party is typically the most perceptive of the group (the one with the highest wits). They need to alert the others quickly when they notice a hazard or an enemy. They generally need to take point or be close to the front of the party for their skills to be of use.

In larger groups (usually 50 or more), a sentry usually has a babbecaster, bell or flare to signal an alert to everyone within a hundred yards. This takes longer, but ensures the safety of the group.

➤ **RAISE THE ALARM:** [UTILITY ACTION] If the sentry has some sort of device to raise an alarm (babbecaster, gong, flare, heavy bell, etc.) then it takes a utility action to use. This alerts everything and everyone within 100 yards, as long as the sound/light can carry that far. To alert everyone within 10 yards is a free action, and doesn't require any sort of loud device.

TREASURER: The treasurer is usually the leader or most trustworthy member of a group. He or she collects the spoils gained throughout the adventures and divides them up or pays shares to the individuals within the party.

Many items won't be shared out in this way because they will be immediately employed by whoever can make best use of it. For example, the treasurer doesn't collect weapons or armor that would be better put to use in the hands of a skilled warrior. An item useful to only one person goes to that character because it's of no use to others.

Expensive, valuable items such as jewelry, gemstones, works of art and cold hard currency are pooled and distributed whenever there is enough to make into equal shares. Some items are pawned off for cash while others are kept as trophies. It's up to the individual what they do with their share.

Whenever two or more characters want the same piece of treasure, the treasurer has to settle these disputes.

ENVIRONMENTS



The most common types of exploration environment are given below. However, these are by no means a complete list. There are many other environments that could be explored with just as much detail and danger as those presented here.

In the Master's Codex, each type of exploration environment given here has a list of rooms and features that can be used to create your own interesting and detailed dungeons on the fly.

CATACOMBS



Catacombs are essentially grand burial chambers for dozens, maybe hundreds of bodies. Construction of catacombs was most common during the Era of Myth, when they would use oil pipes and special machines to keep the dead bodies frozen and preserved. Most such systems ceased to work long ago, though the occasional archeological marvel is uncovered from time to time.

Catacombs were also built during the Residuum but have crumbling walls, poor architecture and often restless undead roaming them. Such places were designed to have one way in, and no way of getting out so that the dead could be dumped inside and left for eternity. They tend to feature reinforced walls where other catacombs would have doors and magical wards where there might otherwise be locks.

Nowadays, catacombs are only maintained by religious factions, wealthy elven families or noble bloodlines who want to preserve the sanctity of death by guarding the bodies of their ancestors.

An important thing to remember is that many catacombs survived throughout the ages and will incorporate extensions that were made later to contain more bodies. So a single catacomb might have areas that were clearly built at different times—some during the Era of Myth, some during the Residuum and some during the New Epoch.



LAYOUT: [HORIZONTAL] Catacombs expand outwards as more space is needed to put the dead to rest, but seldom expand upwards or downwards.

ROOMS: Catacomb rooms are small and confined. They tend to feature small altars, traps, burial urns and alcoves cut into the walls within which bodies have been laid to rest.

CORRIDORS: Catacomb corridors are long and thin, often lined with the bodies of unknown individuals, perhaps the servants who built the catacomb or relatives of someone important.



FLOOR: Floors of myth catacombs are stone, solid, yet cracked from years of neglect. Residuum catacombs have crumbling earthen ground or poorly laid flagstones on the floor. New Epoch catacombs are well maintained, so typically have the most evenly laid stone floors.

CEILING: The ceilings of myth catacombs have arches with metal reinforcement which support tiled mosaics and painted frescos, often in an unrecognizable state. Residuum ceilings are soft earth held up by wooden supports at best. New Epoch catacombs are likely to have metal supports and plain but functional ceiling tiles.

WALLS: Myth ruins have stone walls often with brackets that hold

pipes for broken etherlamps or vents that used to keep the catacomb chilled (these systems will have perished with age). Residuum walls are poorly constructed, usually with no ventilation and wooden supports at best. New Epoch catacombs have masonry walls and solid metal supports.

DOORS: Myth catacombs have solid stone doors with alloy reinforcement, operated by sturdy weight systems, pressure, gearworks or sometimes electrical power. Residuum catacomb doors are weak and flimsy, using magical wards rather than technology or locks to keep out intruders. New Epoch catacombs tend to be guarded, with heavy reinforced wooden doors.

LOCKS: In general, catacombs have few doors or locks, most only featuring a single outermost door (usually well hidden) and a few poorly protected inner doors. Myth catacombs have intricate ancient dwarven locks, worn by time but still functional. Residuum catacomb doors tend to have defensive enchantments, crude wooden and brickwork barricades or walled-off areas instead of doors, as during those times the dead would often rise and roam about on their own—such catacombs act as prisons for the dead rather than resting places. New Epoch locks are as well protected as their keepers can afford, so the quality of locks and guards can vary.

TRAPS: Myth catacombs are rigged with magical and mechanical defenses, usually deadly, almost invisible and extremely efficient. Residuum catacombs have crude and ineffective traps that prevent the intruder from escaping. New Epoch catacombs are trapped with the best that their guardians can afford.

LIGHT: Catacombs are unlit for the most part, because they are not in use. Myth catacombs have the occasional working etherlamp, flickering and dim. Residuum catacombs are pitch black but often have torch sconces along the walls, so explorers should take ample illumination. The catacombs that exist in the New Epoch vary according to the coffers of their patrons.

CAVERN

Caverns are natural passageways through the earth. They could be formed by the movement of rock beneath the ground, the flow of water through rock or they might simply be pockets of air between heavy bedrock supports. Wherever a cavern joins the netherdeep or opens to the surface, it is likely to be inhabited.

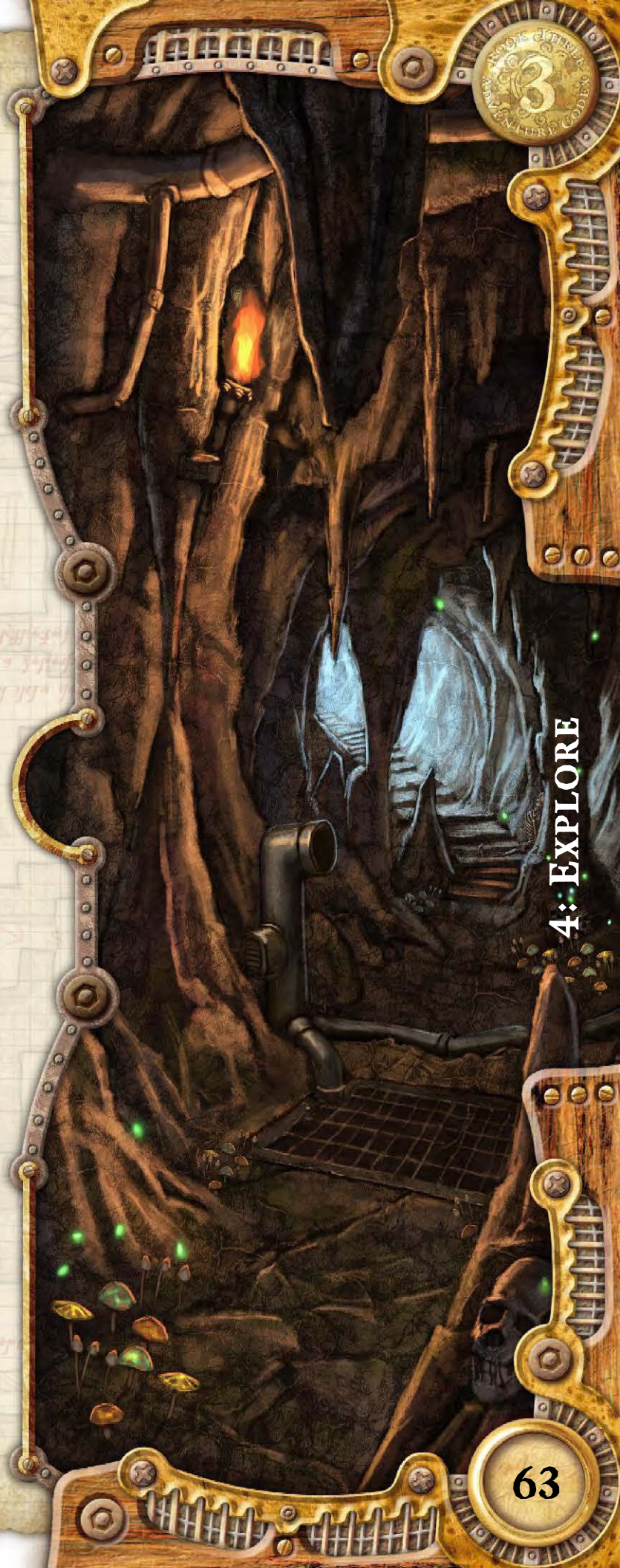
LAYOUT: [HORIZONTAL & VERTICAL] Caverns are natural hollows in the earth. As such, they have both vertical and horizontal openings, according to how they were formed.

ROOMS: Cavern rooms are irregular shapes and feature uneven ground, varying ceiling heights and tight squeezes.

CORRIDORS: Cavern corridors are often narrow, steeply angled and difficult to traverse, even for dungeon delvers. The presence of wet smooth surfaces such as in limestone caverns make getting through some corridors more awkward.

FLOOR: The floor of most caverns is uneven gravel, pitted with various obstacles such as large rocks, trap holes, shifting scree and slippery flowstones.

CEILING: Low ceilings and high ceilings are a common feature of



natural caverns. High ceilings are also known as sink holes and might open up to the surface above. Wherever moisture seeps down from the surface, stalagmites and stalactites may form which can complicate matters.

WALLS: Unless there's a small window that peers through into another cavern room, chipping away at walls in this environment is futile. Solid bedrock surrounds a cavern on all sides. Disturbing the walls of a cavern may cause a collapse.

DOORS: Doors will only be present where a cavern has inhabitants. Sometimes, a curtain of vines or moss may serve as a door.

LOCKS: Locks will only be present where a cavern is inhabited and guarded.

TRAPS: Traps may take the form of natural hazards such as trap holes in the floor, slippery moss, loose stalactites and gusts of nether wind. One very underestimated hazard is the presence of gas pockets deep beneath the surface which pool into deepings or ceiling pits.

LIGHT: Openings in the ceiling, phosphorescent fungi, glowing insects and luminescent plant life are the most common light sources to be found in caverns close to the surface. Most of these light sources are sensitive and may cease to provide light when disturbed. As one travels deeper, light sources become less frequent.

DUNGEON

Dungeons of the industrial age are underground fortresses of steam power and clockwork ingenuity. Many are ancient underground spaces that have been redecorated and re-purposed by dwarven engineers. They come in many different scales, some filling entire mountains and others being merely basement storage. Dungeon has come to be a generic term for inhabitable underground spaces—they are not prisons or holding pens.

LAYOUT: [HORIZONTAL] Dungeons are mostly horizontal in layout, simply for the convenience of the inhabitants, who must typically move about on foot. However, if there is technology enough to make a lift, dungeons may have multiple horizontal levels, one on top of the other.

ROOMS: Dungeon rooms are squarish, large and have humanoid-height ceilings. They are specifically designed to be inhabited so are of a comfortable size for explorers.

CORRIDORS: Dungeon corridors are typically 2 to 3 yards wide and 2 or 3 yards high. Important corridors and main service ways in populated dungeons are typically double this size. Such corridors could be lined with pipes, wires and cables, taking the oil, air and electricity that are needed to keep dungeons maintained.

FLOOR: Flagstones and poured cement floors are typical. In well maintained dungeons, carpets and tiled floors decorate many areas. Dungeon heating such as oil pipes, rising air grates and ember channels are often placed below dungeon floors.

CEILING: Ceilings are also likely to be decorated with tiles or paintings to offset the drabness of closed underground passages. Extractor fans and cooling systems are often placed overhead.

WALLS: Walls are solid stone. Metal paneling is used to cover serviceable

components of dungeons (pipes, valves, switchboards and other maintenance stations).

DOORS: Dungeon doors are as good and secure as they come. Rolling doors, reinforced doors and sliding doors are common as opposed to typical hinged doors.

LOCKS: Important places will be well protected by clockworks and ingenious locking mechanisms. Locks are a small expense compared to the total cost of dungeon building, so they tend to be more common in dungeons than in other places.

TRAPS: Traps are a well known hazard of dungeons. Wherever there is something valuable to be guarded, expect traps to be present.

LIGHT: Dungeons are lit according to the specifications of the owners. Many have etherlamps or oil lanterns lining the walls at regular intervals. Such things require very little maintenance but do pollute the air somewhat. Dungeon delvers don't usually need to provide light of their own.

GEAR GROTTO

Gear grottos are the ruins of industrial monstrosities built by titans during the Era of Myth. During these times, factories expanded themselves downward, deep into the earth and fed off the pure metal minerals found in the gears of the world. These gear grottos mined the surface world dry, giving rise to barren metal landscapes known as ironwastes. Overtime, soil and dust has begun to reclaim areas of ironwaste and gear grottos can be found in places where the earthen crust is thin.

Gear grottos contain many small dungeon levels that are stacked one on top of another, all based around a central shaft that continues deep into the ground, even into the gears of the divine mechanism.

LAYOUT: [VERTICAL] A gear grotto is essentially a massive vertical mine shaft that bores into the gears of the divine mechanism. The deeper you travel, the more dangerous they tend to be.

ROOMS: Gear grottos were constructed by the titans, a giant mechanical people related to dwarves who can be found near the teeth of the world gears. The rooms of a gear grotto are consequently massive chambers and immense open spaces featuring mythworks suspended from the walls and ceilings. Essentially, they are some sort of ancient mining facility or production line.

CORRIDORS: There are few corridors as such, but many old and broken service elevators, conveyor belts, underground rail passageways and transport shafts that carried huge machines and titans throughout the complex. There are also gear terraces—used much like stairs, featuring many round wheels aligned one atop the other in spirals that descend into other parts of the complex.

FLOOR: Gear grottos are almost entirely composed of metal except where stone, glass, or other materials were more suitable to the structure's construction. The metal surfaces are in various states of decomposition and disintegration—pitted, rusty, crumbling, flaking away, cracked and scored, etc.

CEILING: Ceilings are usually a huge domed or vault-like hall containing many platforms and rooms within them. Large rusting iron supports brace the walls and often feature a lattice of cranes,



chains and pulleys.

WALLS: Some room boundaries are defined by stone walls or metal paneling. Others are cornered by massive sets of gears which form some part of the grotto's mechanical bowels.

DOORS: Very few doors are found in gear grottos unless these places have been repopulated by dwarves. The doors that do exist are gigantic bulky gates that must be operated by steam, gears or other external power and are usually no longer functional.

LOCKS: Locks were not something that the titans cared for—a single titan could guard a door and be eternally vigilant.

TRAPS: There are no traps that were intentionally built to deter intruders, but gear grottos have their own set of nasty hazards. Acids used in alchemical electricity and toxic gasses trapped in smelting forges are common throughout these complexes. The moving parts of the factory may also cause some “rooms” to slide or shift as weight shifts.

LIGHT: The titans do not suffer from the black lung like other flesh and blood species so oil braziers and even coal fires could light a gear grotto. However the most common light sources were long-lasting magical ones, typically several to a hall. Unfortunately, the natural desaturation of magic over time has left these devices dim and lusterless.

LABYRINTH

At the heart of every deciduous forest in the New Epoch is a trow hive that controls and communicates with the woodland creatures for miles around. These wicked beasts raise up labyrinths of roots, vines, tangled brush and weeds to trap and capture intruders. In blightwoods, these labyrinths are even more common.

Expanding logging operations are often the first to discover the presence of labyrinths and many innocent workmen have fallen victim to them. An enraged forest will often grow new labyrinth outposts, populate them with trow and work tirelessly to destroy all intruders. When a deciduous forest is cut back and a trow hive destroyed, its spawn will spread into nearby coniferous forests and poison the roots, slowly transforming it into a new labyrinth.

LAYOUT: [HORIZONTAL] Labyrinths can cover acres of land, but seldom expand down into the earth or up into the trees.

ROOMS: Rooms are moonlit clearings, pools and ponds, the shade of ancient trees and fern glades. Many of these are hidden by the forest canopy or powerful illusions created by the labyrinth denizens.

CORRIDORS: Winding, twisting, gnarled passages and nonsensical U-turns are a common feature of labyrinths. Their foremost function is to trap and confuse intruders. Secondly, they also protect the hive and the heart of the forest.

FLOOR: The forest floor is perhaps earthen, mossy, covered in grass, ferns or twisted roots. The soil beneath the foliage might be muddy, soft, firm or even stony, typically overgrown with lichen.

CEILING: Usually a forest canopy is far above, but in a labyrinth the foliage grows over the passageways to funnel intruders into areas where they can be dealt with. Tangled trunks and roots make it impossible to climb or move through.

WALLS: Labyrinths have many types of divisions that are impossible for non-fey creatures to cross through. Vine walls may attempt to strangle and capture intruders, fey mist will suck the life out of victims, oaken arches will not open for the uninvited and other fey doors are closed to all without the hive's permission.

DOORS: Oaken archways in a labyrinth remain closed for intruders. They can be cut through, but will grow back and seal themselves off after a day or two. Illusionary walls, concealed doors and other types of trickery are also used to mislead and confuse.

LOCKS: Magical wards and traps are used in place of locks, preventing access or killing the intruders.

TRAPS: Deadly, painful traps are spread throughout a labyrinth. Poisons, decay and slow deaths are common.

LIGHT: Labyrinths are lit well enough that other light sources are generally not necessary. Even on a dark night, faerie dust and glitterdew can provide an outline of the surrounds.

MINE

Mines are any form of large scale operation that draws precious minerals up from the earth through rail-tracked arteries. All sorts of features can be found in mines, including open cast pits, wells, shafts, rail carts, cave-ins, mineral deposits, floods, gas pockets, and so on.

Mines can be found throughout the world gears in all types of terrain that are solid enough to support a ceiling. Derelict or exhausted mines go out of service and are often repopulated by subterranean creatures while operational mines will only close when something goes drastically wrong.

LAYOUT: [HORIZONTAL & VERTICAL] Mines expand in the direction that promises the greatest lode. Typically this brings them deeper and deeper, further from their entry point. Mine shafts and rails are common forms of rapid transit installed to speed the extraction of ore and the transport of workers.

ROOMS: Where a lode of valuable ores or gems is found, large rooms are carved out of the earth. Other rooms could be constructed as generator alcoves, pump stations, rail cart junctions, loading bays, storage rooms and coal depots. Extensive mines will contain dungeon areas such as barracks for guardsmen, offices for engineers, alchemist quarters, storage rooms, vehicle bays, bunk beds and more.

CORRIDORS: Corridors of a mine are supported by heavy hardwood supports and iron bracing. Along important corridors are cables that carry oil and pipes for oxygen to lower levels. Well established mines might also have rail tracks and lantern brackets or even etherlamps lining the walls.

FLOOR: Floors of a mine can vary from loose rubble to flat poured cement. In general, newer passages are rougher and older passages that see a lot of thoroughfare are paved or poured with flat concrete. In all mines the use of rail carts is common, so floors are often scored by criss-crossing tracks that lead to richer veins of ore.

CEILING: Ceilings are supported with iron and heavy wooden beams spaced at regular intervals. Occasionally, where a mine meets a



cavern there are large open rooms with natural bedrock walls and no supports.

WALLS: Most mine walls are hewn stone and sturdy supports. In some particularly hard mineral deposits, excavating machines or steamwork constructs such as drilling toilers will have ripped through the earth, so scratched and scarred rock walls may be present.

DOORS: Rail gates and cabin doors are about the only entry portals to be found. Where a mine grows large enough to support many workers, underground living quarters and other facilities may create the need for more doors. High security mines might have gates protecting them from the outside.

LOCKS: Doors and locks bar entry only to special storage rooms, prospector rooms, engineer's quarters, mining cabins and offices that are set up near rail crossroads. Mine barracks and guard posts may also be locked if they have dangerous weapons such as gas grenades or mining explosives.

TRAPS: Explosive gas pockets and cave-ins are the main hazards of a mine. However if there is a very precious lode to be mined within, the miners may set up devious traps to maim or kill ore thieves.

LIGHT: Generation after generation of engineers have tried to improve the working conditions of miners by pumping lamp oil, water and fresher air into the depths of a mine. However, miners still take lanterns, alchemical lamps, gas masks and water flasks with them at all times.

NETHERDEEP

The netherdeep is the deepest and darkest part of the natural underground, past the crust and into the mantle of the earth that lies atop the gears of the world. This microcosm of life is largely unexplored and unknown to folk living on the surface and exists completely without the presence of sunlight. Hence, it is filled with strange and dangerous life forms, alien plant-life, luminescent crystals and hundreds of bizarre, undocumented phenomenon.

LAYOUT: [HORIZONTAL & VERTICAL] The twisting, winding, random layout of netherdeep caverns makes mapping and navigation very difficult.

ROOMS: Natural caverns form the bulk of netherdeep rooms. They range in size from tiny passageways to massive open shafts like crossroads of the underworld. Because the netherdeep has a higher saturation of ethers than the surface world, magically simulated life appears with startling frequency—crystals that glow when they sense movement, mushrooms that shuffle away from you, whistling grass and breathing rocks are some of the things you might encounter.

CORRIDORS: Passageways through the netherdeep are similar to those found in natural caverns, though they may be larger, wider and rougher. As such, corridors get wider and the cracks in their walls become large enough to explore and give rise to offshoot passageways that can be explored.

FLOOR: Other exploration environments can exist within a netherdeep,

bring with them the features of their floors, ceilings and walls. Water caves, caverns, mines, dungeons and ruins are common “micro environments” that could populate an area of netherdeep.

CEILING: Ceilings are natural rock, typically very solid or supported by chunks of the world gears of the divine mechanism.

WALLS: Walls of a netherdeep are solid bedrock, typically hardened by the saturation of ethers and the presence of mythrils deposits in foundation stones.

DOORS: Doors don't exist as part of natural netherdeep areas.

LOCKS: There are no locks, unless a different type of environment is discovered in the deep.

TRAPS: Pressure is a new danger that netherdeep explorers should be aware of. The pressure of the air is sometimes great enough to cause oxygen poisoning (fatal in a few minutes). Pressure resistant heavy armors such as dwarven armor are the typical explorers' defense, but this is only a temporary solution. Others prefer to go with magical inventions such as pressure regulators or special headgear that creates a bubble of pressure normalization around the user.

As for traps and hazards, the netherdeep is an unexplored tome of dangers and unexplained phenomenon. Extreme caution is advised.

LIGHT: The transition between subterranean caverns near the surface and the netherdeep is very dark, lightless and void of life. After entering into the netherdeep proper, there are a number of luminescent life forms that give pools of relief against the oppressive dark.

RUINS, FORGOTTEN

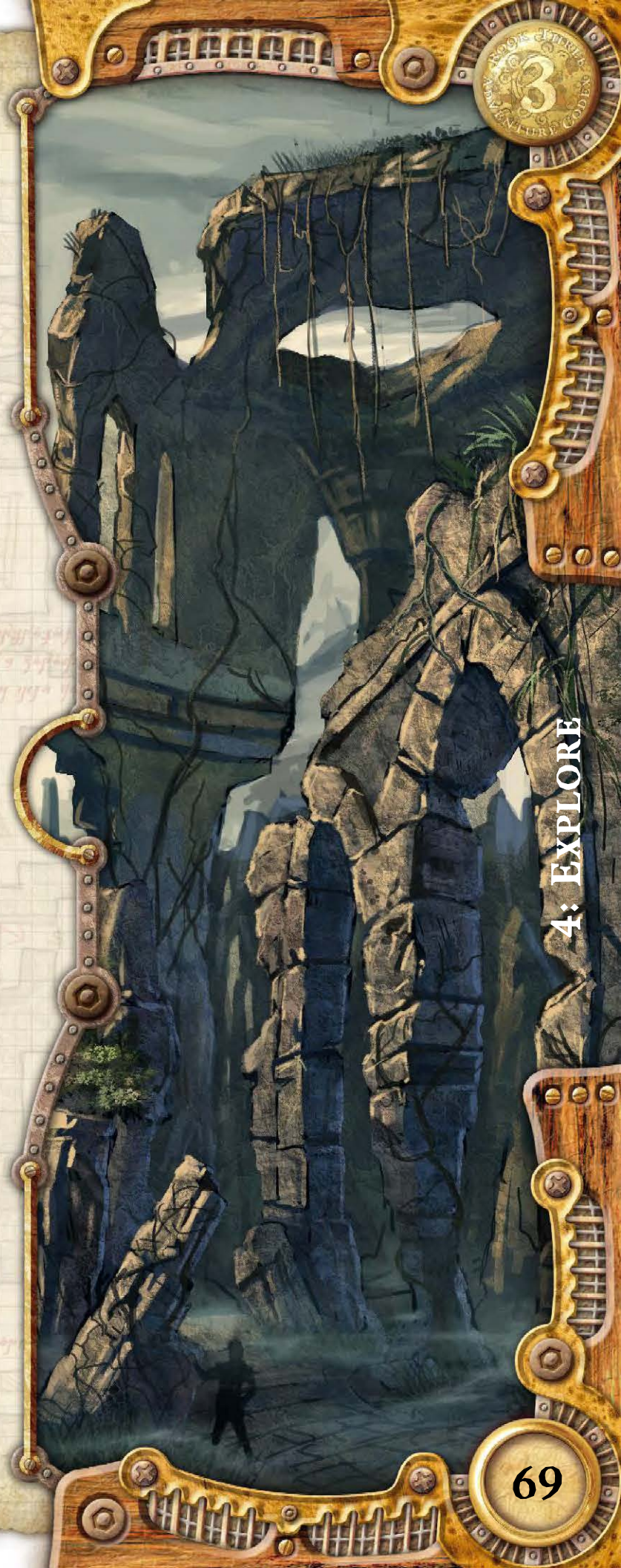
Ancient ruins from the forgotten age can be identified by certain architectural features—the double arch, long and short corner stones on buildings, the prevalence of stone, and the absence of metal supports. Most ruins from the Forgotten Age are little more than indistinguishable earthen mounds, piles of stones or low, piecemeal walls. Underground areas are likely to be small and have inaccessible areas where a collapse or undergrowth has occurred. Above ground ruins will be skeletal, uninhabited and barren.

LAYOUT: [HORIZONTAL] In the Forgotten Age, engineering simply wasn't advanced enough to consider building deeper into the earth. These ruins are shallow, as near the surface as possible.

ROOMS: Broken walls, crumbling foundations and other structural decomposition gives way to new openings between rooms. Additions, modifications or expansions to Forgotten Age ruins tend to be less sturdy and may result in piles of collapsed stone or earth that encroaches on room space.

CORRIDORS: As there were few subterranean builders during the Forgotten Age (dwarves didn't exist yet), there was no need for passages. Large structures tended to have only a few rooms in them, accessible directly from the main doors—the humans of the time didn't build access ways, just entrances directly into the structure.

FLOOR: Moss, moisture and sundered flagstones give way to the



earth below. Floors are generally very solid and layered on heavy foundations to last the ages. However, forgotten ruin floors are generally concealed by fallen rubble, dust deposits and creeping undergrowth.

CEILING: If these ruins have any ceiling at all, it will be supported by fragile, sagging supports. Most ceilings have collapsed and only the sturdiest stone supports will have lasted.

WALLS: Walls are stonework, featuring plaster and stones of all shapes and sizes. Corners tend to be adorned with quoins in alternating tall and short proportions—stones blocks that brace the edges of a structure.

DOORS: Any doors that have survived this long will be wooden and easily breached. If they have locks or opening mechanisms, these will have perished and seized up long ago.

LOCKS: Some areas of a forgotten ruin might be barricaded off or sealed by a barred door. Otherwise, there were no magical locks or cleverly engineered seals. If anything, magical wards may be present but severely weakened by ages of magical desaturation.

TRAPS: Original Forgotten Age ruins had crude traps, which would trap and perhaps wound an intruder but lacked the deadliness required to kill outright. Pits, spear traps and crushing traps are the most common, though many will be inoperable.

LIGHT: These ruins are generally above ground and any subterranean extensions will be unlit.

RUINS, MYTH

Myth ruins are classical, spartan, monumental structures with expert architecture and engineering techniques that rival modern day buildings. Myth ruins feature massive carved blocks of stone, impossibly tall pillars, and statues of colossal proportions. Circular features dominated this era, and can be found in almost every building. The remnants of alchemical and mechanical wizardry can be found in all such structures, with the inner workings of these mechanisms carefully hidden from the eye.

The dangers of myth ruins are well known—radiation, dissonance wells, mechanical guardians, cursed beasts and undead inhabit most of these ancient places. They are magnets for powerful creatures of the umbra. Furthermore, the devious magical and mechanical traps of the Era of Myth are still effective in modern times.

LAYOUT: [HORIZONTAL & VERTICAL] Magical reinforcement and excellent building materials contributed to some tall structures and multilevel towers that have survived to the present day. Otherwise, myth ruins are mostly flat.

ROOMS: Rooms of myth ruins are open, spacious and featureless. High ceilings, decorated pillars and domed ceilings are common throughout subterranean and surface structures. Centuries of looters have left almost nothing but bare stone.

CORRIDORS: Long stone corridors could either lead to the center of myth structures or run around the outer walls. Where dangers have discouraged looting, alcoves with mirrors and etherlamps still adorn these corridors.

FLOOR: Seamless slabs of granite form the floors of myth ruins.

Maintenance ducts in the floor were also common for servicing the hidden workings of structures—stone and metal grating in the floors can be pulled up to display oil pipes and heating mechanisms that were common during the time.

CEILING: Many buildings from the Era of Myth featured temple areas where services could be performed on altars under the open sky. Roofs have even, well-fitted ceramic tiles and metal rivets securing them. The ceilings of structures that have survived to the present day have air ducts connecting to boiler rooms where massive metal fans and heating coils pump warmth through copper pipes.

WALLS: Walls often have bands of alchemical light running along them, encased in glass and metal grating. Small, high windows can be found in many residential structures, though are uncommon in civic buildings. Storage spaces were often built into the walls, covered by sliding metals panels or wooden cupboard doors—the walls were thick and strong enough to hold despite hollows within them.

DOORS: Myth ruins have rolling gearwork doors, sliding stone doors, portcullis gates, mechanical locks and large double doors. Vault-like entrances and glowing text adorn many important buildings while residences have securely barred sliding metal doors. Myth ruin entrances are generally impregnable by means of force and need to be entered by other means.

LOCKS: Myth ruins feature locks unlike those of modern day buildings. Keys were uncommon, but enchanted stones or special objects could be used to unlock a mechanism by placing them within the lock receptacle.

TRAPS: Traps from the Era of Myth are expertly hidden and deadly. They blend various types of trap together to form extremely effective security measures—venting gasses, hidden blades, acid splashes, pit traps, magical petrification, and so on. Finding or disarming myth ruin traps is hard at the best of times.

LIGHT: Most myth ruins have light sources of their own. Alchemical liquid tubes carry light throughout corridors and etherlamps adorn ceilings and larger rooms. Where 'myth tech' illumination is not present, faint enchanted features still have enough luminosity to dimly light areas—magical decorations, glowing tapestries and carpets can still be found in dangerous, hard-to-find ruins in the borderlands.

RUINS, RESIDIUM

The Residium was the dark age of the world. Thus, its architecture climbed skyward to the radiance—steeple, spires, turrets, spinneret-like towers and buttresses formed a very Gothic style of building clearly distinguishable from other periods. Designs became intricate, but came at the cost of comfort. Many residuum structures had supports and foundations that lay outside the structure itself, giving rise to flying buttresses, rib-caged halls and outer pillars that propped-up a building. Stone guardians and sharp, wicked looking features were incorporated to dissuade trespass and walls and gates were fitted with steel spikes to deter invaders.

LAYOUT: [VERTICAL] The buildings of the Residium strove to touch the heavens, climbing ever skyward to match the ambitions



of rulers and their engineers. As such, residuum ruins are mostly vertical structures, both above the ground and below it.

ROOMS: Rooms were large with odd shapes bearing religious significance. Many of these large rooms had overlooking balconies that could be accessed by narrow stairways inside the walls.

CORRIDORS: Stairs, shafts, crude elevator mechanisms and corridors can be found near the center of a structure, leading to all other outlying rooms. Other access chambers for servants and secret escapes also became part of an architect's plan. High ceilings in corridors were also very common.

FLOOR: Stonework and wooden ceilings of the Residuum lacked the engineering of the previous age, so no heating mechanisms nor vents or gadgetry is present. Without the typical rugs and spreads across them, the floors of the Residuum are cold, hard and uninviting.

CEILING: High ceilings are an important feature of Residuum architecture. Grand ribbed halls with supports that protrude to the outside of a structure became highly fashionable. Balconies and staircases in large rooms also pushed the height of ceilings up, calling for all sorts of lighting solutions and many flights of winding stairs.

WALLS: Walls were plain stonework, often covered by woolen tapestries to provide warmth. Supports and other features of a wall were decorated with special carvings, embossed panels, frescoes or gargoyles.

DOORS: Residuum doors were often paired under a single tall arch. Steel reinforcement was common and portcullises, gates and walls were spiked or bladed.

LOCKS: Key locks became standard in any outer door during the high Residuum. Padlocks or combination locks were also available, but easily thwarted.

TRAPS: Traps of the Residuum were crude and sadistic but not always fatal. Poisons, deep pits and cages ensured slow and painful deaths. Many traps were designed to capture trespassers so that they could be found by the residents and dealt with personally. While others used weights in conjunction with the height of the structure to make some very devious mechanisms.

LIGHT: The height of ceilings and the darkness of Residuum architecture combined with the lack of technology make their inner chambers dark and morbid. Candle alcoves and torch sconces often line the walls, but these primitive lights provide poor and unreliable lighting.

WARRENS

Burrowing creatures create subterranean pathways through solid earth for their homes, or simply as a byproduct of their movement through the ground. Such burrows might be the transition from one area to another, a junction between makeshift sections of a dungeon, or the home of a burrowing beast. Burrows that are strong enough might attract other creatures to come and co-inhabit them.

LAYOUT: [HORIZONTAL & VERTICAL] Warrens needed be too deep, unless it supports an entire hive of creatures. They are often dug out in whatever direction has the softest earth.

ROOMS: A room occurs in a junction where other tunnels meet. These are formed wherever there is more traffic, as brushing past the walls quickly widens passages.

CORRIDORS: Corridors wind in all directions. Most creatures do not distinguish much between left and right or up and down. Soft, crumbling earth tunnels form the walls and floors here, with occasional rocks, roots and other features present whenever a tunnel collides with them.

FLOOR: Warrens have soft earthen floors. Constant traffic flattens the floors and increases their hardness. Often, a layer of gravel or other harder material is trampled into a warren floor because of the foot traffic that moves through.

Some creatures, especially intelligent ones, will line their floors with tougher, more comfortable materials. Umbrahusks grind rocks into a fine shingle that they litter their lairs with.

CEILING: No structural supports make a warren ceiling very dangerous. Burrowing creatures won't be trapped by a cave-in, so they care little about maintaining structural integrity in their tunnels. However, they do tend to burrow and nest in areas that offer some stability.

Where the burrowing creatures are intelligent, they may use supports to hold up the ceiling. Gnolls, for example, are known for installing wooden support ribs in their dens.

WALLS: Walls are rounded and usually taper toward the ceiling. They are uneven, lumpy and unstable, threatening collapse.

DOORS: None. Some creatures will use makeshift barriers to cover their lair entrances, usually to keep warmth inside and intruders out.

LOCKS: None.

TRAPS: Traps could be collapses and cave-ins or other types of earthen nasties—insects that drop from the ceilings, monsters that hide in the earth just behind the walls, thin floors that give way under weight or plant roots that stab passersby.

LIGHT: Creatures that burrow and build warrens usually have poor eyesight, so never use light in their homes. Many perceive the world via vibrations, echolocation or other forms of blind sight.

WATER CAVE

Coastal or lakeside caverns have hazards and features of their own which explorers should know about. The movement of water through the cave creates currents, underwater areas, reservoirs, falls and sinkholes. Water caves with rising and falling tides are extra complicated, with the difficulty of exploration often depending on the height of the tide.

LAYOUT: [HORIZONTAL & VERTICAL] Water caves are considered mostly horizontal in layout. However, beneath the water there may be a whole new dimension to the exploration.

ROOMS: Water cave rooms are similar to natural caverns, but are likely to have been shaped by flowing water. Often, this results in a long deep shape, or smoothed walls and floors. If the cavern is especially large, it may have streams or rivers running through it.

CORRIDORS: The age of the cavern and the speed of the water flowing through the bedrock determine the shape of corridors. Rapids will make deep and wide corridors, and are likely to still



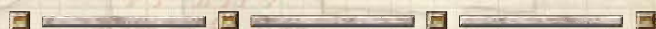
carry the bulk of the water through them. Slow and voluminous water makes wide and smooth corridors or pools into lakes. Small but fast waters create thin, rapid passages. Small and slow streams will only cut narrow veins through the floors of larger caverns.



FLOOR: Floors are solid bedrock, often polished by the passage of water over time. Floors that are submerged in water are host to a variety of life forms.

CEILING: Ceilings in water caves are stable and attract a multitude of insects, animals and lower plant life. Many of these help to shed light throughout the cave.

WALLS: Walls are solid rock, and glisten with moisture. They are very difficult to climb because they have been worn smooth by water.



DOORS: None.

LOCKS: None.

TRAPS: Sinkholes, rapids and cave denizens are the main worries of a water cave. Many sea caves become more dangerous as the tide comes in, threatening to trap explorers. The temperature of the water may also be dangerous, especially if it is cold enough to freeze.



LIGHT: Glow worms, giant cave cod and neon scuttlers are sources of natural light that occur in both fresh water and salt water caves. Next to the ocean, sea caves have anemones which use light to attract prey then fold inward and go dark when they catch something. In fresh water caves, it is dark and still.

Special consideration has to be taken when deciding on the light sources you bring into a water cave. Torches and candles are useless because they are likely to get wet. Electrical phlogiston bulbs and etherlamps are also ineffective. Alchemical lights or magical lights are the best.

WORLD ARTERIES



The world is a great machine known as the Divine Mechanism. The machine lives and breathes just as creatures do, and it recycles waste into the elemental and ethereal spokes. In the deepest places of the world, beyond the netherdeep, closest to the core of the divine mechanism are its mechanical veins, organs and service-ways, known as the world arteries. Though the world arteries have suffered unknown centuries of neglect, these hard to find places are still inhabited by dangerous mechanical and primordial creatures that service the machine and keep the world alive.



LAYOUT: [HORIZONTAL & VERTICAL] No one really knows the extent of the world arteries. While it seems logical that they continue deeper and further in every direction, none have ever plumbed their true depths.

ROOMS: The world arteries are built on a massive scale and have many features similar to gear grottos—they are massive metal structures set deep into the earth. Rooms encountered here are either massive, the size of great halls or cathedrals, or small junctions in passageways that lead between the larger areas. All such areas are littered with fallen earth, vines, rust and the flora of the netherdeep.

Without exaggeration, vehicles could be driven down here, and airships could be piloted through the world arteries. In fact, the sheer scale of these areas demands it.

CORRIDORS: Massive metal tubes run through the world's deepest crust, measuring up to fifty yards in diameter. There are gas vents as wide as highways, though many cannot be traversed because of their steep inclines. Some smaller tubes can make a tunnel of comfortable size for a human.

FLOOR: Metal floors, gigantic sized grates, beams over iron crevasses and railed walkways are some forms of floors present in the world arteries. Most areas on the borders of the world arteries are covered in rust, earth and deposits of silt.

CEILING: Ceilings often have telltale signs of former greatness such as rails that bore gargantuan cranes of the past, vent holes with clunky old extraction fans in them or cables that ooze green oil. Amongst these technological features are vines, roots, subterranean plants and creatures.

WALLS: Walls of the world arteries are solid, braced by unknown alloy supports. Many are covered in "machina obscura", overgrown by centuries of vegetation growth.

DOORS: Vault-like gates and massive powered systems open and close sections of the world arteries. Breaking through these doors is usually not an option unless they are incredibly small or damaged. Typically, one must find some way around a sealed artery door.

LOCKS: On the larger gates, world artery locks are a combination of magical and technological wizardry—massive, time-locked, pressure sensitive, triple-barred and airtight. On smaller doors, the locks are less important and less secure. Many such mechanisms are damaged by rust, decomposition and lack of maintenance.

TRAPS: Actual traps are rare, but many elements of the world arteries are just as deadly. Special ducts are used to prevent creatures entering certain areas and function like pit traps. Poisonous gasses and blinding fogs fill many areas, vents of extreme heat and steam, rust slides, collapses, intelligent plant life, and other hazards can make the environment hostile.

Much the same as netherdeeps, world arteries can have extreme air pressures. The lower you go, the worse it gets. Characters will suffer from oxygen poisoning unless they have some sort of airtight breathing apparatus.

LIGHT: The world arteries are lit with streams of alchemical fluids that traverse the pipes and tunnels. Ether saturated plants and creatures will also give off a faint aura of light. Generally, there is enough ambient light to get by at all times.



5: ACTION



ACTION

THWARTING THE CITY GUARDS, SLAYING THE RAGING UMBRAHUSK AND CAPTURING THE ELUSIVE SHADE. FANTASTIC BATTLES AND ACTION PACKED ADVENTURES ARE OFTEN THE MOST EXCITING EXPERIENCES OF THE NEW EPOCH ROLEPLAYING GAME.

Combat is often the most exciting part of the New Epoch game, and sooner or later, you will find yourself in the thick of it. Combat has rules that you have to abide by in order to defeat your enemies. The fun of the game lies in using these rules cleverly.

OVERVIEW

Combats are complex and exciting situations in which you try to overcome your enemies using all your physical and mental faculties.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY: Two examples, giving you an idea of the different play styles you can try in the New Epoch.

PLAY STYLES: Freestyle play is high momentum and action packed rather than accurate—it is smooth like a movie or novel. Tactical play is strategic and detailed rather than flowing—it is planned like a computer or chess game.

ROUNDS: Rounds are the time units of a combat. Each round is approximately six seconds, so there are ten rounds to a minute.

MOVEMENT: Details the rules of size, reach, space and movement during an action sequence.

ACTIONS: Everything that you do in an action sequence is an action of some sort. Actions take time—you can only take one long action or two standard actions each round.

CHECKS: Making checks is the core of the mechanical game. Skill checks are used to determine whether or not you succeed at any action that carries a chance of failure.

AREAS & TARGETS: Do you conjure a cloud, swing a cleave, erect a wall or hurl a lance at your enemies? Knowing the ability area types will make you a formidable and versatile strategist.

DURATION: Rounds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years and chronicles—the units of time in the New Epoch world.

VEHICLE COMBAT: In a vehicle combat, these rules may become useful: piloting, collisions, armaments, gunnery crew, etc.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY: PART 5 (USING FREESTYLE COMBAT RULES)

The party has explored two of the three ruins and is currently in the third. Unfortunately, the ruins of Morla has become home to secret army strike force known as the Stoigmari Anvil Core, led astray by their crazed captain. The Anvil Core troops are in the possession of both a powerful storm colossus war machine and the artifact the party has come to find. The massive colossus chases the party through the ruins and they make their stand in a tall and defensible tower ruin.

This foe is too strong to defeat through brute force, so other plans are in the mix. Voyl has released a nest of gremlins—creatures that love to sabotage and destroy technology.

Now, the colossus has arrived for the final showdown, leaving a trail of destruction in its wake. And the captain of the Anvil Core is in the pilot's seat.

DAVE: [GM] The final battle begins. Ozurnig, set up the order of turns. The storm colossus is on 2 and the gremlins are on 8.

✦ **LAUREN (OZURNIG)** ORDERS THE REFLEXES OF THE PARTY FROM HIGHEST TO LOWEST IN THIS ORDER: VOYL, JACINTH, GREMLINS, NOJANTU, OZURNIG, STORM COLOSSUS.

DAVE: [GM] The massive colossus lurches toward you, gremlins scrambling all over it. Below the colossus' waist, a cloud of dust, smoke and haze blooms out as the gremlins tamper with its engines. A hatch opens up on its shoulders and a sniper jumps out onto the rooftop. The colossus's eyes begin to glow and sparkle. It is warming up for another deadly blast!

Voyl, you have the highest Reflex.

ANDREW: [VOYL] How far away is the sniper? He's on the colossus' shoulders?

DAVE: [GM] Both the tit and sniper are 5 rings away. Yes, he's on the colossus' shoulders. There's a small rail around his platform.

ANDREW: [VOYL] I'm going to throw him off the colossus with my Telekinetic Fist ability. I can reach up to 8 rings with this wand. What's the sniper's Dex defense?

DAVE: [GM] It's 21.

✦ **ANDREW** DEDUCTS 10 STEAM FOR THE ABILITY, THEN ROLLS HIS WAND ATTACK. HE SCORES A TOTAL OF 27. IT'S A SUCCESS! HE DEALS 16 BASE DAMAGE, 6 BONUS DAMAGE AND 10 ABILITY DAMAGE—A TOTAL OF 32 PHYSICAL DAMAGE. DAVE NOTES THAT 21 DAMAGE MADE IT PAST THE SNIPER'S ARMOR AND THE ABILITY ALSO PUSHES THE TARGET 3 YARDS BACKWARD.

DAVE: [GM] The fist hurtles toward the sniper, slams straight into his chest and sends him toppling backwards, off the shoulder platform and down into the dust cloud below. "Aaarrghh!"

ANDREW: [VOYL] Okay, now I use a defense action and end my turn.

✦ **ANDREW** RECORDS THE DEFEATED ENEMY SOLDIER, SO HE CAN GET EXPERIENCE FOR IT LATER.

DAVE: [GM] Jacinth, you're up next.

VANESSA: [JACINTH] There'll never be a better time to use this—the stoigmari red glory (a type of grenade in the Equipment codex). I'll use my Wild Blast ability, with a range of 6 rings. I'll make it a long attack action, too. A Blast 3 hits 6 targets, and the damage is good.

DAVE: [GM] Okay, the gremlins are spread out so you hit 2 of them as well as the colossus. Usually a Wild Blast scatters, but in this case it doesn't matter—the colossus is so huge and the gremlins are spread out everywhere.

✦ **VANESSA** DEDUCTS 3 STEAM FROM HER TOTAL AND ROLLS THE ATTACK. THERE ARE TWO DIFFERENT TYPES OF ENEMIES IN THE BLAST SO VANESSA RESOLVES THESE SEPARATELY.

THE COLOSSUS' GUTS DEFENSE IS A MASSIVE 41. HER ATTACK ONLY TOTALS 17, BUT IT'S A GUTS ATTACK, SO IT WILL DEAL HALF DAMAGE ANYWAY. UNFORTUNATELY, THIS DOESN'T PENETRATE THE WAR MACHINE'S ARMOR. IT TAKES NO DAMAGE.

THE TWO GREMLINS ONLY HAVE 10 GUTS DEFENSE. SHE DEALS 35 BASE DAMAGE, 10 ABILITY DAMAGE, 5 LONG ACTION DAMAGE AND 7 ADDITIONAL DAMAGE FROM HER ATTACK ROLL. THE GREMLINS TAKE 56 DAMAGE EACH, REDUCED BY 5 FOR THEIR ARMOR TO A TOTAL OF 51 PHYSICAL DAMAGE. THEY PERISH IN THE EXPLOSION.

DAVE: [GM] The powerful red glory grenade explodes in a white halo that lights the entire scene. Several gremlins howl in pain, but as the smoke clears, the colossus emerges unharmed and continues its ominous advance.

VANESSA: [JACINTH] "I can't believe it!" We have to destroy it from the inside.

✦ **VANESSA** RECORDS THE TWO DEAD GREMLINS SO THAT SHE CAN GAIN EXPERIENCE FROM THEIR DEFEAT WHEN SHE RESTS.

DAVE: [GM] Okay, the gremlins are next. Eight remaining gremlins claw and scratch at the colossus. They try to break their way in...

✦ **DAVE** ROLLS EIGHT d20s FOR THE GREMLIN'S BREAK CHECKS. SURPRISINGLY, TWO OF THEM COME UP WITH CRITICALS!

DAVE: [GM] Two of the gremlins rip open hatches and jump into the machine! The others continue to bang upon its metal armor.

GRANT: [NOJANTU] Okay, my turn! I'm using my new fine quality steambow we got from the wraith's tomb in Joza. I'll use my Double Up ability! Aim, long action fire!

✦ **DOUBLE UP** IS A COMBO. GRANT ROLLS TWO ATTACKS AND SCORES A NATURAL CRITICAL WITH A TOTAL OF 34 AND A NORMAL SUCCESS WITH A TOTAL OF 18. DESPITE ITS AWESOME PILOT, THE COLOSSUS IS SLOW AND CLUMSY, WITH A WITS DEFENSE OF ONLY 14. BOTH ATTACKS HIT.

NORMAL WEAPONS CAN'T DENT VEHICLE ARMOR, SO GRANT PROCEEDS STRAIGHT TO DAMAGE. THE BASE DAMAGE IS 16, THE ABILITY DAMAGE IS 5, THE LONG ACTION DAMAGE IS 5 AND THE BONUS ATTACK DAMAGE IS 16 FOR THE FIRST ATTACK AND 4 FOR THE SECOND ATTACK.

AFTER SUBTRACTING THE COLOSSUS' MASSIVE ARMOR, HE SCORES ONLY 7 DAMAGE ON THE FIRST ATTACK AND ZERO ON THE SECOND.

GRANT: [NOJANTU] "What the...? It's invincible! Take cover!"

LAUREN: [OZURNIG] "We cannot destroy this war machine without our own siege armaments! It's time to get creative."

If only, I knew the Rusting Grasp ability... Well, I'll do the next best thing. I'm using Malfunction on the storm colossus. That'll ruin his Pilot checks.

✦ **LAUREN** SUBTRACTS THE 11 STEAM FOR THE ABILITY, ROLLS THE ATTACK AND IS SUCCESSFUL! THE STORM COLOSSUS TAKES A -10 PENALTY TO ALL PILOT CHECKS FOR THE NEXT MINUTE.

LAUREN: [OZURNIG] "Excellent!" I use my other action to take cover behind the strongest defenses I can see nearby. Now, how can we use this to our advantage? We have to make the machine try a difficult maneuver and crash!

DAVE: [GM] And now the colossus takes its turn! Its eyes glow brightly, sizzle and spark, then a beam of ensorcelled lightning rails

PLAY STYLES



There are two very different styles of play in the New Epoch Roleplaying Game. For the most part, these styles change the way combat is played out. However, they also have implications which affect the way you explore detailed environments too.

FREESTYLE PLAY TACTICAL PLAY

Freestyle play and tactical play are equally valid. The game rules differ in three main areas: Movement, Area Effects and Range/Reach.

WHY TWO STYLES OF PLAY? Different styles cater to the tastes of different players and the needs of a roleplaying group. Tactical play requires grids, measurement, time and patience. Freestyle play is a lot quicker and has fewer requirements to play through.

MIX N' MATCH: Two styles of play don't mean you choose either or. You choose the type of combat style you are going to run according to the needs of the encounter.

In a group that prefers freestyle play, save tactical combats for when there's a really important battle or an action sequence in a complex environment. In a group that prefers tactical play, use freestyle combats when you want to move through the action quickly, or when tactics aren't so important (fighting one-on-one in a large open area).

FREESTYLE PLAY



Also called narrative style, this type of play keeps the momentum high, focusing on an exciting, cinematic storyline and fast action sequences. However, it's very vague on the details of combat. It also requires a high amount of trust in the GM and his or her adjudicative abilities.

MAPPING: When you use this style of play, exploration doesn't need to be mapped out by the players. You enter an area, listen to the GMs description, interact with whatever might be present and then proceed through an exit to a new area. The characters can return to any place they have been before and the GM can repeat descriptions of those places as necessary.

MOVEMENT: Distances and movement are fairly blurred in freestyle play. Everything is measured in "rings" of ten yards, as anything smaller is unimportant—there is no need for exact measurement. You state where your character moves and the group imagines it, keeping a mental reference of who is where.

- **RINGS:** A standard move is one ring of distance for all characters. A long move action is two rings. A Sprint is three rings. Other types of slow movement like climbing or swimming only move half a ring or a whole ring on a long move action.
- **SPEED:** If your Speed is 10 or higher, add an additional ring of distance to any move. If your Speed is 20 or higher, add two additional rings of distance to your move. If it's 30, add three rings, and so on.

	FREESTYLE PLAY	TACTICAL PLAY
TURN SPEED	FAST: Each player's turn is faster because there is no measuring and no combat grid. Everything is in theoretical space, not positioned carefully.	SLOW: Each player's turn is slower because you need to measure movement, ranges, reach and area effects. You count off squares on a grid, which takes time.
MOVEMENT	<p>VAGUE: Distances are measured in rings of ten yards each. No smaller units of measurement exist.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A move action covers 1 ring. ➤ A long move action covers 2 rings. ➤ A Sprint covers 3 rings. ➤ Swimming, climbing and sneaking cover ½ a ring. 	<p>EXACT: Distances are measured accurately, to the nearest yard. Each yard is counted on the grid.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A move action covers [Speed] yards. ➤ A long move action covers [Speed + 5] yards. ➤ A move action covers [3 × Speed] yards. ➤ Heaving and crawling cover [½ × Speed] yards.
AREA EFFECTS	<p>FIXED: An area hits a fixed number of targets. For an area of a given size, X, and a group of targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A small area affects X/2 targets. ➤ A medium area affects X targets. ➤ A large area affects X×2 targets. <p>If enemies are spread out, halve the number of targets.</p>	<p>VARIABLE: The number of targets you hit with your area depends on how well you position it on the combat grid. For any given area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Each area has a shape and size in yards. ➤ Place the shape over the combat grid ➤ Count how many targets touch the area.
RANGE	SIMPLE: A weapon has 1 ring of range for every 10 yards listed. Multiply this range by the ability size (a Blast 5 has five times the weapon's base range).	EXACT: A weapon's range is a number of yards. Multiply this range by the size of an ability attack (a Ranged 3 attack has three times the weapon's base range).
REACH	NONE: Reach is not used in freestyle combat. You can only attack a target once you move into the target's ring.	EXACT: Weapon reach is a number of yards. The base range is from the attack type (Melee 2 has two yards or reach), but weapons might also have additional bonuses.

AREAS: Areas don't need to be measured out exactly. There are three different broad categories for ability areas—small, medium and large. The number of creatures enveloped by the area depends on the ability area size, X (Blast X, Cleave X, Lance X, etc), and whether the enemies are grouped or spread out.

In freestyle play, targets are grouped if they are in combat or near each other (in the same ring). So, when you hurl a grenade into a combat, it will hit friends and enemies alike.

- ✦ **SMALL AREA:** [CONE, LANCE, WALL] A small area envelops X/2 grouped targets or X/4 spread out targets.
- ✦ **MEDIUM AREA:** [CLEAVE, SLASH, SQUARE] A medium-sized area envelops X grouped targets or X/2 spread out targets.
- ✦ **LARGE AREA:** [AURA, BLAST, CLOUD] A large area envelops X×2 grouped targets or X spread out targets.

REACH: Reach is not used in freestyle combat. You can only attack targets that are next to you in melee. If they are at a distance of 1 ring or more, you have to move closer.

TACTICAL PLAY

The tactical style of play is like a chess game where movement and exact distances are important. It allows players to mastermind their combat strategies, and take small details into account. To achieve this level of strategy, tactical grid maps are essential, which means that combats play out more slowly and more accurately than in freestyle play.

MAPPING: Tactical play requires maps to be drawn as you explore. Usually, the players draw the map onto grid paper as the GM describes the area. Inaccuracies can be corrected by the GM if it will be important to upcoming events. Dungeons that have many junctions and crossroads are better mapped in this way because there is less chance of becoming lost.

When a combat happens, players can either draw overtop their map to note the positions of all the characters, or move to a larger grid and use figurines or cardboard cut outs to represent different combatants present in the encounter. Combats can take time, but the precision you gain by having a grid is a massive advantage to strategic-minded players.

MOVEMENT: Movement can be measured in absolute distances, and players can note where they appear on the map. You determine the number of yards you can move on your action and position yourself precisely there.

AREAS: Areas are placed or drawn over the tactical grid, and enemies are enveloped when they touched (even partially) by the effect.

In tactical play, the exact locations of creatures are noted on the grid, so you can precisely position your abilities to avoid allies in combat and capture the maximum number of enemies in the area.

REACH: Reach can be used to gain an advantage in tactical play. Basically, you can attack another creature without them being able to attack back. If your reach is greater, the enemy will have to move closer before they can attack you. If you fight in a formation, reach is a powerful tool.

ROUNDS

Action sequences are broken down into small units of time which makes it easy to manage the actions of each character in the combat—these are called rounds. Each round is six seconds, during which every participating creature gets a turn.

Your Reflex determines your place in the order of turns when an action sequence begins. The character or creature with the highest Reflex gets to take their turn first in the round. When they're done, the next highest Reflex score takes their turn. Then the next, then the next, and so on until the lowest Reflex has taken their turn—the round ends and a new round begins with the same order as before.

ORDER OF TURNS = HIGHEST TO LOWEST REFLEX

Where two characters have the same Reflex score, randomize who goes first (roll off against each other, play rock, paper, scissors, etc).

LATECOMERS: When you are late in joining the action, you must wait until a new round of combat begins. You are then slotted into the order of turns at the appropriate place and the round begins with the latecomers now taking part.

SURPRISE ROUND

Surprises grant a special round before everyone can join combat.

ONE STANDARD ACTION

AND 1 FREE ACTION (OPTIONAL)

THOSE WHO ARE NOT SURPRISED CAN ACT

A surprise round is only about 3 seconds (not 6 seconds like normal round). So each character can only take a single standard action on their turn. When the surprise round ends, everyone gets added to the order of turns and the next round begins.

HOW TO SURPRISE: To surprise an enemy, you must catch them off guard, prone or helpless. Targets on their guard can't be surprised.

Use utility skill checks for your surprise attack. The TN you want to beat is equal to the highest Wits defense of the group you are trying to surprise. Everyone makes a check and those that succeed can join the surprise round. If you fail, you can't join the surprise round. If nobody succeeds on their surprise attack, the enemy has sensed you and combat begins normally with no surprise at all. Below are some examples of skills that could be used to surprise an enemy:

- ✦ **AMBUSH:** [STEALTH VS. WITS] You sneak up and attack from the shadows or hide until the enemy is close enough to waylay.
- ✦ **BARGE:** [BREAK VS. WITS] You barge through a door or a window to surprise those on the other side.
- ✦ **DIVERSION:** [HANDLE VS. WITS] You order your soldier, hireling or pet to cause a diversion.
- ✦ **EMERGE:** [SWIM VS. WITS] You approach an enemy from under the water then surface abruptly and take them by surprise.
- ✦ **FEINT:** [CONVINCE VS. WITS] You gasp and point which distracts the guards while you turn and flee.
- ✦ **THE DROP:** [JUMP VS. WITS] You leap down from a high ledge and lands amidst your enemies, taking them completely by surprise.

MOVEMENT

TYPICAL MOVEMENT: Your typical types of movement are those that every humanoid character is capable of. You can walk, climb, crawl, jump, push, pull, sneak, sprint or swim.

SPECIAL MOVEMENT: There are several other types of special movement possible with magic or technology. Special movement works the same as normal movement. Creatures can stop, hover if necessary, walk, sprint, etc. If there is a vertical component to the movement, descending is double speed and ascending is half speed.

TYPICAL MOVEMENT	ACTION	FREESTYLE	TACTICAL
Walk	Move action	1 ring	[Speed] yds.
	Long move action	2 rings	[Speed+5] yds.
Climb, crawl, heave, sneak, swim	Move action	½ ring	½ × [Speed] yds.
	Long move action	1 ring	½ × [Speed+5] yds.
Jump *	Move action	—	—
	Long move action	—	—
Sprint	Long move action	3 rings	3 × [Speed] yds.

SPECIAL MOVEMENT	ACTION	FREESTYLE	TACTICAL
Burrow	Move action	½ ring	½ × [Speed] yds.
	Long move action	1 ring	½ × [Speed+5] yds.
Flight	Move action	2 rings	2 × [Speed] yds.
	Long move action	3 rings	2 × [Speed+5] yds.

* Jump: You move as far as your check allows, irrespective of speed.

OBSTACLES

Obstacles are things that you can move past, but they hamper your speed a little: muddy pools, snags, small barricades and low gaps. If you have to move all the way around it, it's not an obstacle—it's a wall, pillar or structural feature.

FREESTYLE: [1 RING TO PASS] An obstacle of any kind or size requires 1 ring of movement to pass through.

TACTICAL: [CONSUMES SPEED TO PASS] Usually, each point of speed grants 1 yard of movement. Obstacles require two, three or four points of Speed per yard.

- **MINOR OBSTACLE:** [2 YARDS] Each yard of a minor obstacle takes two yards of movement to get through.
- **AVERAGE OBSTACLE:** [3 YARDS] Each yard of an average obstacle takes three yards of movement to get through.
- **MAJOR OBSTACLE:** [4 YARDS] Each yard of a major obstacle takes four yards of movement to get through.

SIZE, SPACE & REACH

Size becomes important in tactical style play. Mostly, creatures only take up a 1×1 yard square on the grid you use. All player characters except halflings use this same size, even though an orc is much larger than a goblin. Halflings are special because they are so small that several can fit into a small space.

The space that a creature occupies is determined by its size. The floor space of a creature is circular, expressed as a circle with a known diameter. All creatures take up a circular area—there are no rectangular or ovals.

Small creatures (ones with a negative size) can fit several to a square on your combat grid. Large creatures take up several squares. Any two creatures that are 5 or more sizes different can occupy the same squares or move through each other without problem—a giant can step over a halfling easily, but maybe not an orc. Similarly, a goblin or halfling may be able to duck under a big vehicle as it travels past or run through the legs of a large creature.

SIZE	SPACE (DIAMETER)	HOW MANY FIT IN ONE SQUARE	REACH
-5	1/5 yd. circle	5	1 yd.
-4	1/4 yd. circle	4	1 yd.
-3	1/3 yd. circle	3	1 yd.
-2	1/2 yd. circle	2	1 yd.
-1	1 yd. circle	1	1 yd.
0	1 yd. circle	1	1 yd.
+1	1 yd. circle	1	1 yd.
+2	2 yds. circle	1	1 yd.
+3	3 yds. circle	1	2 yds.
+4	4 yds. circle	1	2 yds.
+5	5 yds. circle	1	3 yds.

THE GENERAL RULE

+X	X yds. circle	1	X/2 yds.
-X	1/X yd. circle	X	1 yd.

SQUEEZING

When there isn't enough space to fit through, creatures can squeeze. You can fit in a space up to half your own size/volume by squeezing. Any smaller space is just too small—it's impossible to move into the space.

SQUEEZING: [½ SPEED, -5 SKILLS, -5 DEFENSES] Your speed is halved while you are squeezing and you take a -5 penalty to all skill checks and a -5 penalty to all defenses. You are no longer squeezing when you arrive in a space capable of taking your full size.

ACTIONS

Everything that you do in an action sequence is an action of some sort. Actions are a measure of how much time it takes to complete something. There's a limit to how many you can take in a round.

Either...

2 STANDARD ACTIONS OF DIFFERENT TYPES AND 1 FREE ACTION (OPTIONAL)

OR...

1 LONG ACTION AND 1 FREE ACTION (OPTIONAL)

When you are taking two standard actions, they must be different action types—they can't be the same type of action. For example, you can make a move action then an attack action, but you couldn't take two attack actions nor two move actions.

LESS/MORE ACTIONS: Some special abilities and status effects (hasted) imbue you with the capacity to take more actions than normal. Others deprive you of actions (slowed).

If you can take 3 or more actions in a round, the same restriction applies for standard actions—your actions must be different types. A long action takes the same time as 2 standard actions, so it is possible to take one long and one standard action when hasted.

Other special status effects and abilities can deprive you of one or more actions. When you can only take one action per round, long actions become impossible.

STANDARD ACTION

Standard actions are the basic things that you can do during your turn each round. A standard action could be a move, assist, attack, defense or utility action.

In addition to your two standard actions, you can also take a free action in the same round. Any standard action can become a long action if you want it to be the only action you take this round.

ASSIST ACTION: An action that allows your allies to interrupt your turn—switch places with an ally or perform a cooperative attack.

ATTACK ACTION: An action that harms or targets another—you throw a grenade, swing an axe or conjure a deathly cloud.

DEFENSE ACTION: An action that enhances your defenses for a short time—you prepare to dodge or brace for impact.

MOVE ACTION: An action that allows you to move from one place to another—you run, jump, sneak, swim, teleport, fly or levitate.

UTILITY ACTION: A non-offensive action of some sort—you barge through a door, lift a heavy load or pilot a vehicle.

LONG ACTION

Long actions require more effort than standard ones so you can only use one per turn. Many abilities or skills require long actions normally, especially those that incorporate elements of different actions—you move then attack, you defend then move, you attack then defend, etc.

Any standard action can become a long action, granting a bonus but increasing the time required to complete it. Abilities or skills that are already long actions are already more powerful than other abilities.

You can take a single free action in addition to your long action.

LONG ASSIST: Assist actions that become long assist actions do not gain any bonuses.

LONG ATTACK: Attack actions that become long attack actions gain a +5 bonus to each amount of damage dealt.

LONG DEFENSE: Defense actions that become long defense actions gain a +5 bonus to all defenses until the start of your next turn.

LONG MOVE: Move actions that become long move actions gain +1 ring of movement or a +5 bonus to Speed.

LONG UTILITY: Utility actions that become long utility actions do not gain any bonuses.

SPECIAL ACTION

These could take a fraction of a second, or many rounds to complete.

FREE ACTION: You can take one free action each round, in addition to any other actions you take—sniff the air, signal to your group quietly, sense the temperature.

MINUTE ACTION: Requires a whole minute to complete. If a check is required, make the check in the last round to determine success.

HOURLY ACTION: Requires a full hour to complete. If a check is required, make it when the hour has elapsed to determine success.

DAY ACTION: Requires 10 hours to complete. When the time is up, you make your check (if required) to see if you were successful.

INTERRUPT ACTION

An interrupt isn't really an action, but an interruption to an action. Everything halts until the interrupt action is resolved. You can't initiate an interrupt but could use abilities to set up interrupts for later: you hold your shot until the enemy emerges from behind cover; you delay your attack until your ally knocks the target off guard.

Interrupts don't change the order of turns. They delay the result of your action. You use the action(s) necessary, wait for your condition to be fulfilled and interrupt at the first opportunity that presents itself. At this opportunity, you may wish to cancel your action, though this does not return any Steam that was spent in the process.

INTERRUPTING AN INTERRUPT: Yes, it can happen when one interrupt action fulfills the criteria for someone else's interrupt. The most recent interrupt action is always resolved first.

SHOTS



Projectile and scientific weapons have limited ammunition, noted by their number of shots. This is the number of attack actions (standard or long) that you can make before you must reload the weapon.



RELOAD: [LONG UTILITY ACTION] Reloading leaves you off guard until the beginning of your next turn.

COMMON ACTIONS



These are the basic actions that your character does all the time. The following actions are used in every combat, cost no steam to activate, and have no requisites of any kind. These actions can be used with any kind of weapon, too.

0 ATTACK

ATTACK ACTION: INSTANT / WEAPON VS. DEX, GUTS, WITS

You make an attack with a readied one-handed or two-handed weapon. On a successful check, you deal your weapon damage plus any bonuses you might have from your vital, class or weapon. A long action attack grants a +5 bonus to all damage dealt.

0 DEFEND

DEFENSE ACTION: PERSISTENT / NO CHECK

You gain a +2 bonus to all your defenses (Dex, Guts and Wits) until the beginning of your next turn (stacks with long defense bonuses). A long action defense grants an additional +5 bonus to all defenses.

0 FREE

FREE ACTION: INSTANT / NO CHECK

Anything that you can do without concentration is a free action. Many of these are not actions at all. You can drop something you are holding, close your eyes, listen to a sound, etc. Talking to your allies is not an action. You can talk as much as you like and it won't take an action.

0 GUARD

ATTACK ACTION: PERSISTENT / WEAPON VS. DEX, GUTS, WITS

This prepares an interrupt action. You hold your attack until an enemy comes within striking reach (or firing range). On the first opportunity to present itself you take your attack as an interrupt action. You can wait until the beginning of your next turn but if you still haven't used the attack, then it is wasted.

You could also hold your attack until some condition is fulfilled—the enemy comes out from cover, an ally moves out of the way, the door opens, and so on.

0 OFFHAND ATTACK

FREE ACTION: INSTANT / WEAPON VS. DEX, GUTS, WITS

If you have a one-handed weapon in each hand and you take an attack action or long attack action with your main weapon, you can take an extra attack as a free action on the same target with your offhand. You take a -5 check penalty and a -5 damage penalty on this attack. On a successful check, you deal your offhand weapon's damage plus any bonuses you might have from your vital, class or weapon.

You can only attack with your offhand following an attack action or long attack action with your main weapon. You can't perform an offhand attack if you are using a two handed weapon or a shield, but an unarmed attack is acceptable.

0 MOVE

MOVE ACTION: INSTANT / NO CHECK

In freestyle play, you move 1 ring (ten yards). In tactical play, you move [Speed] yards on the action grid. A long action move is very useful to slow or heavily armored characters because it allows either +1 ring of movement, or adds +5 to your Speed.

If you are sneaking, sprinting, swimming, climbing or jumping then you might require a skill check to be successful, which carries its own TN. Otherwise there is no skill check.

0 UTILITY

UTILITY ACTION: INSTANT / NO CHECK

You perform some non-offensive, non-combat action—use an item, pull a lever, draw a weapon, open a door, read a note, etc.

CHECKS

Repairing, sniping, performing and haggling. Anything that carries a chance of success or failure requires a check. If you are very skilled or very lucky, you will be successful in your endeavors. If you lack both skill and luck, you will fail.

Checks determine success or failure. A check is a simple equation of luck (a d20 roll) plus skill (your total skill bonus) against a difficulty. To be more exact, the character rolls a d20 (a 20-sided die), adds any appropriate skill bonuses or other modifiers and compares the result to the target number (TN) for that action. Easy actions have a low target number. Difficult actions have a high target number.

A d20 CHECK IS...

COMPARE [d20 + BONUSES] TO [TN]

If you get equal to or higher than the TN, you succeed at your action. If you score less than the TN, you fail at that action.

MODIFIERS: Talents, status effects, combat situations and abilities might also contribute a bonus or a penalty to your check.

REWINDING: Sometimes you forget to add a crucial bonus to your check. At other times, the GM forgets to hit you with the full might of the enemy. To preserve the momentum of the game, refrain from 'rewinding' an action sequence too often—e.g. "I shouldn't have been hit because I forgot to add my bonus! Can I get that Health back?"

If you forget to factor something into your check, assume you momentarily forgot to make full use of your talents, advantages or other modifiers.

TN, TARGET NUMBER

A target number is a set difficulty which you need to equal or beat on your skill check to succeed. The higher the number, the more difficult it is to succeed.

Some TNs are decided by the GM according to the apparent difficulty of a task while others are determined by the experience and power of the target you want to affect.

TN = DIFFICULTY: Target numbers could be determined by difficulty of the task at hand—climbing a mountain (the incline of the slope), repairing a table (the quality of the furniture), leaping across a chasm (the distance of the jump) or lifting a portcullis (the weight of the gate). Each skill description in the Character Codex notes various examples so you can estimate the difficulty of your own task.

If you score equal to or beat the target number, you succeed—you climb half your movement up the mountain, repair the table, land on the other side of the chasm or raise the portcullis above your head.

If you score lower than the TN you fail—you can't progress any further up the mountain, fail to repair the table, miss the far edge of the chasm, can't lift the portcullis.

TN = DEFENSE: Other target numbers are found from the strength

of your targets—sneaking up on a guard (the guard's Wits), striking a clockroach (the roach's Dex), clearing a room with a grenade (the occupants' Guts) or handling a steamtoiler (the toiler's Wits).

You make a check against the defenses of the target(s) you want to affect. You are successful against all targets that your check equals or beats—you get right next to the guard without him noticing, deal damage to the clockroach, devastate the room and its occupants or force the steamtoiler to obey your commands.

➤ **DEX:** Dexterity is used for attacks that you can see and dodge. Most martial weapon attacks are against a target's Dex defense because they can be parried, blocked, sidestepped or otherwise evaded.

➤ **GUTS:** Guts is used for attacks that you can resist, but not dodge or evade. Large explosions, magical area effects, enveloping gas clouds and airborne diseases are examples of such attacks.

➤ **WITS:** Wits is used for attacks that you can't see or dodge, but you can preemptively avoid. It sums up your awareness, perception and willpower. You can't dodge a gunshot, but if you notice the firearm being drawn, you can duck behind a tree.

IMPOSSIBLE TASKS: Sometimes, a task may be impossibly hard with a TN of 50 or higher. These tasks are incredibly difficult to succeed at—you don't even bother trying until your skill check bonus is at least +30.

However, you can use situational advantages, teamwork and other modifiers to achieve these target numbers. Or you can just cross your fingers and hope to score a critical.

TRYING AGAIN: Some skills have a price in Steam that must be paid every time you want to try again. By paying this cost, you redouble your efforts and give the task another go.

Other skills have a penalty for failure that may prevent a retry or a price in time or resources that is expended regardless of success or failure (which must be paid each time you attempt a check).

CRITICAL! (20)

When you have nothing but luck on your side, you can pull off the most amazing and unbelievable feats. A critical is just that—success despite the odds.

If your d20 roll comes up with a 20, you scored a critical success. This means you succeeded regardless of how poor your skill bonus, disadvantages or other modifiers are. A critical means you succeed despite the difficulty of the task.

WEAPON CRITICAL: When you score a weapon critical, not only does it hit despite the enemy's defense, it dents their armor and deals damage too.

➤ **DENTS:** First, you apply dents to the enemy armor. The number of dents you inflict are noted in your weapon description.

➤ **DAMAGE:** You deal damage taking into account the enemy's new (reduced) armor values. Usually, critical damage is high because you have rolled a 20. However, where your check still wouldn't beat the target's defense, you just deal the minimum damage (weapon + vital + bonuses). You don't reduce your damage by difference between your attack roll and the enemy defense.

FUMBLE! (1)

Sometimes, all the skill and luck in the world isn't enough to prevent the unexpected from happening. A fumble is just that—failure despite the odds.

If your d20 roll comes up with a 1 you fumble, regardless of how good your skill bonus, advantages or other modifiers are. A fumble means you fail, despite the ease of the target number. Furthermore, a fumble immediately ends your turn, wasting any extra unspent actions you may have had.

ADVANTAGES & DISADVANTAGES

Aside from the modifiers noted in a skill description, there are other factors that could make your checks more like to succeed or fail. You get bonuses for favorable circumstances and penalties for unfavorable circumstances—tell the GM if you think such circumstances apply and he or she may grant you an extra bonus to your next check.

ADVANTAGE / DISADVANTAGE

+1 TO +5 CHECK BONUS / -1 TO -5 CHECK PENALTY

The bonus or penalty from an advantage or disadvantage has a minimum of +1 or -1 and a maximum of +5 or -5. Normally, when someone points out an advantage, the GM assigns it a bonus and play continues. It's up to you to point these out.

- **ADVANTAGE:** [+1 TO +5 BONUS] Combat advantages might be higher ground, high morale, attacking a target that is waist deep in water, attacking someone who is climbing a wall, following the plan of a master tactician, and so on.

Utility skill advantages arise from any number of special circumstances: favorable winds (Navigate); cloud cover (Stealth); the brand of a lock (Thievery); the quality of a library (Lore).

- **DISADVANTAGE:** [-1 TO -5 PENALTY] Combat disadvantages might be fighting on lower ground, poor morale, balancing on a rooftop in a poor strategic location, and so on.

Utility skill disadvantages might come from a broken lifting harness (Heave), a faulty tool (Repair), broken shoes (Sprint) or an unkempt appearance (Charisma).

TEAMWORK

Any skill check can benefit from teamwork. Each person in the team who helps the check-maker grants a small bonus to them, even if they are no good at the skill.

TEAMWORK BONUS = +1 PER ALLY
MAXIMUM +10 BONUS FOR 10 ALLIES

Teamwork is useful in a variety of situations—navigating, repairing, treating a disease, recalling history, piloting a vehicle, etc. Teamwork is also especially useful in melee combat where you and your allies can surround powerful enemies and bring them down through cooperation.

To gain a teamwork bonus from an ally, they must commit themselves to the task. This means they have to actively help you.

Sometimes this means taking actions to aid you, but at other times (melee combat) being present and ready is enough.

MAXIMUM BONUS: [+10] Teamwork bonuses are in addition to advantages, disadvantages and other modifiers. The maximum possible teamwork bonus is +10 for ten allies.

MELEE COMBAT: In melee combat, any allies that are within melee reach of your target grant you a +1 bonus to your attack checks (assuming they pose a threat). If you are using freestyle combat rules, you all need to be part of the same combat (in the same ring).

WEAPON CHECK MODIFIERS

In addition to the advantages and disadvantages that could apply to any situation, there are several very common modifiers that apply only to weapon skill checks. These are in addition to advantages or disadvantages and there is no maximum for how many can be stacked.

MELEE: These modifiers should be added to, or are subtracted from, your Melee attack rolls. The bonuses don't apply to any other kind of area attack.

- **OFF-GUARD:** [+2 BONUS] An off-guard opponent is mobile, but not ready to defend himself.
- **PRONE:** [+5 BONUS] A prone opponent is not in a standing position, but can still try to defend himself.
- **HELPLESS:** [INSTANT KILL AT 10 YARDS] A melee attack within 10 yards instantly kills a helpless target.
- **TEAMWORK:** [+1 BONUS PER ALLY WITHIN REACH] More allies grant higher bonuses. See 'Teamwork' above.

RANGED: These modifiers should be added to, or are subtracted from, your Ranged attack rolls. The bonuses don't apply to any other kind of area attack.

- **WITHIN ENEMY REACH:** [-5 PENALTY] When using a projectile weapon in combat (within striking distance an enemy), you take a penalty.
- **HELPLESS:** [INSTANT KILL AT 10 YARDS] A ranged attack within 10 yards instantly kills a helpless target.
- **OBSURED:** [-1 PENALTY PER COMBATANT] When shooting into a combat, you take a -1 penalty to your check for every creature in the group. A miss means no target was hit.
- **NO TEAMWORK:** [NONE] No bonuses.

COVER: Walls, bunkers, fortifications and good use of your surrounding environment can offer defense bonuses to the strategic adventurer. Add these bonuses to all your defenses and armors against attacks that originate from the other side of your cover.

- **LIGHT COVER:** [+2 ALL DEFENSES, +2 ARMOR] Light cover is a layer of plaster, wooden defenses or a makeshift barricade.
- **MEDIUM COVER:** [+5 ALL DEFENSES, +5 ARMOR] Medium cover could be heavier woods or a low brick wall.
- **HEAVY COVER:** [+10 ALL DEFENSES, +10 ARMOR] Heavy cover is typically a standard brick wall, or a low concrete wall.

TARGETS & AREAS

Acquiring and using abilities is an important part of the New Epoch game. The areas and effects of these abilities are complex, but also interesting. Getting familiar with them is only a matter of time.

FREESTYLE & TACTICAL: Combat can be vastly different depending on whether you prefer freestyle or tactical combat. Areas in a freestyle combat hit a set number of enemies whereas in tactical combat they are placed and then the numbers of enemies in the area are counted.

ALLIES & ENEMIES: Sometimes, an ability description will specify whether the area affects allies only, enemies only or both. Otherwise assume the area affects both allies and enemies equally.

FREESTYLE

In freestyle combat, your area attacks hit a set number of targets. There are four basic categories of area: single, small, medium and large. If the targets are grouped, you hit more of them. If the targets are spread out, you hit fewer.

FREESTYLE AREA TYPE	NUMBER OF TARGET'S HIT	
	GROUPED	SPREAD OUT
SINGLE		
Melee X	1	1
Other X	1	1
Ranged X	1	1
SMALL		
Cone X	X/2	X/4
Lance X	X/2	X/4
Wall X	X/2	X/4
MEDIUM		
Cleave X	X	X/2
Slash X	X	X/2
Square X	X	X/2
LARGE		
Aura X	X×2	X
Blast X	X×2	X
Cloud X	X×2	X

Where allies and enemies are mixed together in the same space, your area might hit some of each (assuming it affects both parties equally). Beginning with enemies, choose who is affected, alternating between enemies and allies. Choose an enemy, then choose an ally, then another enemy, then another ally, and so on until you reach your quota for this ability.

TACTICAL

In tactical combat, any creature enveloped within or partially touching an ability's area is affected, even if it only just touches the area an enemy occupies.

AREA TYPE	AREA SIZE
SINGLE	
Melee X	1 target
Other X	1 target
Ranged X	1 target
SMALL	
Cone X	cone, 45° arc, X yards radius
Lance X	box, 1 yard wide, 1 yard high, X yards long
Wall X	box, X yards wide, X/2 yards high, 1 yard long
MEDIUM	
Cleave X	disc, 360° arc, X yards radius
Slash X	disc, 180° arc, X yards radius
Square X	box, X yards wide, X yards long, 1 yard high
LARGE	
Aura X	Sphere, X yards radius
Blast X	Sphere, X yards radius
Cloud X	Sphere, X yards radius

You place or draw the area over the combat grid and count the targets enveloped by, or touching, the area.

AREAS & COVER

Areas are effects that take up air space, but don't penetrate far into solids or liquids. Cover grants you some protection against area effects. Solid blockages and liquids also repel areas.

COVER: A solid object can grant cover if between you and the area's point of origin. Clouds are a special case, and they bypass all types of cover.

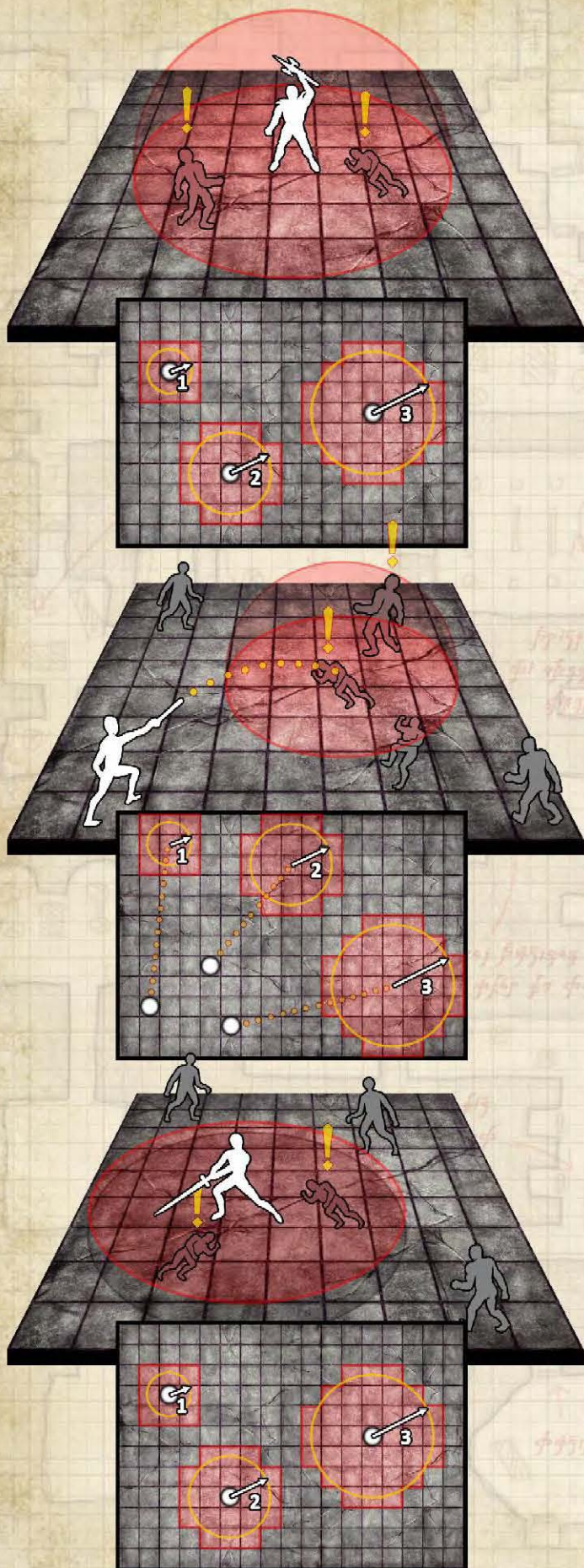
SOLIDS: Areas cannot penetrate through solids that can withstand their damage. Walls and doors contain an area with no leakage.

LIQUIDS: Areas cannot penetrate through liquids that can withstand their damage. A few feet of water makes small explosions harmless.

INSTANT / PERSISTENT

INSTANT: Instant abilities are resolved immediately. You roll your attack check, apply damage and do whatever it is the ability allows for.

PERSISTENT: Many ability with an area are persistent effects. These areas stay in play until the duration expires. Do not make an attack check on your turn. Persistent areas can only attack as an interrupt when a target is inside the area at the beginning of their turn, or when a target moves into the area (voluntarily or otherwise).



AURA



Auras are abilities that encompass an area around you and move with you. Auras might radiate outward from you or saturate the area around you. They are great for buffing allies or debuffing enemies and often have long durations.



AREA: AURA X

RANGE: CENTERED ON SELF

FREESTYLE: X×2 GROUPED OR X SPREAD OUT

TACTICAL: SPHERE, RADIUS X YDS.



An aura has a spherical area with a varying radius in yards. The aura radiates outward from you and the area moves wherever you do—it is inseparable from your body.

BLAST



Blasts are explosive effects that damage enemies or wash over allies. Most blasts are instant damage abilities for destroying large mobs of enemies, but others can impose status effects on your enemies.



AREA: BLAST X

RANGE: X × WEAPON RANGE

FREESTYLE: X×2 GROUPED OR X SPREAD OUT

TACTICAL: SPHERE, RADIUS X YDS.



A blast is a spherical area with a varying radius (in yards). The blast originates from a single point placed by the ability user. The target point also has a varying range—a number of your weapon's range increments.

CLEAVE



Cleaves are spinning circular attacks that can hit enemies on all sides. Some cleaves are a blast of energy that surges outward from you while others are performed by swinging a large weapon.



AREA: CLEAVE X

RANGE: CENTERED ON SELF

FREESTYLE: X GROUPED OR X/2 SPREAD OUT

TACTICAL: FLAT DISC, RADIUS X YDS.



A cleave is a flat circular disc (not spherical) with a varying radius (in yards). Cleaves are centered on the user, but do not move with the user. Cleave abilities do not affect the user.

CLOUD



Clouds are billowing smoky areas that damage and debilitate all who linger within. Clouds are excellent at deterring enemies who are trying to pursue you and useful for slowly choking those that are immobilized. They have interesting effects, like their ability to wrap around cover and cause penalties to ranged attacks.



AREA: CLOUD X

RANGE: X × WEAPON RANGE

FREESTYLE: X×2 GROUPED OR X SPREAD OUT

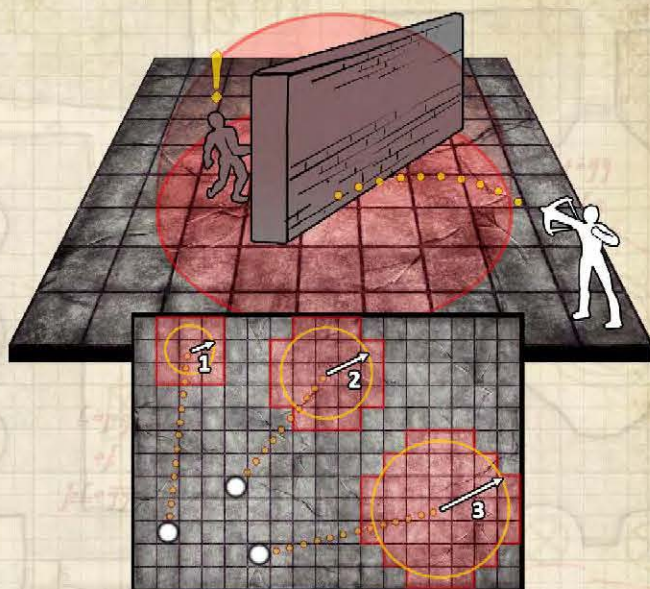
TACTICAL: SPHERE, RADIUS X YDS.



A cloud is a spherical area with a varying radius (in yards). The cloud originates from a single point placed by the ability user. The target point also has a varying range—a number of your weapon's range increments.

All creatures that rely on their eyes to see take an additional -2 penalty for attack checks (ranged and melee) through the smoke.

Clouds penetrate any type of cover because the smoke simply rolls around it (targets don't get their defense or armor bonuses from cover). However, clouds can't seep through walls, doors or complete blockages. Any constant directional wind disperses the cloud immediately.



COMBO



Combos are fast and deadly combinations of strikes, focused on dealing damage to a single target. Combo strikes do less damage than other attacks so they are most effective versus lightly armored individuals, and may be ineffective against heavily armored targets.

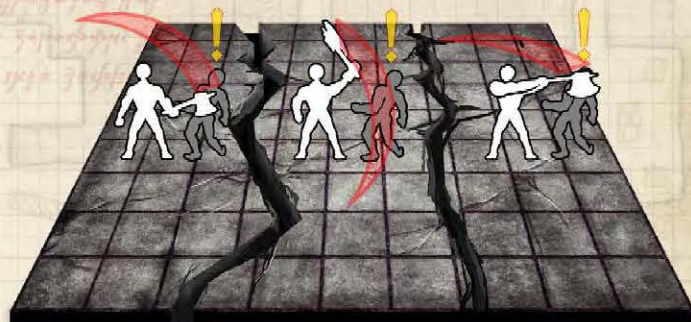


AREA: COMBO X×

EFFECT: X × SOME OTHER TYPE OF ATTACK



A combo is a number of attacks upon a single target. Each attack of a combo is treated as a separate action, except that it only consumes one shot's worth of ammo for projectile and scientific weapons. Each attack check is rolled and resolved separately.



CONE



Cones are directional sprays of energy that shower a pie-slice area. Usually, these are damaging effects that can be dangerous to use near your allies, so you may need to move to a good firing point first.



AREA: CONE X

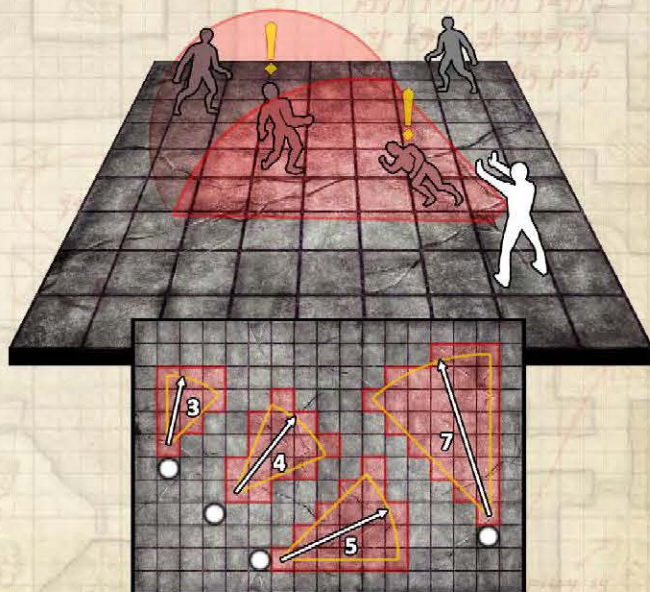
RANGE: DIRECTED AWAY FROM SELF

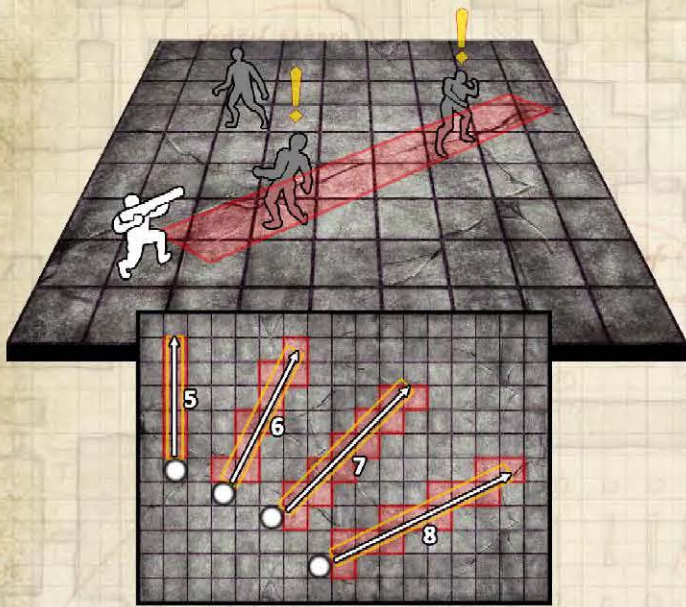
FREESTYLE: X/2 GROUPED OR X/4 SPREAD OUT

TACTICAL: CONE, LENGTH X YDS.



A cone fills a 45° spread with a varying length. The cone begins from directly in front of you and radiates directly away from you.





LANCE



Lances are powerful, straight surges of destruction that carry through many targets. Unlike larger, unwieldy areas, a thin and precise lance can squeeze through a chaotic melee without damaging your allies.



AREA: LANCE X

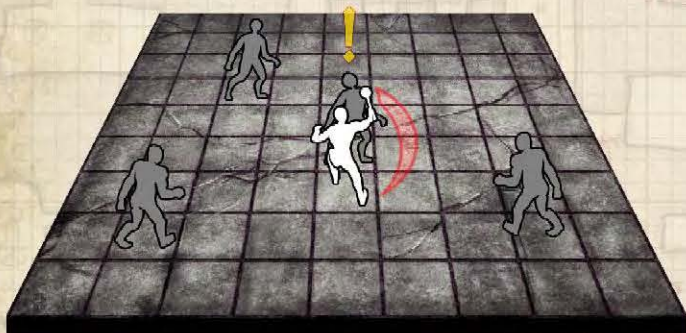
RANGE: DIRECTED AWAY FROM SELF

FREESTYLE: X/2 GROUPED OR X/4 SPREAD OUT

TACTICAL: BOX, LENGTH X YDS., WIDTH 1 YD., HEIGHT 1 YD.



A lance is a long, thin rectangular area that is 1 yard wide, 1 yard high and has a varying length (in yards). Lances originate from directly in front of the user.



MELEE



Melee attacks are close range, heavy hitting smashes. While they don't have the spread or area of other abilities, they tend to cost less steam and do more damage, so are good against tough opponents or heavily armored tanks.



AREA: MELEE X

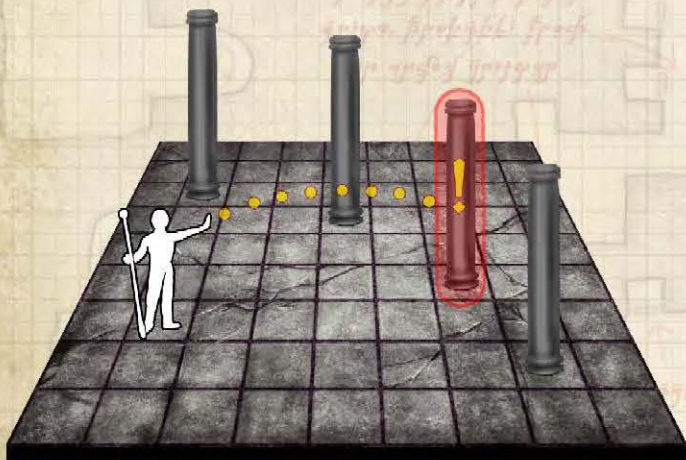
RANGE: X YDS. [+ ANY WEAPON REACH]

FREESTYLE: 1 TARGET

TACTICAL: 1 TARGET



A melee attack is a single weapon check against a single opponent. You must have a weapon capable of making a melee attack and you must be within reach of your enemy.



OTHER



Other abilities target objects and items, or provide useful effects to allies who are willing accept them. They cannot be used against enemies, so they are usually beneficial in nature and used during times of rest rather than times of action.



AREA: OTHER X

RANGE: X YARDS

FREESTYLE: 1 TARGET

TACTICAL: 1 TARGET



An 'Other' ability is an effect which targets an object, item or ally. The range varies—a number of your weapon's range increments.

RANGED



Ranged attacks are gunshots, clockbow bolts, force blasts and precise far away attacks. They are great for sniping, picking targets out of a crowd and dealing high damage to a single creature.



AREA: RANGED X

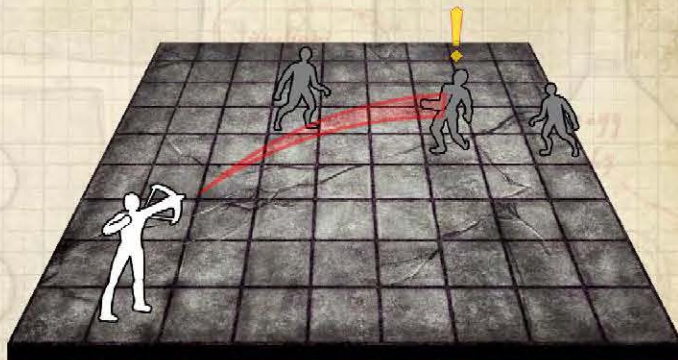
RANGE: X × WEAPON RANGE

FREESTYLE: 1 TARGET

TACTICAL: 1 TARGET



A ranged attack is a single weapon check against a single opponent. You must have a weapon capable of making a ranged attack and you must be within range. The range varies—a number of your weapon's range increments.



SELF



Self abilities are buffing, healing, augmenting effects that increase your effectiveness, offer bonuses or benefit you in some way. Self abilities with long durations can be very effective if used during the beginning of an encounter so you can use its bonuses throughout the action.



AREA: BLAST X

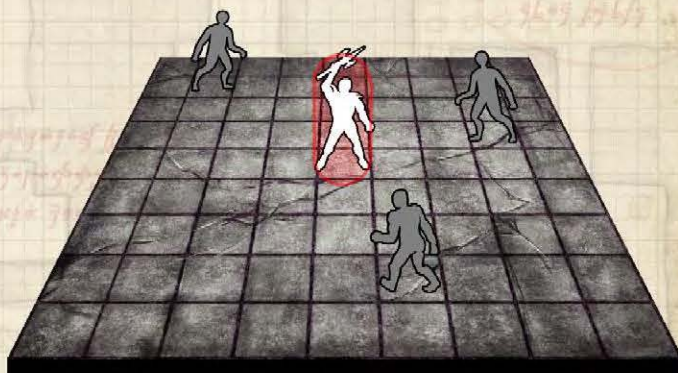
RANGE: CENTERED ON SELF

FREESTYLE: SELF

TACTICAL: SELF



A self ability affects you and no other, typically granting healing, a beneficial status effect or a bonus of some sort. Most self abilities have a duration for which the effect stays active.



SLASH



Slashes are fast, damaging attacks that spread over a forward half circle. They could be the slice of a sword or the arc of a flaming hand. Slashes are great for encompassing all the enemies directly in front of you without endangering your enemies.

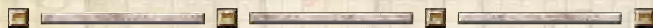


AREA: SLASH X

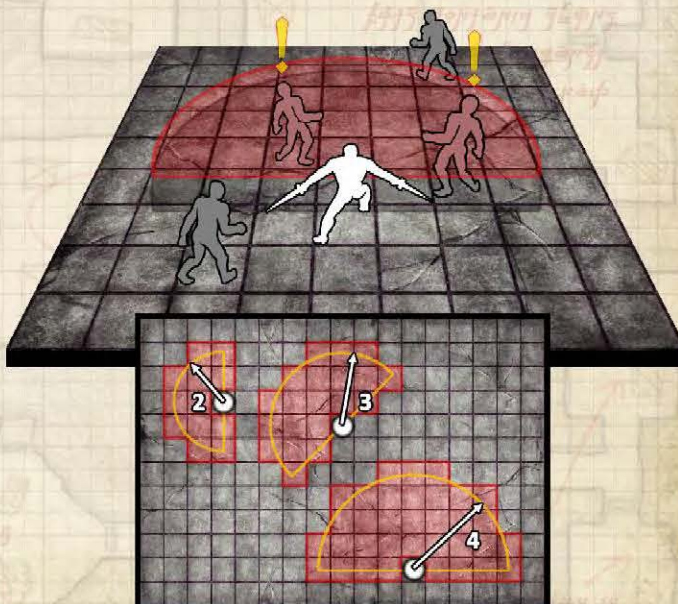
RANGE: DIRECTED AWAY FROM SELF

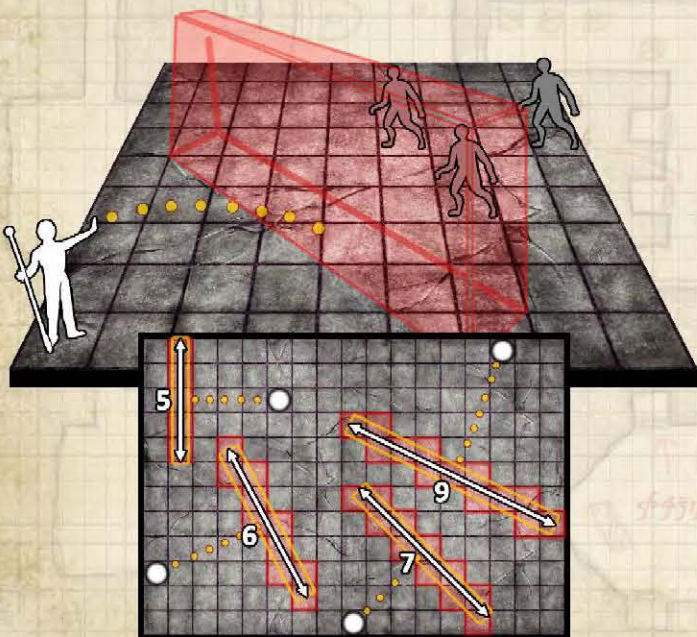
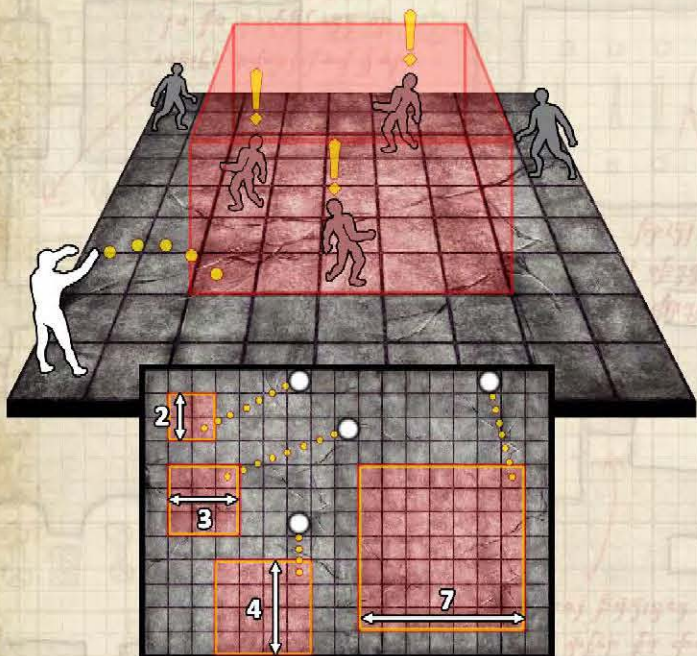
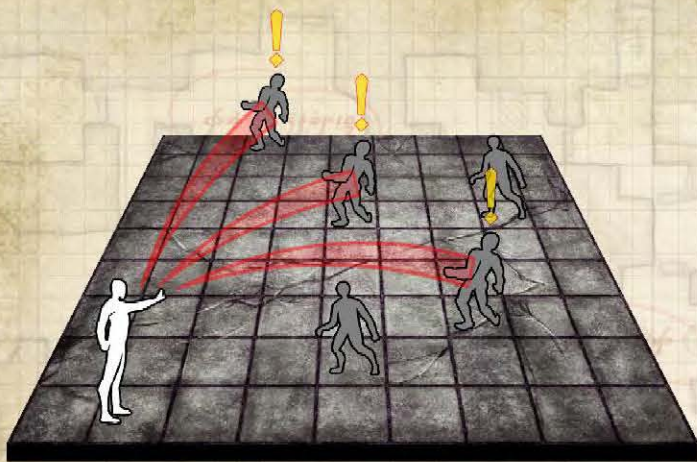
FREESTYLE: X GROUPED OR X/2 SPREAD OUT

TACTICAL: FLAT HALF-CIRCLE, RADIUS X YDS.



A slash is a flat, forward, semicircular arc (not hemispherical) with a varying radius (in yards). Slashes are centered on the user, and point forward but do not move with the user. Slash abilities do not affect the user.





SPLIT

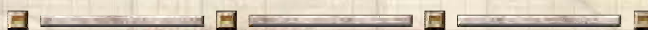


Splits are rapid, versatile attacks that distribute the damage amongst many targets within range. They are great for picking off several weak targets in a crowd, especially when there are allies that you don't want to hit with a large area effect.



AREA: SPLIT X×

EFFECT: X × SOME OTHER TYPE OF ATTACK



A split is a number of attacks, each upon a different target. Each attack of a split is treated as a separate action, except that it only consumes one shot's worth of ammo for projectile and scientific weapons. Each attack check is rolled and resolved separately.

SQUARE



Squares are unusual areas with specific yet effective strategic uses. Squares are placed at one corner and can then extend their sides in any direction, allowing them to 'turn corners'. Squares can also be placed so that they overlap you and your allies.



AREA: SQUARE X

RANGE: X × WEAPON RANGE

FREESTYLE: X GROUPED OR X/2 SPREAD OUT

TACTICAL: BOX, WIDTH X YDS., LENGTH X YDS., HEIGHT 1 YD.



A square is a flat area (not a cube) with a varying width and length (in yards). The square should align perfectly with your action grid, if there is one. The square originates from a single corner point (you place the point) and expands in any direction you choose (even a direction you can't see).

WALL



Walls are barriers that deter or prevent enemies from crossing to the other side. They have obvious applications—separating a powerful enemy leader from the group, barring entry during a siege, stopping a deadly cloud or flood, etc.



AREA: WALL X

RANGE: X × WEAPON RANGE

FREESTYLE: X/2 GROUPED OR X/4 SPREAD OUT

TACTICAL: BOX, WIDTH X YDS., LNG 1 YD., HGT X/2 YDS.



A wall is a long, thin, rectangular area that is 1 yard deep and has a varying length and height (in yards). The wall originates from a single center point (you place the point) and expands outward equally on either side. The wall's back faces directly toward you and its front faces directly away from you.

If a solid wall is created, it pushes creatures caught in the area out (each creature chooses which side). Creatures might even have to squeeze together into the same space if necessary.

DURATION

A cloud of poison might last for a few rounds, an aura of strength might last for a minute and a blessing might last for an hour. Many abilities, effects and areas have durations for which they are active.

For more detailed information on how weeks, months, years and chronicles are measured, see the World Codex.

ROUNDS: The ability lasts for a number of rounds. A round begins on your turn and finishes at the beginning of your next turn (before you can take any actions). The effect ends at the beginning of the round that exceeds the duration.

MINUTES: The ability lasts for a number of minutes. Each minute is 10 rounds, and the effect ends at the beginning of the round that exceeds the duration. The effect ends at the beginning of the round that exceeds the duration.

HOURS: The ability lasts for a number of hours. Each hour is 60 minutes, or 600 rounds. The effect ends at the beginning of the round that exceeds the duration.

DAYS: The ability lasts for a number of days. Each day is measured as 24 hours, not the period between your rests. The effect ends at the beginning of the round that exceeds the duration.

WEEKS: The ability lasts for a number of weeks. Each week is 9 days: 6 working days and 3 days of rest.

MONTHS: The ability lasts for a number of months. Each month is 3 weeks—does not include any part of the extra 1 week that comes at the beginning of each season.

SEASONS: The ability lasts for a number of seasons. Each season is 3 months and 1 week.

YEARS: The ability lasts for a number of years. Each year is 4 seasons, or 360 days.

CHRONICLES: The ability lasts for a number of chronicles. Each chronicle is 30 years.

STATUS EFFECTS: Status effects are usually persistent. The penalties or bonuses remain until the status effect duration expires. If a status effect isn't given a duration, it will expire when the parent ability's duration expires. If there is no duration given for ability nor status effect, it is permanent.

INSTANT: The ability's effect is instantaneous and ends immediately. However, things that happen as a consequence of the ability may continue—diminishing damage, for example.

PERSISTENT: Any ability that covers an area and has a duration greater than instant is usually a persistent effect (it attacks every round) or causes a persistent status effect (the effect remains until the ability duration expires or the target leaves the area).

If the area has an attack then it happens as an interrupt during someone else's turn—you wait until a target is in the area at the beginning of his or her turn, or wait until a target moves into your area, then make your attack as an interrupt action.

VEHICLE COMBAT

Vehicles are a cool part of the New Epoch setting that require a few extra rules. When your character wants to take cover behind his steambike, race others in his monowheel or command an airship in battle, you can refer to the entries below.

The pilot in a vehicle is the most important person onboard. He control the vehicle's movement and keeps the passengers safe but is handicapped when it comes to combat.

THE PILOT

PILOT DEFENSES: The pilot seat is typically a well-protected place, usually the most secure and structurally sound spot in a vehicle. As long as the vehicle is bigger than the pilot, he gets cover bonuses versus any kind of attack. Depending on the construction of the vehicle, gunnery crew or passengers may get this bonus too.

PILOT PRONE, BUT GAINS COVER

VEHICLE 1 SIZE LARGER: LIGHT COVER

VEHICLE 2 SIZES LARGER: MEDIUM COVER

VEHICLE 3 SIZES LARGER: HEAVY COVER

EVEN LARGER: PILOT CAN'T BE ATTACKED DIRECTLY

If the vehicle size is any larger, the pilot cannot be attacked at all from the outside of the vehicle. In large vehicles such as airships and tanks, the hull needs to be breached before the pilot becomes vulnerable.

PILOT REFLEX: When vehicle's are important to a combat, the pilot controls the vehicle on his or her turn, but the pilot's reflex is penalized by the size of the vehicle. The bigger the vehicle, the slower his or her reactions will be.

PILOT COMBAT ACTIONS: A pilot needs to keep at least one hand on the controls and maintain the vehicle's course and bearing, even when it is cruising. Because of these limitations, a pilot sacrifices one of his combat actions each round to maintain controlling the vehicle, even if he does nothing with that action except steady the wheel.

PILOT ACTIONS PER ROUND

ONE PILOTING ACTION

ONE STANDARD ACTION

The piloting action could be used to make a maneuver, dump ballast, gain altitude or do anything else related to piloting—if you don't make a pilot check, it doesn't use up your utility action this round. The other standard action can be used to do whatever you like: shoot a firearm, use a stimulant or defend yourself.

THE VEHICLE

VEHICLE DEFENSES: The defenses of a vehicle depend on the skill of a pilot. The pilot uses his or her own total defense scores (not prone) but modifier each by the size of the vehicle.

VEHICLE'S DEX = PILOT'S DEX - VEHICLE SIZE

VEHICLE'S GUTS = PILOT'S GUTS + VEHICLE SIZE

VEHICLE'S WITS = PILOT'S WITS - VEHICLE SIZE

ARMOR: Vehicle armor has three values, just like personal character armor. It has a physical armor, an elemental armor and an ethereal armor for softening the blows of different damage types.

However, vehicle armor can only be dented by armaments—the weapons of other vehicles. Character weapons and abilities have no effect on vehicle armor, even on a critical hit.

VEHICLE ARMOR CAN ONLY BE DENTED BY VEHICLE ARMAMENTS

You can still scratch the hull of a vehicle if your attack damage exceeds its armor, but you won't be able to weaken it by chipping away at its armor. Personal weapons are simply too small to have any effect on the massive armored hulls of vehicles.

CHECKS

A pilot check is required to maneuver a vehicle. You (the pilot) make a Pilot check each time you want to do something special. You don't need to make a check to continue on your course at your current speed, but you still lose an action.

CHECKS: PILOT SKILL - VEHICLE SIZE
CHECK REQUIRED FOR MANEUVERS
NO CHECK FOR MAINTAINING COURSE

Pilot skill checks are penalized by the size of the vehicle. It's daunting to steer a hulking Ijolean Broadsword through a narrow canyon, but the tiny Avenian Falcon doesn't even break a sweat.

ATTACKS: A vehicle attack, just like a Pilot check, is penalized by size. But, it is the size of the armament, not the vehicle, that is important here.

ATTACK: PILOT'S WEAPON SKILL - ARMAMENT SIZE

The pilot can take control of any one vehicle armament during his or her turn from the pilot seat, so long as that armament has gunnery crew manning it. He or she can operate it single handedly, regardless of size, but can't reload it. Gunnery crews can man and fire other armaments, or help the pilot to reload an armament. The pilot also counts as one gunnery crew member for the armament he controls.

TEAMWORK: Extra large vehicles require a skilled crew to work in conjunction with the captain (who is the main pilot). Brass pipes and gramophones relay messages around such vehicles to aid the pilot. These are essentially teamwork bonuses

TEAMWORK REDUCES PILOTING DIFFICULTY

OTHERS ABOARD

GUNNERY CREW: A gunnery crew is limited in what they can do each round, similar to a pilot. They must give up one action per round to maintain the armament. Each crew member is left with only one standard action to use in a combat round.

The armament attack is made by the most skilled gunner of the crew. The others maintain the weapon. Any additional crew above the required number for an armament can offer teamwork bonuses to the lead gunner. For example, if an armament requires 10 crew, you only get a +1 teamwork bonus when you have 11 gunnery crew on that weapon. If you had 12 crew, you'd get a +2 bonus.

PASSENGERS: Other characters aboard a vehicle get to use a full rounds worth of actions every turn. In a very small vehicle, these extra passengers might also have to sit prone. But in a large one, they can move from place to place throughout the vehicle.

COLLISIONS & CRASHES

Collisions and crashes are the inherent dangers of actions sequences involving vehicles. The damage done during a collision depends on the size of what it hits. The two objects in the collision deal damage to each other. If one of those objects is natural terrain, you just work it out for the vehicle.

DAMAGE DEALT = VEHICLE SIZE × [SPEED DIFFERENCE / 5]

The speed difference is approximate. You have to work out or 'guesstimate' how fast one object hits the other. This can be done by math, or a simple GM ruling.

When one object is stationary use the moving object's speed (the other speed is zero). When objects move directly toward each other, add the speeds. When they move in the same direction, subtract the slower speed from the faster one. When they have different angles and speeds, use trigonometry or just estimate.

FAILED MANEUVER: [BOTH TAKE FULL DAMAGE] An accidental collision between two vehicles is balanced with regard to the damage each vehicle sustains.

RAM ATTACK: [RAMMER TAKES HALF DAMAGE] A vehicle ram attack is different. One vehicle intentionally rams another. If they are successful, the target takes full damage and the rammer takes only half damage. If the attacks fails, neither vehicle takes any damage. If the target is stationary or disabled in some way, no attack roll is necessary—the ram automatically succeeds.

PASSENGERS: [HALF DAMAGE] Passengers aboard a vehicle take half the total collision damage. They can reduce the collision damage by their personal armor.



SALE



6: INJURY





INJURY

CHARACTERS IN A ROLEPLAYING GAME DON'T JUST GET BRUISED ELBOWS, SCALDING SORES AND PAPER CUTS—THEY ARE THE TARGET OF BROKEN BONES, THIRD DEGREE BURNS AND SEVERE LACERATION. THEY ARE CONSTANTLY THROWING THEMSELVES INTO HARM'S WAY, AND GET INJURED BECAUSE OF IT.

Most roleplayers already know how damage and health works. It's not a new concept at all. This chapter will explain the basics to novices, and the details to veterans to clarify the rules about injury and damage. You'll find information on status effects, healing, resting, armor and other hazards of adventuring such as drowning, catching on fire or being crushed.

OVERVIEW

No doubt, you will soon be familiar with all of the types of injury possible in this chapter, and with a bit of luck, you'll be able to avoid the worst of them.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY: A transcript of a roleplaying session by the developers, detailing some of the rarer types of damage and other hazards that might be encountered.

BASICS: There are three things you need to keep an eye on when you are in a dangerous situation. These are your health, your steam and the durability of your armor.

These numbers determine your endurance in a battle, so you need to avoid harm and exert yourself only when necessary in order to conserve stamina. The longer you can last, the more experience you are likely to get and the longer you will live.

DAMAGE: Damage comes in many different shapes and forms. In addition to the different types of physical, elemental and ethereal damage, there is also special damage and diminishing damage to worry about.

REST: Resting cures almost all ailments. These rules let you know how long your character has to rest in order to restore health and steam as well as repair your dented armor.

INJURIES: The most common types of injury are wounds and exhaustion. Injuries can usually be cured by resting, unless they are debilitating like diseases.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY: PART 6

The characters have defeated a storm colossus, and are low on Health and Steam. The players made their stand in a ruined tower and the storm colossus crashed and caused a massive cloud of dust to rise. The players have fled onto the tower roof to escape the suffocating dust. Like many Residium structures, the roofs are steepled, slippery, angled and very hard to traverse. The center of the tower is hollow, a gaping empty void in the center of the tall square walls around it.

From the dust cloud below, the captain of the storm colossus arose, flying a rocketpack, giving him excellent maneuverability while the players are pinned down on the tower rooftop. They are now in the closing moments of this epic battle.

DAVE: [GM] Expertly piloting his rocket pack, the stoigmari captain zooms through the arch and hovers in the center of the round structure. (Draws a dotted line and an X on their battle grid) The gaping hole beneath him is a massive 60 yard drop into the billowing dust cloud below. And then he unleashes another massive mind blast on you, Ozurnig!

LAUREN: [OZURNIG] Argh! No, I only have 7 Health left and my armor is ruined!

DAVE: [GM] And that's why he's chosen you. Especially after you Grapple Slammed him into the wall. He wants revenge!

➦ THE STOIGMARI CAPTAIN IS USING A SPECIAL UNIQUE ABILITY THAT THE PLAYERS HAVE NEVER SEEN BEFORE. HE GAINS THIS ABILITY THROUGH THE LINK TO THE ARTIFACT THAT THE PLAYERS HAVE BEEN SENT TO FIND. IT PRODUCES A POWERFUL CONE OF SOUND THAT INFLECTS DIMINISHING DAMAGE AND THE CONFUSED STATUS EFFECT.

DAVE FAINTLY DRAWS THE CONE SHAPE TO MAKE SURE IT COVERS OZURNIG. THEN HE ROLLS THE ATTACK AND SCORES A TOTAL OF 38. IT'S A VERY HIGH ROLL AGAINST OZURNIG'S GUTS DEFENSE OF 23, BUT IT ISN'T A CRITICAL.

THE DAMAGE IS 0 BASE DAMAGE, 20 ABILITY DAMAGE, 15 BONUS DAMAGE AND ANOTHER 5 FOR THE LONG ACTION HE TAKES. IT'S A TOTAL OF 40 DAMAGE AND OZURNIG ONLY HAS 6 ARMOR.

LAUREN: [OZURNIG] (Clutching her arm) Urgh! I fall to my knees and quiver, helplessly. I'm on -27 Health and Beaten. And I'm confused too!

DAVE: [GM] (Putting on his best deep Stoigmari accent) "Ha ha harr!" The crazed captain cries. "Now I kill you, small tin man. For Stoigmar, for the Anvil Core!"

LAUREN: [OZURNIG] He's going to kill me! Quickly do something!

DAVE: [GM] Next round! Voyle, you have the first turn.

➦ THE NEXT ROUND BEGINS AND THE ORDER OF TURNS STAYS THE SAME. VOYLE IS UP FIRST!

ANDREW: [VOYLE] I'm completely out of Steam! I perform a standard attack... No, screw it. I use up all my steam to perform a Halt ability on the captain!

DAVE: [GM] (Reminding Andrew) You'll be exhausted, and helpless if you go into negative steam.

ANDREW: [VOYLE] It's so unlike Voyle to do heroics, but this is life or death. Expending the last reserves of my stamina, I try to stun him with the Halt ability. "Nojantu, take him down!"

➦ ANDREW MEASURES THE RANGE ON THE BATTLE GRID—IT'S FINE. HE ROLLS HIS ATTACK, BUT THE DIE COMES UP WITH A NATURAL 1. HE FUMBLED.

ANDREW: [VOYLE] "Dah! Paragons be damned!" And then I fall down.

DAVE: [GM] Your shot goes wildly astray, frizzling one of the pillars on the opposite side of the hollowed out tower. Then you keel over like a worn out rag doll.

ANDREW: [VOYLE] (And then quickly adding) I strategically aim my fall towards the nearest defensible cover.

LAUREN: [OZURNIG] "Tch! Whatever."

VANESSA: [JACINTH] Okay, my turn? Good. (Grimacing and standing up) I am going to draw my dagger, leap onto the stoigmari captain, then wrestle his rocketpack off him!

DAVE: [GM] (Surprised) Whoa?! Are you even near him?

VANESSA: [JACINTH] Yes, I was standing there when he made his first pass two rounds ago! And damn, that sonic weapon hurt!

GRANT: [NOJANTU] "Don't do it, gypsy! You're carrying half the loot! And who's going to cook?"

VANESSA: [JACINTH] "Burn and die, greenfuzz!" I'm doing it. I think I can jump up to 6 yards on a running jump. Can I reach him from that central walkway, there?

DAVE: [GM] (After a moment's consideration) Okay, distance isn't an issue here. But he's going to try to avoid you. This is a weird situation, so I'm going to say it's a Jump check versus his Dex defense. It'll be a long attack action and then next round you can try to wrestle it off him.

VANESSA: [JACINTH] (Whining) Fine, I'll do it anyway! "I was born in the skies, and I'll die in the skies! Hyaar!"

➦ VANESSA ROLLS HER 'JUMP ATTACK' AND SCORES A 26! IT'S AN EXCELLENT ROLL AND SHE SUCCEEDS!

DAVE: [GM] You leap through the air, landing face to face with the stoigmari captain. His bristling beard and long bedraggled hair fly about in the wind as he struggles to control the rocketpack. You can barely hold onto him! Nojantu, it's your turn!

GRANT: [NOJANTU] Okay. "Gypsy, hit him hard then rip the pack off."

VANESSA: [JACINTH] What are you talking about?

GRANT: [NOJANTU] I use my assist ability, Vengeance. You get a free interrupt attack dealing weapon plus 15 damage, and you even deal half damage on a miss!

➦ VANESSA ROLLS HER ATTACK AND HITS, DEALING A TOTAL OF 27 DAMAGE WITH HER DAGGER. THIS IS JUST ENOUGH TO FINALLY KILL THE ENEMY. HOWEVER, THE RESULTS OF THIS HEROIC ACTION DIDN'T GO EXACTLY AS PLANNED...

DAVE: [GM] Thrusting the dagger into the captain's neck, he gurgles and convulses as blood gushes out from his jugular.

VANESSA: [JACINTH] Yes! I got the kill!

GRANT: [NOJANTU] Wait a minute! It was my ability! So it's my kill!

DAVE: [GM] (Interrupting the both of them) And then he goes limp. The rocketpack engine splutters and stops. A sudden silence comes over the entire scene. In slow motion, the captain and Jacinth break apart, her legs flounder in the air and then they begin to plunge into the dust cloud below...

VANESSA: [JACINTH] How far did you say it was to the ground?

DAVE: [GM] It's 60 yards to the dust cloud and after that another 20 or 30. It's a deadly fall.

GRANT: [NOJANTU] (Smirking) "Well, whad'ya know? I got two kills with my ability!..."

MUCH LATER ON...

The party survived and they discovered Jacinth, unconscious and Beaten at the bottom of the tower. Only Nojantu survived the encounter without being Beaten, and thus, he has to tend to all the others. After raiding the storm colossus for first aid kits and medical supplies, Nojantu goes to work on the others.

The daylight is fading, the celestial ribbon is sinking into the horizon. They are all conscious, but too tired and wounded to travel. They have a small camp in a defensible ruin where Nojantu has set up a makeshift infirmary. He's no doctor, but he's all they've got.

➔ AS FAR AS GAME RULES GO, ALL THEY NEED TO DO IS TAKE A NIGHT'S REST. HOWEVER, THIS GROUP ENJOYS THE ROLEPLAYING EXPERIENCE SO THEY ARE ACTING IT OUT.

VANESSA: [JACINTH] (Angrily) "Greenfuzz! Where's my soup!?"

GRANT: [NOJANTU] "Geez, I was only joking about before!" (Mumbles about how he defeated the enemy captain and gets no credit).

ANDREW: [VOYL] "From where I was lying, it sure looked like Jacinth got him."

LAUREN: [OZURNIG] "Harden up, Nojantu. Did you get any medical supplies from the colossus?"

GRANT: [NOJANTU] "All right, all right. Yeah I got this potion, labeled Quib's Formula. That's all. Here." (Handing it to Voyl)

ANDREW: [VOYL] (Rejects it) "It's a healing potion. Give it to Jacinth. She's got the lowest Health score, so she's most likely to recover before something comes to disturb us. We are in the middle of a dangerous ruin, you know."

GRANT: [NOJANTU] "Right. Here you go gypsy. You made a fine mess of that captain."

➔ NOJANTU GIVES THE POTION TO JACINTH AND SHE DRINKS IT. THIS TYPE OF POTION RESTORES 2d12 HEALTH. SHE ROLLS THE DICE AND SCORES AN 18, THEN INCREASES HER HEALTH BY THAT MUCH.

GRANT: [NOJANTU] (Rolls up his sleeves and says uneasily) "Now lets see if I can do anything about those wounds. Ozurnig, Voyl, walk me through this okay?"

➔ NOJANTU MAKES HIS MEDICINE CHECK WITH A +2 TEAMWORK BONUS FROM OZURNIG AND VOYL. HE WANTS TO USE THE TREAT WOUND APPLICATION OF THE SKILL.

UNFORTUNATELY, TN 30 IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO ACHIEVE. HE ROLLS A 16, BUT IT STILL ISN'T HIGH ENOUGH TO SUCCEED.

VANESSA: [JACINTH] "Ouch! Be more careful!"

ANDREW: [VOYL] "Well, you don't have any Steam left to try again, so try to treat Ozurnig's wounds instead."

➔ NOJANTU TRIES TO TREAT WOUNDS ON OZURNIG AND FAILS. THEN HE TRIES ON VOYL AND SUCCEEDS. THE REMAINING STEAM AND HEALTH DAMAGE MUST HEAL WITH TIME.

DAVE: [GM] Luckily, the rest of the night passes uneventfully. As the Celestial Ribbon climbs above the horizon you awaken, feeling cold, stiff and sore. But luckily, the worst is behind you.

BASICS



In the most simple terms, there are three numbers that you need to keep track of during a combat. These are your health, your steam and armor. When any of these are reduced to zero or less, you will suffer severe consequences and will be more vulnerable to attack—your enemies could kill you.

When your Armor, Health or Steam is getting low, you need to consider the risks of continuing. Will you push forward or stop for some rest?



HEALTH: Health is your buffer zone against wounds. When you are fit and able your health is at the maximum. When you take damage your health score decreases. When it reaches zero you are Beaten and at the mercy of your enemies.

When you get hit by a hammer, a trap, a gunshot, a fireball or a light lance you take damage—your health temporarily decreases, though armor reduces the severity of these blows. For example, 32 Flame damage would reduce your health by 32 if you had no armor.



STEAM: Steam is your buffer zone against exhaustion. When you are well rested your steam is at the maximum. When you exert yourself or use abilities your steam decreases. When it reaches zero you are Beaten, too exhausted to defend yourself.

When you cleave your enemies, conjure a wintry blast or pull off a trick shot you expend steam—your steam temporarily decreases. For example, a 20 steam ability would reduce your steam by 20. More powerful abilities reduce your steam by a greater amount.



ARMOR: Armor is your buffer zone against damage. When all your armor is polished up and well-maintained it is very protective. When an enemy scores a critical on you, your armor decreases. When it reaches zero, you will be very vulnerable to attacks.

When you are struck by a flail head, fall prey to an explosive trap, or are splashed with acid, you armor reduces the damage. For example, if an enemy dealt 24 Physical damage, your 10 Physical armor would reduce the damage to only 14 Physical.

When an enemy scores a critical hit on you, he dents your armor. This could be between 1 and 10 dents, depending on what kind of weapon or attack he has. A single dent reduces all three armor value equally. Your armor score can be reduced to a minimum of zero in this way.

DAMAGE



Damage is something you will become instantly familiar with, as it is the result of most successful weapon checks. Simply, you add together your weapon damage, vital bonus, ability damage and any bonus damage from a high attack roll. That's the damage you apply to the target.

$$\begin{aligned} W &= \text{WEAPON DAMAGE} + \text{VITAL} \\ & \quad (+ \text{ATTACK ROLL BONUS}) \\ & \quad (+ \text{ABILITY DAMAGE BONUS}) \end{aligned}$$

You might have other damage bonuses from your weapon quality, temporary ability buffs or other effects. Add everything together—there is no limit to how high your damage can be.



ONLY ONE DAMAGE TYPE: Damage can only ever have a single type (Physical, Acid, Ice, Poison, etc.). If you ever come across a situation in which there is more than one damage type, discard one of them and choose the damage type that you prefer for this attack.

ARMOR

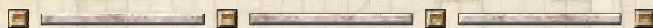


Your armor is the last line of defense against damage. When you are hurt, armor will negate some of that damage, and the rest will penetrate through to your body (you'll lose Health). The target being hit is responsible for making this damage reduction.



DAMAGE REDUCTION: Armor has three values: physical, elemental and ethereal. Reduce the damage you take by the appropriate armor value. Different types of armor may be more effective versus certain types of damage.

- **PHYSICAL DAMAGE:** [PHYSICAL] Reduce damage by your Physical Armor total.
- **ELEMENTAL DAMAGE:** [ACID, ELECTRIC, FLAME, ICE, SONIC] Reduce damage by your Elemental Armor total.
- **ETHEREAL DAMAGE:** [DARK, HEALING, LIGHT, NECROTIC, POISON] Reduce damage by your Ethereal Armor total.
- **SPECIAL:** [SPECIAL] Special damage ignores all forms of armor or damage negation.



EXAMPLE: You are fighting a gremlin. Your weapon damage is +5, your vital bonus is +4 and your ability damage bonus is +10. Your weapon usually deals Physical damage, but this ability deals Sonic damage.

You make an attack roll against the gremlin and hit. Your attack roll beats the gremlin's defense by +6, so you deal $(5+4+10+6=)$ 25 Sonic damage.

Sonic damage is elemental. This gremlin has 11 Elemental Armor, so reduces your attack's damage to only 14 Sonic damage. The gremlin loses 14 Health and the battle continues.

DAMAGE NEGATION: Sometimes it is possible that your armor can completely negate the damage dealt.

If you come up against a foe that can't be damaged, try to inflict a different damage type or use your most damaging strikes so that they can penetrate through armor.

PHYSICAL DAMAGE



Physical damage comes from anything that is physical in itself. While this doesn't encompass other categories of damage, it includes any type of physical injury you can think of—crushing, slashing, piercing, etc.

- **CRUSHING:** Hammer blows, crushing boulders, unarmed strikes and staggering explosions.
- **PIERCING:** Arrows, musket rounds, spear thrusts, sword tips, spikes and pistol shots.
- **SLASHING:** Saber cleaves, grenade shrapnel, blade traps, whip slashes and axe strikes.

ELEMENTAL DAMAGE



Elemental damage comes from the elements of the world—earth, air, fire, water and also sonic attacks.

- **ACID:** Burning alkalines, sizzling acids, horrid alchemical concoctions and corrosive gasses.
- **ELECTRIC:** Jolts and sparks, arcs of lightning, electron discharges and electrical currents.
- **FLAME:** Fireballs, furnace brands, heat waves, conflagrations and fiery infernos.
- **ICE:** Low temperatures, freezing ice storms, bitter cold snaps and frigid blizzards.
- **SONIC:** Multiplicative resonance, overpowering sound, horrid dissonance and blissful harmony.

ETHEREAL DAMAGE



Ethereal damage comes from the ethers of the world—darkness, light, life, death and also poison attacks.

- **DARK:** Psychological trauma, negative energy, loss of hope, insanity and confusion and defiance of the natural order.
- **HEALING:** Purifying and restoring blood, sealing wounds, cleansing the physical body and reversal of decay and death.
- **LIGHT:** Burning radiance, positive energy, blinding light, overstimulation of the mind and enforcement of the natural order.
- **NECROTIC:** Decay of life, withering with age, decomposition of youth, destruction and reversal of healing and sapping strength.
- **POISON:** Contamination of the blood, toxification, debilitation, sickening and nausea.

HEALING: A target willing to receive healing can expose a hand, arm, neck or other weak spot in their armor in order to receive the full benefits of the healing (armor won't reduce it). It's assumed allies automatically do this (you don't have to declare it).

SPECIAL DAMAGE



Special damage is different to all other damage. It is the kind of damage that cannot be classified. This type of damage completely ignores armor and is completely unavoidable. Special damage may be unavoidable loss of vitality or life force, self-inflicted damage, an inevitable consequence or a repercussion of your actions.

CRITICAL HITS



Critical hits not only deal high damage, they also reduce your enemy's armor. Scoring a few lucky criticals in the opening rounds of an action sequence will leave an enemy wide open for the remainder of a battle.

When you score a critical hit, you dent the enemies armor, then apply your damage. The number of dents is listed with your weapon. The damage dealt will be high because you have rolled high, and you should add the difference to your damage. If you still didn't beat the enemy's defense on a critical, it just means you don't get any bonus damage from a high attack roll (you still deal the basic damage of your weapon, plus vital and ability bonuses).

DIMINISHING DAMAGE



Fast acting poisons, debilitating necrotic diseases, severed arteries and gushing wounds are all examples of diminishing damage.

Most damage is instant, reduced from the target's health immediately and has no other lasting effect. Diminishing damage is different—it damages the target for 5 rounds and then dissipates.

After diminishing damage gets through your armor in the first round, it ignores armor for each round thereafter. However, newly applied diminishing damage from later attacks still has to penetrate through armor as normal.

DIMINISHING DAMAGE HALVES EACH ROUND ENDS AFTER 5 ROUNDS

Diminishing damage is applied in full when the effect begins, then again at the beginning of each subsequent round (the turn in which it was first dealt). Each round, the damage is half that of the previous round. Once it has dealt damage five times the damage ends, no matter how strong it still is.



STACKING DIM DAMAGE: Diminishing damage of the same type doesn't stack together, but diminishing damage of different types does stack.

Consider damage and remaining duration (rounds of damage left) to be separate when stacking diminishing damage together. The higher damage cancels out the lower damage. Similarly, the longer remaining duration cancels out the shorter one.

For example, you are taking 5 Flame Dim damage and it only has one round left. You are then hit for 25 Flame Dim damage. The old damage is replaced with the new one, 25 Flame Dim damage and it has a full 5 rounds of grief to give you.



SPECIAL: Some types of diminishing damage can be instantly removed if the right conditions are available. For example, jumping into water ends fire damage and dousing yourself with water ends acid damage. If such a situation exists, you can use an action during your turn to alleviate the diminishing damage.

DENTS



Dents reduce your armor, making you more vulnerable to damage. When you are stuck by a critical, the enemy dents your armor before he deals damage.

A DENT REDUCES PHYSICAL ARMOR, ELEMENTAL ARMOR AND ETHEREAL ARMOR BY THE SAME AMOUNT

For example, an enemy attacks and scores a critical, inflicting 3 dents on your armor. This reduces your physical armor by 3, reduces your elemental armor by 3 and reduces your ethereal armor by 3.

SCAVENGED ARMOR IS HALF DENTED

Pieces of armor scavenged off your fallen enemies are always dented when you find them. As a general rule, they have only half their normal armor (half dented). You can repair these dents during a night's rest. Armor cannot be destroyed, no matter how many times it is dented. It can be repaired by resting or using the Repair skill.

✦ **CRITICAL:** A critical causes dents. Different weapons cause a different number of dents.

✦ **REST:** Resting for a minute removes 1 dent. Resting for an hour removes 10 dents. Resting for a night removes all dents.

✦ **REPAIR:** Armor can be patched with a successful Repair check, removing 1 dent. You can do this once between every rest, or pay additional steam to try again until the armor is in good condition.



CHANGE MY ARMOR TO REMOVE DENTS? No. Dents are not upon any particular piece of armor—they are the sum total of nicks, scrapes, buckles and punctures across your entire suit. The under-clothing that armor attaches to may also be damaged: belts, harnesses, mantles, tack and gambesons. So, dents make it impossible to change pieces of armor without removing the whole suit of armor and repairing everything underneath, which you need to stop and rest to do.

INJURIES



The least glamorous part of an adventurer's life is the injuries—exhaustion, wounds, insanity, starvation and a myriad of other harmful effects and conditions. While prevention is the best course of action, you will inevitably get injured sooner or later.

SCARS



Every time you are Beaten because your Health dropped too low, you gain a permanent scar—it can't be healed, even through magic. Many types of scars are visible, especially if they are from physical damage.

Slashing and puncturing weapons can cause tears, punctures and abrasions on the skin, which leave raised lumpy skin even if stitched and bandaged. Bludgeoning weapons can cause bone fracturing or breaking which leaves kinks in straight bones, even when properly set by a doctor.

All types of elemental damage other than sonic produce burns, many of them unsightly and disfiguring: acid burns, heat burns, frost burns or electrical burns. Sonic damage causes partial or permanent deafness in one or both ears.

Ethereal damage tends cause undetectable scarring, often psychological in nature. Light and dark damage may cause permanent damage to the brain. Necrotic damage may cause forms of decay, tumors or necrosis. Healing damage can cause mutation if overused, as the body creates new ways in which to build itself up. Poisons will cause internal damage to organs.

BEATEN



True adventurers don't die when they're beaten. They clutch their wounds and crawl away to recover and fight another day. You won't die when you don't have any Health or Steam left. You'll just fall to the ground, beaten but still conscious.



BEATEN: You are beaten when reduced below 1 Health or 1 Steam (current Health and Steam can be negative numbers). Beaten characters take massive penalties to everything, and can be killed outright by a single direct blow.

- ✦ You take a -10 penalty to all checks.
- ✦ You take a -10 penalty to all damage you deal.
- ✦ You take a -10 penalty to all defenses.
- ✦ You are helpless (Melee and Ranged attacks within 10 yards instantly kill you, you can only perform 1 standard action per round, your Speed is halved).



If you are damaged but not killed (caught in a blast radius, for example), you take the damage and your Health is reduced even further. Both Health and Steam can be reduced indefinitely in this way.

MAX HEALTH AND STEAM ENDS BEATEN STATUS

This status effect ends when both your Health and Steam are at their maximums again. Merely having a positive number for Health and Steam isn't enough to restore you to fully working condition.

DEATH



Beaten creatures and adversaries die in a few minutes, but Beaten player characters and special non-player characters will recover if they can avoid further damage long enough to heal.



SLOW DEATH: Normally, a beaten creature dies after a minute or two if it isn't tended to by another. Player characters are special because they don't die when beaten—they take huge penalties but eventually recover.



INSTANT DEATH: When you sleep, when you are beaten, or when you are helpless, you have no ability to defend yourself—you are helpless (as per status effect). So, any Melee attack or a Ranged attack within 10 yards instantly kills you.



IS DEATH THE END?: If you are truly attached to your character, ask the GM to spare them and you will be presented with some grim alternatives to death. See the Master's Codex for details.

REST

Resting replenishes lost health and steam. The longer you rest, the more you replenish. If you're wounded or exhausted, however, you won't rest well.

REST LIMIT: The benefits of getting rest are not always increased by resting more. Your body needs a certain amount of rest and once you've had it you won't benefit from any more. You can take up to 3 Minute rests per day, up to 2 Hour rests per day and only 1 Night rest. Any time in excess of this is just wasted time.

MINUTE'S REST = MAXIMUM 3 PER DAY

HOURLY REST = MAXIMUM 2 PER DAY

NIGHT'S REST = MAXIMUM 1 PER DAY

A short rest is a minute's rest. A longer rest is an hour's rest. The longest rest you can take is a night's rest of eight hours during which your character sleeps for about six hours.

RESTING IN ARMOR: Armor isn't designed for sleeping in. In fact, some rigid armor can make sitting for long periods uncomfortable. The most rest you can get in armor is an hour's rest. You can't sleep or get a night's rest while wearing armor.

SLEEP DEPRIVATION: Going without sleep affects your performance—you lose your edge and will eventually slip up. For every 12 hours you go without sleep, you take a cumulative penalty of -2 to all skill checks. So, after 24 hours you'd take a -4 penalty and after 36 hours you'd take a -6 penalty, and so on.

INTERRUPTED REST: If your rest is interrupted at any time before completion, you gain no Health, Steam nor Armor. However, this does not use up the rest for today—you can try again until successful, then you cross that rest off the list.

NORMAL	HEALTH	STEAM	ARMOR
Minute's rest	NONE	10 + LEVEL	1
Hour's rest	10 + LEVEL	MAXIMUM	10
Night's rest	MAXIMUM	MAXIMUM	MAXIMUM

A MINUTE'S REST

When you take a minute's rest, you stop to catch your breath and restore a small amount of steam. You don't get any sleep.

- ✦ **HEALTH:** You don't gain any Health on a minute's rest.
- ✦ **STEAM:** You gain [10 + Level] worth of Steam.
- ✦ **ARMOR:** You repair 1 dent in your armor.

AN HOUR'S REST

When you take an hour's rest, you sit and perform maintenance on your gear, regain a small amount of health and replenish your steam to full. You don't get any sleep.

- ✦ **HEALTH:** You gain [10 + Level] worth of Health.
- ✦ **STEAM:** Your Steam is replenished to its maximum.
- ✦ **ARMOR:** You repair 10 dents in your armor.

A NIGHT'S REST

A night's rest takes around eight hours. When you take a night's rest you sleep for six or seven hours and perform general repairs and maintenance on your equipment. You get around six hours sleep during this time.

- ✦ **GAIN EXPERIENCE:** When you take a night's rest, the GM rewards experience points for all the challenges you have succeeded at. You can also buy new levels if your rest goes uninterrupted.
- ✦ **HEALTH:** Your Health is replenished to its maximum.
- ✦ **STEAM:** Your Steam is replenished to its maximum.
- ✦ **ARMOR:** Your armor is restored to its maximum.

STATUS EFFECTS

Special abilities have the power to inflict harmful status effects on enemies and grant beneficial ones to allies. The descriptions for all common effects are given below.

BLESSED: You are favored by the powers that be.

- ✦ You gain a +2 bonus to all checks.
- ✦ You gain a +2 bonus to all damage you deal.

BLINDED: You can't see anything.

- ✦ You take a -5 Dex penalty.
- ✦ You take a -2 penalty to all checks.
- ✦ Ranged attacks upon a single target automatically fail. Area attacks with a range scatter 1 yard for every 10 yards of distance to the target. Mark off the four points of a compass in a clockwise direction and roll a d20 (1-5: north, 6-10: east, 11-15: south, 16-20: west)

CONFUSED: You act randomly. Roll a d20 each turn.

- ✦ You can act normally on a roll of 1-7.
- ✦ You cannot take any actions on a roll of 8-13.
- ✦ You mindlessly move and attack an ally on a 14-20 (with whatever weapon is readied, only weapon attacks, no abilities).

DEAFENED: You can't hear anything and you can't balance properly because of the ringing in your ears.

- ✦ You take a -5 Wits penalty.
- ✦ You take a -2 penalty to all checks.

DISEASED: You are diseased. It is much harder to heal and regain stamina and you will surely die if you do not receive medical attention.

- ✦ Your rest is fitful. Degrade the benefits of rest by one step. A minute rest is of no benefit. An hour's rest is only as good as a minute. A night's rest is only as good as an hour.
- ✦ You cannot gain a level.
- ✦ If this status effect is not removed or cured, you die when the disease duration ends.

DISTRACTED: You cannot concentrate on what you are doing.

- ✦ You take a -2 penalty to all defenses.
- ✦ You take a -2 penalty to all checks.
- ✦ You cannot use long actions.

ENRAGED: You are careless but devastating.

- ✦ You take a -2 penalty to all defenses.
- ✦ You take a -2 penalty to all checks.
- ✦ You gain a +5 damage bonus to all damage you deal.
- ✦ You cannot use assist, defense or utility actions.

HASTED: You move faster than normal.

- ✦ You gain a +2 bonus to all defenses.
- ✦ You gain a +5 bonus to your base speed.
- ✦ You gain 1 extra action per round, but are still limited to only one action of each type on your turn.

HELPLESS: You have no capacity to defend yourself or take actions.

- ✦ Melee attacks and Ranged attacks within 10 yards instantly kill you (including melee and ranged combos and splits).
- ✦ You can take only 1 standard action per round.
- ✦ You move at half speed.

LUCKY: You have better chances of scoring a critical.

- ✦ Your critical range improves by 1 (you score a critical if your d20 comes up with a 19 or 20 on a skill check).
- ✦ This stacks together with goblin luck (18, 19 or 20).

OFF GUARD: You are not ready to receive an attack, such as when you don't have a melee weapon readied against an armed opponent.

- ✦ Checks against you gain a +2 bonus (the enemy factors it into their check when they make an action against you).
- ✦ You don't gain your shield bonus to defense or armor.
- ✦ Getting back on your guard is a free action.

PETRIFIED: You are magically turned into, or encased in, a solid substance such as ice or stone.

- ✦ You cannot take any actions.
- ✦ You gain a +30 bonus to all armors.
- ✦ You don't age.
- ✦ Your weight doubles.

PRONE: You are impaired in some way, perhaps sitting, knocked down or wounded when an attack is made against you.

- ✦ Checks against you gain a +5 bonus (the enemy factors it into their check when they make an action against you).
- ✦ You don't gain your shield bonus to defense or armor.
- ✦ Standing up and getting on your guard is a move action.

PROTECTED: You are shielded from attacks and damage.

- ✦ You gain a +2 bonus to all defenses.
- ✦ You gain a +2 bonus to all armors.

SICKENED: You become ill, dizzy and sickened.

- ✦ You take a -5 penalty to Guts.
- ✦ You take a -2 penalty to checks.

SILENCED: You cannot speak, or make any noise at all.

- ✦ You cannot use censors, scrolls, staffs, relics, tomes or wands.
- ✦ You cannot use any skill that requires your voice.
- ✦ You gain a +10 bonus to Stealth and Thievery checks if the silence is magical and affects your footfalls.

SLOWED: You are unable to move or act at normal speed.

- ✦ You take a -2 penalty to all defenses.
- ✦ Your speed is halved (to a minimum of 1 yard).
- ✦ You lose the first action of your round. Thus, you can only take one action per round, and can only take a long action if you spend two rounds doing so.



STUCK: Your feet are stuck, but your arms and upper body are free.

- ✦ You take a -2 penalty to all defenses.
- ✦ You cannot take a move action, nor move by any means. However, others can still move you.



STUNNED: You are unable to move or act at normal speed.

- ✦ You take a -5 penalty to all defenses.
- ✦ You can only take free actions.

KNOCKBACK



Knockback is a common effect that pushes a target. It isn't a status effect as such because it is instant. However, it is common enough to have standardized rules.

- ✦ The strength of the knockback is $[X - \text{target's size}]$ yards.
- ✦ The direction of the knockback is directly away from the origin of the attack. For area effects, this is the midpoint or point of origin for the area. Wherever the direction isn't clear, the attacker decides.

REGENERATION



Some abilities and items grant regeneration. This allows you to slowly recuperate and gain Health and Steam at a constant rate without needing to rest.



REGENERATING HEALTH: You replenish Health slowly.

- ✦ You gain 1 Health at the beginning of every time unit specified (round, minute, hour, day, etc.).



REGENERATING STEAM: You replenish steam slowly.

- ✦ You gain 1 Steam at the beginning of every time unit specified (round, minute, hour, day, etc.).





REWARDS

EVENTUALLY, YOUR BLOOD, SWEAT AND TEARS ARE GOING TO PAY OFF. THERE ARE SEVERAL COMMON TYPES OF REWARD YOU COULD GAIN:

- ✦ THROUGH YOUR TRIALS IN THE AVENIAN GNOLL RAIDS, YOU GAIN EXPERIENCE AND LEARN SEVERAL NEW ABILITIES.
- ✦ AS THANKS FOR SAVING HIS LIFE AND BUSINESS, THE GUNSMITH GIVES YOU HIS FEARSOME PROTOTYPE REPEATER.
- ✦ AFTER SAVING THE MAYORS CHILDREN, THE TOWNSFOLK REJOICE AND WORD OF YOUR DEEDS TRAVELS FAR AND WIDE.
- ✦ HAVING DEFEATED THE HARBINGER CULT'S LEADER, YOU COME UPON HIS HIDDEN STASH—A HOARD OF ELECTRUM PIECES, APPARENTLY MINTED IN THE RESIDUUM.

These examples aren't every kind of reward you might find, but they are certainly the most common. This chapter details the kinds of advancement, payment, renown or treasure you might receive for your services.

OVERVIEW

In the pages that follow, the topic below will be covered in greater detail. Use these entries to gauge the rewards from your adventures.

For details on how much payment or experience you should receive at any given level, refer to the Master's Codex.

LEVELS: How and when do you gain a level? How does my character describe the improvement of his abilities? How much does a level cost? How do I buy the level? Is training required? All these questions and more are answered here.

EXPERIENCE: Experience points are gained whenever you do something difficult and succeed at it. Use these points to buy levels, increase your vitals and learn new abilities.

RENOWN: Recognition, fame, infamy and notoriety are some of the things that experienced adventurers begin to accumulate. Here you can determine how far word of your deeds has spread.

PROFIT: The profit of your adventures is the salary, wage or payment that you receive for your services. More difficult tasks require higher payments. There are also other factors that can drive the asking price up or down, as noted in this section.

SPOILS: Gaining loot and treasure from adventures is something the professionals have come to expect. However, pawning it off to local merchants isn't as easy as one might imagine.

Who gets the largest share of the treasure? Do you invest the money, donate it, or dedicate it to improving arms and equipment? Furthermore, how do you divide the loot in your adventuring group when things are not easily divisible?

EXAMPLE OF PLAY: PART 7

The party has survived a huge battle and is resting. Some of the party members were Beaten, but their Health and Steam will be restored to full during their rest.

While their characters rest, the players ply the GM for experience, recalling their actions to gain experience rewards. If they can amass enough experience, they can buy a level and increase their Vitals and Abilities.

DAVE: [GM] Okay Voyl, you're first.

ANDREW: [VOYL] Well, first, there's the sniper on the storm colossus that I defeated.

➔ DAVE CHECKS HIS NOTES. THE SNIPER WAS WORTH 100 EXPERIENCE (HE WAS LEVEL 10). VOYL GETS THIS REWARD ALL BY HIMSELF BECAUSE HE DEFEATED THE ENEMY ALONE. THEN, ANDREW DIVIDES 100 BY HIS CHARACTER LEVEL, 17. HE ENDS UP GAINING 6 EXPERIENCE POINTS.

ANDREW: [VOYL] And then the defeat of the storm colossus and the stoigmari captain. That's shared with everyone.

➔ DAVE FINDS THE STORM COLOSSUS EXPERIENCE REWARD AND DIVIDES IT BETWEEN THE FOUR PLAYERS. THEY GET 50 EXP EACH. AND THEN EACH PLAYER DIVIDES THAT AMOUNT BY THEIR LEVEL, GETTING ANYWHERE BETWEEN 2 AND 4 EXPERIENCE POINTS.

THE STOIGMARI CAPTAIN IS A SLIGHTLY EASIER CHALLENGE, AND THAT EXPERIENCE GETS SHARED OUT BETWEEN EVERYONE AND THEN DIVIDED BY LEVEL JUST THE SAME AS ABOVE.

DAVE: [GM] Anything else?

ANDREW: [VOYL] I released the gremlins... a roleplaying reward?

DAVE: [GM] No, not really. It helped you win the battle but it was Ozurnig's break checks that made it happen. Anything else? No? Okay, Ozurnig.

LAUREN: [OZURNIG] Well, since he mentioned it, I broken the gremlin cage.

➔ IT WAS A TN 30 SKILL CHECK, SO IT IS WORTH 3 EXPERIENCE POINTS.

LAUREN: [OZURNIG] I used my Heave skill to push over the pillars and construct defenses in the tower ruins. That really helped us survive the captain's sonic weapon.

➔ DAVE DECIDES IT'S FAIR, SO HE AWARDS ANOTHER 2 EXPERIENCE POINTS FOR THE TN 20 HEAVE CHECK.

DAVE: [GM] Is there anything else?

LAUREN: [OZURNIG] No, that's all. Nojantu?

DAVE: [GM] Okay, first I'd like to award 2 experience points for roleplaying. Although he got on everyone's nerves, he really remembered his character traits even in the thick of battle.

GRANT: [NOJANTU] Sweet! I'd also like to get some experience for climbing the steeple on the top of the tower ruin to get that critical hit on the captain.

DAVE: [GM] Okay, that's fair.

➔ DAVE AWARDS 3 EXPERIENCE POINTS FOR THE TN 25 CLIMB CHECK. IT'S A SPECIAL USE OF THE SKILL BECAUSE HE USED IT TO GAIN A 360 DEGREE FIRING ARC AND EFFECTIVELY OVERCOME THE CAPTAIN'S MANEUVERABILITY.

DAVE: [GM] Okay, so what about Jacinth?

➔ EXPERIENCE REWARDS CONTINUE IN A SMILAR FASHION...

LEVELS



In most cases, the best reward for your time and effort is a new level. It's something intangible, powerful, and nobody can take it away from you.

As your character progresses through the chapters of their adventures, they will accumulate experience. When a character has enough experience points, you can buy a level when you rest. Each new level costs experience points to purchase, which you deduct from your total experience points.

BASE CLASS

COST TO BUY = [TOTAL NEXT LEVEL × 10] EXP
BONUSES = +1 VITAL RANK, +1 ABILITY RANK

ADVANCED CLASS

COST TO BUY = [TOTAL NEXT LEVEL × 20] EXP
BONUSES = +2 VITAL RANKS, +2 ABILITY RANKS

FACTION CLASS

COST TO BUY = [TOTAL NEXT LEVEL × 30] EXP
BONUSES = +3 VITAL RANKS, +3 ABILITY RANKS

Use your total level (the sum of all classes) to determine the experience point cost of the next level. When your character gains a level you can increase your vitals and abilities.

REST & LEVEL UP



To gain your level, you must get a day's rest. Rest allows your brain to consolidate upon the experiences of the day, form new neural pathways and strengthen muscle memory. During this time, you reflect on what you've learned, train your vitals and abilities, and improve upon what you already know.

Adding a level during rest gives you the time you need to consider ability choices and rework your character without disturbing the flow of play.

You can only buy 1 level each time you rest. After a full day, you can rest again and buy another level. You can't perform two day's rests back to back.

RANKS



Whenever you gain a level, you gain bonus ranks to distribute among your vitals and abilities.

LEVEL UP BONUSES

+ VITAL RANK [MAX = ⅓ LEVEL]
 + ABILITY RANK [PREREQUISITES]

Your first class (base class) grants you only one vital rank and one ability rank each level. When you select advanced or faction classes, the number of ranks you receive increases.

EXPERIENCE



Whenever you kill a monster, thwart a trap, solve a puzzle or complete a quest, the Game Master rewards you with experience. For an easy task, you'll get a little experience. For a difficult task, you'll get more. If you succeed at a task that is way above your level, you'll get a lot of experience points.



EXPERIENCE REWARDED DURING REST: You can gain experience points whenever you take a day's rest. This should happen every time you rest for the day.



YOU TELL, GM REWARDS: Each player in the group tells the GM what they did and then he or she tells you how much that challenge or achievement is worth.



ROUND FRACTIONS UP: When receiving experience points for combat challenges or skill challenges, don't record fractions—round up to the nearest point.

COMBAT EXPERIENCE



The most common way to gain experience is defeating your enemies. When any member of your group defeats an enemy in combat, each participating combatant gets experience, and then divides that amount by their level.

$$\text{DISTRIBUTE ENEMY EXP VALUE} \\ \left[\frac{\text{ENEMY EXP VALUE}}{\text{PARTICIPANTS}} \right]$$

THEN DIVIDE THAT BY YOUR LEVEL

A creature has an experience value. That experience is divided equally amongst everybody who participated. Then you divide the experience by your level. Several general trends can be gleaned from this equation:

- The more powerful the foe, the more experience you get.
- The bigger your group, the less experience you each get.
- A low level character gains more experience than a high level character when they defeat a creature.



COMBAT BYPASSED: [HALF EXP] Sometimes it's clever to bypass a combat entirely through ideas and use of utility skills. You should get half experience in such a situation.



ENEMY HANDICAPPED: [HALF EXP] If an enemy starts off at a disadvantage, then the experience for the challenge is halved. Examples of handicaps are enemies caught resting, opponents without weapons or armor, creatures already at half health, etc.



ENEMY HELPLESS: [NO EXP] If an enemy never even fought back it's not worth any experience at all.



LEVEL ZERO OR LESS: If your level is zero or less, then use one-half in place of your level for the above equation.

SKILL EXPERIENCE



When you use any skill to overcome an important problem that is relevant to the adventure plot or goals, you gain some experience. This could be any number of actions—you find and disarm a trap, solve a puzzle, bluff a soldier, convince a magistrate to listen, perform surgery, etc. If the skill check doesn't relate to the goals of your adventure, it may not warrant any experience reward (see Training & Work below).

TARGET NUMBER / 10

While this isn't much, if you keep using skills and recording these points, they'll soon add up (remember to round fractions up). Of course, if the skill check bears no importance to the quest or storyline, it doesn't earn experience.



SHARING SKILL EXPERIENCE: You normally don't share skill challenge experience. Skill experience is usually given individually, not to the whole group. You only need to divide up the experience reward for a skill challenge when you were helped by others—see 'sharing experience' below.

STORY EXPERIENCE



You receive story experience for completing a chapter of your adventure. When it is the last chapter in a quest, you receive three times the listed experience instead (not both chapter and quest exp). You don't receive experience for completing encounters or campaigns. The experience reward depends on your degree of success.

CHAPTER COMPLETION

TOTAL SUCCESS = 30 EXP
PARTIAL SUCCESS = 20 EXP
UNSUCCESSFUL = 10 EXP

QUEST COMPLETION

LAST CHAPTER COMPLETION EXP × 3
FAME POINT & INFAMY POINT (see Renown for details)

Each person in the group receives experience, assuming they all applied their efforts to bring them to the conclusion of the adventure.



TOTAL SUCCESS: The result was a total success. You championed at all your endeavors and won a great victory—the whole party survived without injury, all mysteries were resolved, you completed all the goals of the client, etc.



PARTIAL SUCCESS: The result was a partial success. Despite some degree of defeat or failure, you eventually won the day—a party member died, couldn't solve all your client's problems, missed your employer's secondary objective, etc.



UNSUCCESSFUL: The result was inconclusive, tied or unsuccessful. You had some victories but it wasn't enough to win overall, and the chapter ended without a success—two or more party members died, the primary goal is incomplete, the mystery remains unsolved, etc.

ROLEPLAYING EXPERIENCE

It's an assumption of roleplaying that you stay in character as often as possible, and act out your adventures with your roleplaying group. Some folk like to concentrate on combat and strategy, whilst others are interested in the acting and improvisation. Roleplaying your character well deserves an experience reward wherever appropriate.

An experience reward based on roleplaying is more difficult to adjudicate. It's subject to the GM's scrutiny and should be given only in special circumstances. These are only offered when they pertain to the goals of your quest or adventure—they are given when your character displays his personality traits with decisions and acts.

Dialogues and arguments are good times to display your character traits. At other times, your character's actions may speak even louder than words. The best roleplaying experience rewards are gained during pivotal decisions—your character's personality may alter or affect the plot. Each time you do this, you are eligible for an experience reward, as noted below.

FAIR = 1 EXP

ACCURATE = 2 EXP

INSPIRING = 3 EXP

FAIR: You portrayed your character in a lengthy dialogue and played upon the traits, strengths and weaknesses of your character's personality.

ACCURATE: You accurately played your character's personality. This may have caused conflict within your group or solved a conflict that already existed.

INSPIRING: You delivered an inspiring and memorable portrayal of your character which affected the plot of this adventure, for better or worse.

CHARACTER FLAWS: Look at your personality traits. If you have a flaw or some type of weakness, it is something you can use to earn experience. Playing upon your character's flaws often leads to trouble, failure or problems that can affect the whole group. Consider the examples below:

- ✦ Your character has gotten drunk, suffering penalties to all your combat skills and abilities.
- ✦ Your pacifist tendencies allow the arch villain to get away without injury.
- ✦ The librarian in you makes you abandon the party temporarily to investigate a nearby cache of books.
- ✦ Your patriotic side alienates an otherwise helpful non-player character.

PLAYER SACRIFICE: Sometimes, the things you do in character are counter-intuitive for a player. When a player makes this type of sacrifice in order to roleplay their character, they gain experience. Consider the following examples:

- ✦ You refuse to use the powerful weapons of your enemy because they are 'evil'.
- ✦ You donate your character's earnings to the city orphanage.
- ✦ You travel alone by sea because of your fear of flying.
- ✦ You return the armor to its rightful owner even though it is of no use to them.

SHARING EXPERIENCE

In general, everyone gets experience points for defeating enemies when the group wins a combat encounter. However, experience earned from skill challenges, story awards and roleplaying rewards are given out individually.

Sometimes, characters that opt out of combat might lose their share of the experience. A character who merely watches others do the fighting won't learn anything.

To make matters simple, you are either helping out, or not. If you help, you gain experience and if you are not helping, you don't.

HELPFUL: [FULL EXP] A character that took actions to help succeed at the challenge gets a full share of the experience when it is divided amongst the players.

NOT HELPFUL: [NO EXP] A character who didn't take actions to help win the challenge gets no experience.

TRAINING & WORK

When the stakes are high, you will learn extra fast. When great responsibility lies in your hands, you will strive to meet the demands of a task. When the consequences of failure are dire, you will do almost anything to avert them. Without such life and death conditions you just don't have the same kind of motivation.

Actions made just for the sake of gaining experience points or earning money fall under the categories of training or work, as they don't push your character's abilities to the limit. Methodically bluffing every person you meet, swimming back and forth across a lake or setting and disarming your own traps are prime examples of practice just for the sake of getting better. Characters only receive experience after a whole week of training or a month of work. Gaining experience in this fashion typically applies only to NPCs.

TRAINING: [1 EXP PER WEEK] Every week of intense training, studying, practicing and learning gives you 1 experience point. Usually this requires a teacher, mentor or a list of goals set by someone more experienced and it will also require payment.

WORKING: [1 EXP PER MONTH] Every month of non-adventurous work or regular employment (such as a guardsman, sailor, entertainer, scribe or a gunsmith) gives you 1 experience point.

RENOWN

Renown is another good reason for adventurers to get busy solving local mysteries and thwarting bad guys. Recognition is a powerful motivator and is often the best reward that the local folk have to offer.

The right kind of reputation can be the determining factor in a social situation. Where authorities are involved, a well known riven bard is likely to get a better result than a feared draug necrolyte. However, when it comes to intimidating street thugs, the necrolyte wins hands down.

For some races, renown opens doors to places that would otherwise be barred. The respected orcish war hero is welcome to join in the faction festivities as a guest of honor. Similarly, the reputed dwarven engineer is welcome in prestigious tinker inventor conventions.

FACTIONS: If you are in the employ of others, renown also allows you to command a higher price for your services. However, when you gain renown with one powerful employer, it may put you at odds with others.

This is especially so when in the employ of factions. These government powers vie against each other for political leverage, using adventurers toward their own gains. Factions pave a fast road to fame and power, but in order to reach the end game you have to play politics with the establishment.

RENOWN

Renown is a very general measure of how well known you are: How far has word of your deeds spread? How many newspaper articles have mentioned your name? Does the towncrier speak your name in his daily announcement?

LVL RENOWN

0	Your family and friends know of you.
10	The local townsfolk recognize your accomplishments.
20	Your reputation has spread to the surrounding settlements.
30	Your countrymen, both near and far, have heard of you.
40	Neighboring nations know of you.
50	You are famous throughout the Heartlands.
60	Your name is known throughout the Crownlands.
70	Your reputation covers the Major Plate.
80	Creatures on the Elemental Spokes have heard of you.
90	Your name has traveled to the Outer Rim.
100	You are known to the entire World Machine.

Naturally, this is very approximate. Bards are likely to be more famous than rogues. Furthermore, the way in which you portray your character plays a large part in whether people are drawn to you or not. There are many contributing factors to your character's personal magnetism.

FAME & INFAMY POINTS

You gain a fame point whenever you complete a quest. This point improves the disposition of a specific group of people. You choose the group and each time you meet one of those people, and their disposition is one step higher by default. Be reasonable about what group of people you choose: this choice should reflect your accomplishments and character history.

You also gain an infamy point when you complete a quest. This worsens your disposition with a certain group—you will be demonized, avoided, despised or feared by these people.

GAIN 1 FAME POINT UPON QUEST COMPLETION

FAME POINT IMPROVES DISPOSITION 1 STEP

GAIN 1 INFAMY POINT UPON QUEST COMPLETION

INFAMY POINT REDUCES DISPOSITION 1 STEP

You can only apply a fame or infamy point to a group of people once. You can't have two fame points on a single group.

You choose which group your fame and infamy apply to, then record the details on page 4 of your character sheet. If you are a bard, you receive an extra fame or infamy point every time you finish a quest—you decide whether it is fame or infamy.

GROUPS: Choose a group to apply your fame point or infamy point to. Some examples of such groups are given here. Several of the categories are so general, that you need to specify or choose from within them.

- ✦ **LOWER CLASS:** Laborers, commoners, farmers, workers, etc.
- ✦ **MIDDLE CLASS:** Merchants, craftsmen, artisans, specialists, etc.
- ✦ **UPPER CLASS:** Nobility, land owners, barons, faction heads, etc.
- ✦ **RACE:** Choose 1: greens, evles, dwarves, humans, halflings, etc.
- ✦ **GENDER:** Choose your preferred sex: male or female.
- ✦ **AGE:** Choose 1: children, adolescents, adults, elderly, etc.
- ✦ **NATIONALITY:** Choose 1: Aglosen, Avenoss, Osteria, Heartlands, Stoigmar, Ijolea, Yusuna, Perivia, etc.
- ✦ **FACTION:** Choose 1: The Aeronauts, The Iron Phalanx, The Keepers, The Architects, etc.
- ✦ **COMPANY:** Choose a company of mercenaries.
- ✦ **GUILD:** Choose a guild of adventurers or a range of craftsmen.

INCOGNITO: Although you can't undo the effects of renown, you can minimize the number of friends and enemies you have by using an infamy point to cancel out a fame point. Or, you can cancel a fame point by using an infamy point.

BONUS POINTS: Sometimes you are awarded a fame point or infamy point which the GM assigns to a group. It's a consequence of your actions, a reflection of your deeds. You earned it through your actions, but don't get to assign it yourself.

- ✦ **QUEST BONUS:** A quest might award additional fame or infamy. This could improve your relations with a certain group of people, while putting you at odds with another.
- ✦ **ADVANCED CLASS:** When you join or learn from a company or guild, you inherit their fame and infamy, if any.
- ✦ **FACTION CLASS:** When you take a faction class, you are branded with the politics of that faction, for better or worse.

PROFIT

Much of what an adventurer does has the end goal of money. A nice, simple payout for a job well done is as common to this profession as any other.

Sometimes, you give the client a quote for the cost of your services. They can take it or leave it. At other times, the client offers to pay a certain amount and any interested parties take on the job.

Lower level characters usually require less pay, and will often do things for free if there is loot and spoils to be taken. Higher level characters need funding because there are expenses that go with the job. Often, the amount offered corresponds to the difficulty of the job.

PAYMENT

So, how much should you be asking for your services? This is a tricky question with no simple answer. There are many factors that can affect pay rates.

Below is a table listing the amount, in shillings, an adventuring group could expect for a Chapter's worth of services. Use the average level in your group—approximate if necessary. Multiply this by the number of chapters you expect to have in a quest. It is common to receive some portion of a payment immediately and the rest upon completion.

Of course, these payments are in addition to spoils, treasure and anything else which seems profitable along the way. In fact, the payment is rarely as good as the treasure to be found.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL	TYPICAL PAYMENT PER CHAPTER
Level 0	0£ per Chapter
Level 10	100£ per Chapter
Level 20	200£ per Chapter
Level 30	300£ per Chapter
Level 40	400£ per Chapter
Level 50	500£ per Chapter
Level 60	600£ per Chapter
Level 70	700£ per Chapter
Level 80	800£ per Chapter
Level 90	900£ per Chapter
Level 100	1,000£ per Chapter

MODIFIERS: The specifics of the job could modify the payment somewhat. Examples of these specifics are noted below. Apply any that are relevant when you give your client a quote.

- ✦ **NO SPOILS:** [INCREASE PAYMENT] If there are no spoils to be taken, or the client specifically doesn't want any looting to happen, they will need to offer a higher payment.
- ✦ **SUBTLETY:** [INCREASE PAYMENT] Generally, adventurers expect to be able to trash the location. However, if there is to be no collateral damage or a degree of subterfuge or restraint, the payment needs to increase.
- ✦ **TROVE:** [DECREASE PAYMENT] When there is expected to be a lot of loot, the payment doesn't

need to be as high.

- ✦ **FAME:** [DECREASE PAYMENT] This task will make you famous with a certain group, or get you into their good graces.
- ✦ **INFAMY:** [INCREASE PAYMENT] This task is likely to bring notoriety and bad press to the group that undertakes it.
- ✦ **TRAVEL:** [INCREASE PAYMENT] If the task requires a lot of travel, then these expenses will require compensation.

EXAMPLE 1: [QUOTE] A group of level 40 adventurers quotes their client for a quest which they believe has 6 chapter's worth of peril. Normally, that would require 2,400£, but because there is a huge treasure trove to be found, the client only offers 2,000£.

EXAMPLE 2: [CONTRACT] A wealthy patron has a very dangerous task which would require a group of adventurers at around level 70. He expects the task will require only 3 chapters to complete. Usually, the payment would be 2,100£, but because of the infamy this task might incur with a faction, the patron offers 3,000£.

LIVING COSTS

It's good to consider your living costs and weight that up against the time you think a job will require. Living costs depend on your character's preferences, ranging from survival to extravagance. For details on living costs, see the Equipment Codex, Chapter 6: Services.



SPOILS

Without a doubt, the majority of adventurers out there are motivated by the possibility of riches. Everyone remembers the tales of legendary treasure hauls and hopes to hit the mother load.

LOOTING

Ransacking the reliquaries of the past is an ancient practice. Tombs, dungeons, ruins and caverns are typical places where treasures were stockpiled during the Cataclysm to prevent them falling into the wrong hands.

IS IT THEFT?: In general, whenever you are exploring far from civilization where no other citizens live, you can loot it. Governments allow the reclamation of lost treasures but have a treasure tax upon these valuables. Technically, if you don't declare and pay tax on what you've found to the local authorities, it's stealing.

SELLING LOOT

Selling loot isn't as easy as going to the general store and collecting cash. Shopkeepers will only buy your old junk if they think it has some sort of resale value. Furthermore, think of supply and demand—a small town won't need jewels and artifacts because they'd never be resold. A word of advice: only loot if you're sure you can sell it.

$$\text{RESALE VALUE} = \frac{1}{3} \text{ RETAIL VALUE}$$

In general, you will only get a fraction of the real retail price when you pawn off loot at any kind of store. At best, it's one-third of the retail value for a new item of the same type. However, this can go much lower.

KINDS OF SHOPS: Unless you are trading in a small thorp with only one general store, you have to think about what items a shopkeeper will buy from you. Use common sense to decide if a merchant wants to buy pawned goods or not. Junk stores and pawn shops will take almost anything, but they offer less than specialist stores.

Any merchant that can work iron or steel (gunsmith, bladesmith, blacksmith) could make use of an old sword—even if it's too old and soft to see combat, it could be reforged or recycled because it's made of metal.

However, a blacksmith won't want wands, staves, steambows, gems, jewels, treasures, etc. He can't put any of those things to good use, and he definitely won't resell them because people go elsewhere to get those sorts of goods.

MERCHANT'S RISK: Any merchant has to take a risk when they buy your second hand loot. Maybe half of what they buy will be resold, and the other half is just that gets forgotten in a store room. To

minimize this risk, they buy your loot at a low price so they can maintain their business even if they can only resell a few bits and pieces within it.

SUPPLY & DEMAND: If you find a merchant that is willing to buy pawned goods from you, it's a great start. But typically, these transactions are small.

If you've collected the armor and weapons for every creature you've ever slain, the typical merchant just can't afford to take them off your hands. He doesn't have the demand for such items and could never sell them. When you have this many goods to offload, you could find yourself traveling from one settlement to another, in order to find enough buyers.

SHARES

When it comes to dividing the plunder, every party, company or faction has their own rules. If the discovery of treasure tends to spark a mad rush to grab everything in sight, you probably need to establish some formal guidelines with your comrades about how you're going to share the spoils.

➔ **THE POOL:** Treasure is collected and pooled together until there is enough that everyone can get a good share. This is a good solution when there are many people involved or when certain expensive items can't be split up.

When the time comes to distribute the wealth, an appraiser gives a value to everything in the pool and the treasure is shared out as evenly as possible. This could happen at the end of a chapter, quest or campaign.

➔ **THE ACCOUNT:** Your adventuring party sets up an account with a bank, merchant guild, company or faction. Treasure is poured into the account to finance new equipment and services for the party. But withdrawal requires two or more members to be present.

Usually, an accountant or treasurer keeps a tally of who spent what and where, and people take turns to dip into the fund so they can upgrade their gear. However, this requires a lot of trust and organization to work well. Plus, everything has to be sold or converted into currency in order to deposit it and share fairly.

➔ **THE LEADER:** When a powerful character leads ten novices on a quest, he pays them a small amount for their contribution. The low level characters are mainly for support and comfort, not partners or peers. Sometimes they are students of the leader.

Most adventurers don't like to be paid as simple hirelings, even when the pay is good. But sometimes that's all there is on offer, especially when the boss character is far more powerful than the others. All the spoils go to the boss and he or she pays a salary or wage to the others in the party. While you don't get a big share of the profit, the experience gained is usually far greater than normal.

➔ **NOT DIVISIBLE:** When you discover something that can't be shared and everybody wants, it may be impossible to determine who really deserves the item.

You may need to play a game of chance to see who gets the prize. Alternatively, the item in question can be a prize dedicated to the person who can win in a contest. Of course, the contest needs to be fair, probably several encounter's worth of trouble.

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MOVEMENT

TYPICAL	ACTION	FREESTYLE	TACTICAL
WALK	Move action Long move action	1 ring 2 rings	[Speed] yds. [Speed+5] yds.
CLIMB, CRAWL, HEAVE, SNEAK, SWIM	Move action Long move action	½ ring 1 ring	½ × [Speed] yds. ½ × [Speed+5] yds.
SPRINT	Long move action	3 rings	3 × [Speed] yds.

OBSTACLES: In freestyle combat, an obstacle consumes 1 ring of movement. In tactical combat, an obstacle consumes 2, 3 or 4 yards of movement per yard of the obstacle (minor, average and major obstacles).

PER HOUR: You can move [Speed] miles per hour at a very brisk pace.

PER DAY: You can walk [30+Speed] miles in a day if you travel for 10 hours. Vehicles can move [10×Speed] miles per day. Overland movement is penalized by either the terrain or the weather—whichever is slower.

CHECKS

A d20 CHECK IS...

COMPARE [d20 + BONUSES] TO [TN]

If you get equal to or higher than the TN, you succeed.

MODIFIER	MARTIAL/MELEE	RANGED
OFF-GUARD	+2 bonus	—
PRONE	+5 bonus	—
TEAMWORK	+1 bonus per ally	—
INSIDE ENEMY REACH	—	-5 penalty
OBSCURED	—	-1 penalty per target
HELPLESS	Automatic instant kill when within 10 yards	

CRITICAL: [20] On the roll of a 20, you succeed regardless of the difficulty. Weapon check criticals dent armor before dealing damage.

FUMBLE: [1] On the roll of a 1, you fail no matter how easy the difficulty.

ADVANTAGES: [UP TO +5] Circumstances that make you likely to succeed.

DISADVANTAGES: [UP TO -5] Circumstances that make you likely to fail.

TN, TARGET NUMBER: The number that you want to equal or succeed in order to pass your check.

➔ **TN = DIFFICULTY:** The difficulty of the task is assigned by the GM.

➔ **TN = DEX:** Attacks that you can see and dodge.

➔ **TN = GUTS:** Attacks that you can see, but your can't dodge.

➔ **TN = WITS:** Attacks that you can't neither see nor dodge.

COVER: Provides some degree of protection to those that make use of it.

➔ **LIGHT:** Light cover grants +2 to all defenses and +2 armor.

➔ **MEDIUM:** Light cover grants +5 to all defenses and +5 armor.

➔ **HEAVY:** Light cover grants +10 to all defenses and +10 armor.

ROUNDS

ORDER OF TURNS = HIGHEST TO LOWEST REFLEX
Latecomers must wait until a new round begins to join a combat.

AMBUSH OR SURPRISE ENEMY = SKILL CHECK VS. WITS

COMMON ACTIONS

In a typical round, you can take...

2 DIFFERENT STANDARD ACTIONS (AND 1 FREE ACTION)
or... **1 LONG ACTION** (AND 1 FREE ACTION)

But in a surprise round you only get...

1 STANDARD ACTION (AND 1 FREE ACTION)

0 ATTACK

ATTACK ACTION: INSTANT / WEAPON VS. DEX, GUTS, WITS

You make an attack with a readied one-handed or two-handed weapon.

A long action attack grants a +5 bonus to all damage dealt.

0 DEFEND

DEFENSE ACTION: PERSISTENT / NO CHECK

You gain a +2 bonus to all your defenses (Dex, Guts and Wits) until the beginning of your next turn. A long action defense grants an additional +5 bonus to all defenses.

0 FREE

FREE ACTION: INSTANT / NO CHECK

Anything that you can do without concentration is a free action.

0 GUARD

ATTACK ACTION: PERSISTENT / WEAPON VS. DEX, GUTS, WITS

This prepares an interrupt action. You hold your attack until an enemy comes within striking reach (or firing range). On the first opportunity to present itself you take your attack as an interrupt action.

0 MOVE

MOVE ACTION: INSTANT / NO CHECK

In freestyle play, you move 1 ring (ten yards). In tactical play, you move [Speed] yards on the action grid. A long action allows either +1 ring of movement, or adds +5 to your Speed.

0 OFFHAND ATTACK

FREE ACTION: INSTANT / WEAPON VS. DEX, GUTS, WITS

Following any attack action or long attack action, you attack with your offhand weapon (the same target). You take a -5 check penalty and a -5 damage penalty.

0 UTILITY

UTILITY ACTION: INSTANT / NO CHECK

You perform some non-offensive, non-combat action. A long utility action does not grant a bonus.

AREA/TARGET	RANGE	FREESTYLE, NUMBER OF TARGETS HIT	TACTICAL, DIMENSIONS OF AREA
MELEE X	X × Yards	1 Target	1 Target
OTHER X	X × Yards	1 Target	1 Target
RANGED X	X × Weapon Range	1 Target	1 Target
CONE X	Away from Self	[X/2] Grouped — [X/4] Spread Out	Cone, Length X yds.
LANCE X	Away from Self	[X/2] Grouped — [X/4] Spread Out	Box, Length X yds. (Width 1 yd., Height 1 yd.)
WALL X	X × Weapon Range	[X/2] Grouped — [X/4] Spread Out	Box, Width X yds., Height X/2 yds., (Length 1 yd.)
CLEAVE X	Centered on Self	[X] Grouped — [X/2] Spread Out	Flat Disc, Radius X yds.
SLASH X	Centered on Self	[X] Grouped — [X/2] Spread Out	Half Disc, Radius X yds.
SQUARE X	X × Weapon Range	[X] Grouped — [X/2] Spread Out	Box, Width X yds., Length X yds., Height X/2 yds.
AURA X	Centered on Self	[X×2] Grouped — [X] Spread Out	Sphere, Radius X yds.
BLAST X	X × Weapon Range	[X×2] Grouped — [X] Spread Out	Sphere, Radius X yds.
CLOUD X	X × Weapon Range	[X×2] Grouped — [X] Spread Out	Sphere, Radius X yds.

STATUS EFFECTS

BLESSED: +2 checks, +2 damage.

BLINDED: -5 Dex, -2 checks, ranged attacks fail, area attacks scatter.

CONFUSED: Roll a d20 each turn: 1-7 act normally; 8-13 can't take any actions; move and/or attack an ally with a basic attack.

DEAFENED: -5 Wits, -2 checks.

DISEASED: Rest downgraded, can't gain levels, death when duration ends.

DISTRACTED: -2 defenses, -2 checks, can't use long actions.

ENRAGED: -2 defenses, -2 checks, +5 damage. Can't use assist, defense or utility actions.

HASTED: +2 defenses, +5 Speed, +1 standard action per round.

HELPLESS: Melee and ranged attacks within 10 yard instantly kill you, only allowed 1 standard action per round, move at half speed.

LUCKY: Improves critical range of all checks by 1.

OFF GUARD: Checks against you gain a +2 bonus. Can't use shield bonuses. Free action to get back on your guard.

PETRIFIED: Can't take any actions, +30 armors, don't age, weight doubles.

PRONE: Checks against you gain a +5 bonus. Can't use shield bonuses. Move action to stand up.

PROTECTED: +2 defenses, +2 armors.

SICKENED: -5 Guts, -2 checks.

SILENCED: Can't use arcane, divine or occult weapons. Can't speak. +10 to Stealth and Thievery if silence affects your footfalls.

SLOWED: -2 defenses, Speed halved, lose 1 action per round.

STUCK: -2 defenses, can't take move actions.

STUNNED: -5 defenses, can only take free actions.

KNOCKBACK: Knockback is a number of yards, minus the target's size. The direction is directly away from you, or the midpoint of the ability area.

DURATION

ROUNDS: Each round is 6 seconds. There are 10 rounds in a minute. A 1 round duration you activated expires at the beginning of your next turn (not the beginning of the round).

INSTANT: You roll and resolve attacks for these areas immediately.

PERSISTENT: You place the area, then wait. If an enemy is in the area at the beginning of their turn, or they enter the area, you roll your attack.

DAMAGE

TOTAL DAMAGE = W + ATTACK BONUS + ABILITY BONUS

W = Weapon base damage + Vital bonus for that weapon

ATTACK DAMAGE BONUS = Add 1 to the damage for every point by which your attack roll exceeds the enemy defense.

ABILITY BONUS = Additional damage added by an ability.

ARMOR: Armor reduces damage from attacks. You subtract the appropriate armor value from damage before reducing your current Health.

PHYSICAL DAMAGE: [PHYSICAL] Reduced by your physical armor.

PHYSICAL DAMAGE: [ACID, ELECTRIC, FLAME, ICE, SONIC] Reduced by your physical armor.

ETHEREAL DAMAGE: [DARK, HEALING, LIGHT, NECROTIC, POISON] Reduced by your ethereal armor.

SPECIAL DAMAGE: [SPECIAL] Completely ignores all armor.

CRITICAL: You hit, regardless of the enemy's defense. First, apply dents to reduce the enemy armor, then apply damage calculated as normal.

1. APPLY DENTS TO ENEMY ARMOR

2. DEAL DAMAGE AS NORMAL

If your attack roll was lower than the enemy defense, don't subtract damage from your total. You just deal the normal base damage for this attack (you can't have a negative attack damage bonus).

DENTS: A single dent reduces your physical armor, elemental armor and ethereal armor by 1. Each weapon deals a set number of dents on a critical hit. These dents are applied before damage is dealt.

DIMINISHING DAMAGE: This damage continues to hurt the target for several rounds but eventually dissipates.

**DIMINISHING DAMAGE HALVES EACH ROUND
ENDS AFTER 5 ROUNDS**

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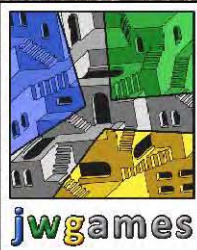
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