RBL-100

EARTHDAWN®

PLAYER'S COMPENDIUM

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CONTENTS

INHERITANCE 8

GAME CONCEPTS 14
We Live in an Age of Legend 14
The World of Earthdawn 14
What is a Roleplaying Game? 15
How to Use This Book 16
Optional Rules 16
Game Terms 16
Adepts and Disciplines 16
Character Record Sheet 16
Steps and Action Dice 17
Action Tests 18
Time 19
Distances and Weights 20
The Passions 20
The Horrors 20
Names 20
Blood Magic 20

HOW IT CAME TO PASS 21
The Martyr Scholar 21
The Eternal Library 22
The First Horrors 22
Thera is Born 23
The Therans and Barsaive 23
Birth of an Empire 23
Rites of Protection and Passage 24
Orichalcum Wars 24
Theran Navy and Empire 25
Jaron and the Sphinx 25
Thera and the Dragons 26
Race to the Shelters 27
The Elven Schism 27
The Scourge 27
Throal and Parlainth 28
Blood Wood 28
The Time of Hiding 29
The Return 29
The Earthdawn 29
Throal Opens 30
Conflict of Destinies 30
The Theran Behemoth 31
The King is Dead 31
The Dragons Intervene 32
The Rise of Cara Fahd 32
A Different World 32

NAME-GIVER RACES 33
Kinship between the Races 33
Dwarfs 33
Elves 34
Humans 36
Obsidimen 36
Orks 37
Trolls 38
T'skrang 39
Windlings 40

CREATING CHARACTERS 41
Building a Hero 41
Getting Started 41
Character Record Sheet 41
Choose a Discipline 41
Common Disciplines 41
Circle 43
Choose a Race 43
Generate Attributes 43
Attribute Descriptions 43
Purchase Point Method 43
Random Roll Method 44
Modify Attribute Values for Race 45
Record Step Numbers and Action Dice 45
Determine Characteristics 45
Armor Ratings 45
Defense Ratings 46
Health Ratings 47
Initiative 47
Karma 47
Movement Rates 47
Encumbrance 48
Record Racial Abilities 48
Astral-Sensitive Sight 48
Flight 49
Gahad 49
Heat Sight 49
Increased Physical Defense 49
Increased Wound Threshold 49
Low-Light Vision 49
Maximum Strength 50
Minimum Strength 50
Minimum Toughness 50
Natural Armor 50
Tail Attack 50
Versatility 50
Assign Talent Ranks and Spells 50
Starting Talent Ranks 51
Starting Spells 51
Assign Skill Ranks 51
Knowledge Skills 51
Artisan Skills 51
Language Skills 52
General Skills 52
Equip Your Character 52
Flesh Out Your Character 53
Personality 53
Character History 54
Play the Game 55
Creating Experienced Characters 55
Create a Beginning Character 55
Spend Legend Points 55
Advance to the Next Circle 55
Equipment and History 55
Sample Character 56

DISCIPLINES 57
To Live Life as an Adept 57
On Discipline and Identity 57
On Individuality and the Adept's Way 58
On Becoming an Initiate 58
On Initiating other Adepts 58
On the Phenomenon of the Talent Crisis 59
On the Acquisition of Multiple Disciplines 59
On the Practice of Multiple Disciplines 59
Concerning Other Disciplines 59
On Minor, or Half-Magic, Adepts 60
Personal Visions 60
Initiation Into a Discipline 61
Training for Circle Advancement 61
Talent Crises 62
Deeds of Atonement 62
Half-Magic 62
Making Half-Magic Tests 63
Half-Magic and Skills 63
Discipline Descriptions 63
Important Attributes 63
Racial Restrictions 63
Rituals of Advancement 63
Karma Ritual 64
Artisan Skills 64
Talents 64
Characteristics Bonuses 64
Spell Bonuses 64
Discipline Abilities 64
Karma Bonuses 64
Additional Information 64

THE NOBLE WAY OF THE AIR SAILOR 65
On Being an Air Sailor 65
Learning the Ways of the Sky 66
Proving Your Worth 66
Non-Adepts as Air Sailors 67
On the Races the Sky Chooses 67
Of Air Sailors and the Passions 68
Of Those Who Serve Thera 68
Game Information 69
Human Air Sailor 71

ON THE PATH OF THE ARCHER 72
On Dividing the World 72
On the Art of Seeing 73
Concerning the Enemy 73
Understanding the Arc 73
Of the Bow and the Crossbow 74
Regarding the Sniper 74
Game Information 75
Human Archer 77

KEEPER OF THE BEASTS 78
On Becoming a Beastmaster 78
On Learning Mastery from Beasts 78
On the Virtues of Strength and Patience 79
On the Many Kinds of Beastmasters 80
Of Those Races Unsuited to the Discipline 80
On the Beastmaster's Faith in Jaspree 81
On Avoiding the Taint of the Horrors 81
On the Beastmaster's Duty Since the Scourge 82
Game Information 82
Ork Beastmaster 84

THE DARING AND DAUNTLESS CAVALRYMAN 85
The World of the Cavalryman 85
On the Bond Between Mount and Rider 85
On the Limits of Relationships with Others 85
On Life in a Cavalry 86
On Daily Practices 86
On Becoming a Cavalryman 87
On Bonding More than Once 87
Of the Rite of the Hero 87
Of Honor Braids 88
On the Training of a Cavalryman 88
Of Soldiers and Horsemen 88
Game Information 89
Dwarf Cavalryman 91

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ELEMENTALIST 92
How the Elementalist Sees the World 92
On the Need for Balance 93
Of Elemental Spirits 93
Of Working With Earth 94
Of Working With Air 94
Of Working With Fire 94
Of Working With Water 95
Of Working With Wood 95
Of the Place of Orichalcum in the Balance 95
On Training an Elementalist 95
On the Significance of Ritual 96
Of Those Who Follow One Element 96
On Those Adepts Known as Enchanters 96
Game Information 96
Dwarf Elementalist 99

AN ILLUSIONIST REVEALS THE TRUTH 100
The Tale of Odu Fratan 101
On the Life of an Illusionist 101
On Training and Teaching 102
On the Rituals of Advancement 102
Concerning Charlatans 103
Game Information 103
Troll Illusionist 105

WALKERS IN SHADOW 106
On the Continuum That is Life and Death 106
On the Nature of the Spirit 107
On the Migration of the Spirit After Death 107
On the State That is Undeath 108
On the Workings of Nethermagic 108
On Cosmology and Other Dimensions 109
On Understanding the Horrors 109
Game Information 110
Human Nethermancer 112

ON THE WAY OF THE SCOUT 113
One With the World 113
A Discourse on Other Environments 114
On Specialists 115
On Combat and Other Skills 115
On Training 115
Scouts and the Passions 116
Game Information 116
Human Scout 118

THE FIERCE AND HONORABLE WAY OF THE SKY RAIDER 119
Of a Life in the Skies 119
A Discourse on Responsibility 120
On Working With Others 120
On Loyalty to Ship and Crew 120
On Raiding 121
Of Sky Raiders and the Passions 121
On Training 121
Concerning Ongoing Training 122
Game Information 122
Ork Sky Raider 124

THE DANCE OF THE SWORDMASTER 125
The World of the Swordmaster 125
Life as a Swordmaster 126
On Finding One's Path 126
On the Art of Training 126
Taking Up the Gauntlet 126
The Tripled Blades 127
Flattery 127
The Foil 127
Contention 127
Of Tournaments and Tales 127
Bragging Rights 128
On Specialists 128
On the Gallant 128
On the Bladesman 128
Game Information 129
T'skrang Swordmaster 131

THE GIFT OF THEFT 132
On the Tyranny of Possession 132
Forging Alliances 132
Finding a Master 133
On Stealing Magic From the World 133
On Other Thieves 134
On the Way of Selfishness 134
Game Information 135
Windling Thief 137

WHY THE TROUBADOUR SINGS 138
Of Our Place in the World 138
On the Importance of Tales 138
On Entertainment 138
On the Persistence of Memory 139
The Joy of the Troubadour 140
Troubadours and the Passions 140
On Training 140
On Specialists 141
Game Information 141
Elf Troubadour 144

THE BATTLEFIELD PATH 145
The Battlefield 145
The Shield 146
The Sword 147
The Enemy 147
Loyalty 148
Training 148
Game Information 149
Obsidiman Warrior 151

THE VALUE OF STRONG ARMS AND STRONGER MINDS 152
On Becoming a Weaponsmith 152
Being a Weaponsmith 154
The Heartblade 154
The Forge 154
Weaponsmiths and Other Adepts 155
Game Information 155
Dwarf Weaponsmith 158

THE WAY OF MIND AND SYMBOL 159
On Symbols and Spellcasting 159
On the Idea and its Meaning 160
Understanding Through Ideas and Symbols 161
On Correspondences and Antipathies 161
On Branches From the Path 162
Game Information 163
Obsidiman Wizard 165

TALENTS 166
Using Talents 166
Talent Tests 166
Discipline Talents 166
Talent Duration 167
Game Terms 167
Talent Descriptions 167
Abate Curse 167
Acrobatic Strike 168
Air Dance 168
Air Sailing 168
Air Speaking 168
Animal Bond 168
Animal Leadership 169
Animal Possession 169
Animal Training 169
Animate Object 169
Anticipate Blow 169
Arcane Mutterings 170
Armored Matrix 170
Armor Mount 170
Astral Pocket 170
Astral Sight 170
Astral Web 171
Attribute Pattern 171
Aura Armor 171
Avoid Blow 171
Bank Shot 171
Bardic Voice 171
Bargain With Summoned Creature 172
Battle Bellow 172
Battle Shout 172
Bestial Resilience 172
Bestial Toughness 172
Blade Juggle 172
Blind Fire 173
Blood Guilt Weapon 173
Blood Share 173
Body Blade 173
Book Memory 174
Book Recall 174
Borrow Sense 174
Call Arrow 175

Call Mount 175
Casting Pattern 175
Cat's Paw 175
Chameleon 175
Champion Challenge 175
Charge 175
Claw Frenzy 176
Claw Shape 176
Climbing 176
Cobra Strike 176
Cold Purify 176
Conceal Weapon 176
Confront Horror 177
Create Arrow 177
Creature Analysis 177
Critical Hit 177
Crushing Blow 177
Dead Fall 177
Defense 178
Detect Falsehood 178
Detect Influence 178
Detect Trap 178
Detect Weapon 178
Develop Animal Sense 178
Direction Arrow 178
Disarm 179
Disarm Trap 179
Disguise Self 179
Dominate Arrow 179
Dominate Beast 179
Down Strike 179
Durability 179
Eagle Eye 180
Earth Armor 180
Earth Skin 180
Echo Location 180
Effect Pattern 180
Elemental Hold 180
Elemental Tongues 181
Emotion Song 181
Empathic Command 181
Empathic Sense 182
Endure Cold 182
Enduring Art 182
Engaging Banter 182
Enhanced Matrix 182
Ethereal Weapon 183
Evidence Analysis 183
False Sight 183
Fast Hand 183
Fearsome Charge 183
Fence 184
Fireblood 184
Fire Heal 184
First Impression 184
First Ring of Perfection 184
Flame Arrow 184
Forge Armor 185
Forge Blade 185
Frighten 186
Frighten Animals 186
Gain Surprise 186
Gliding Stride 186
Gold Sense 187
Graceful Exit 187
Great Leap 187
Haggle 187
Heal Animal Servant 187
Heartening Laugh 187
Hold Thread 187
Howl 188
Hypnotize 188
Impressive Shot 188
Impressive Strike 188
Improve Armor 188
Improve Blade 189
Incite Mob 189
Incite Stampede 189
Item History 189
Karma Ritual 189
Lasting Impression 190
Leadership 190
Life Check 190
Lifesight 190
Lion Heart 190
Lion Spirit 191
Lip Reading 191
Lizard Leap 191
Lock Picking 191
Lock Sense 191
Maneuver 191
Matrix Strike 191
Melee Weapons 191
Memorize Image 192
Metal Ward 192
Mimic Voice 192
Mind Wave 192
Missile Twister 192
Missile Weapons 192
Momentum Attack 192
Mount Attack 193
Mount Durability 193
Moving Earth 193
Multi-Charge 193
Multi-Shot 193
Multi-Strike 193
Multi-Tongue 193
Multi-Weaving 193
Mystic Aim 194
Netherwalk 194
Orbiting Spy 195
Picking Pockets 195
Pin 195
Plant Shelter 195
Poison Resistance 195
Questor 195
Quickblade 195
Quick Shot 196
Rally 196
Range Pattern 196
Read and Write Language 196
Read and Write Magic 197
Reshape Object 197
Resist Taunt 197
Riposte 197
Ritual of the Ghost Master 198
Rushing Attack 198
Safe Path 198
Safe Thought 198
Screaming Arrow 199
Second Attack 199
Second Chance 199
Second Weapon 199
Sense Magic Weapon 199
Sense Poison 200
Shared Matrix 200
Shield Beater 200
Shield Charge 200
Show Armor Flaw 200
Silent Walk 201
Slough Blame 201
Soften Blade 201
Song of Deflection 201
Soul Shatter 201
Speak Language 201
Spell Crystal Lock 202
Spell Matrix 202
Spellcasting 202
Spirit Dodge 202
Spirit Hold 203
Spirit Mount 203
Spirit Strike 203
Spirit Talk 203
Spot Armor Flaw 203
Sprint 204
Steel Thought 204
Steely Stare 204
Stone Skin 204
Stopping Aim 204
Summon 204
Summoning Circle 205
Sure Mount 205
Surprise Strike 205
Swift Kick 205
Swing Attack 205
Talent Pattern 206
Tame Mount 206
Taunt 206
Temper Other 206
Temper Self 206
Temperature 206
Thought Link 206
Thoughtful Expression 207
Thread Weaving 207
Throwing Weapons 207
Thunder Axe 207
Tiger Spring 207
Trace Missile 207
Tracking 208
Trample 208
Trap Initiative 208
Trick Riding 208
True Shot 208
True Sight 208
Truth Skit 208
Unarmed Combat 209
Unmount 209
Unshakable Earth 209
Venom 209
Versatility 209
Vital Strike 209
Vitality 209
Warning Shot 210
Warp Missile 210
Water Dancing 210
Weapon Breaker 210
Weapon History 210
Wheeling Attack 211
Wheeling Defense 211
Whirlwind 211
Willforce 211
Wind Bow 211
Wind Catcher 211
Winning Smile 212
Wood Skin 212
Wound Balance 212
Wound Transfer 212

TALENT KNACKS 213
Learning Talent Knacks 213
Creating Talent Knacks 214
Using Talent Knacks 215
Talent Knack Descriptions 215
Adept's Best Friend 215
Air Conditioning 216
Air Legs 216
Air Mount 216
Anchored Spell 216
Angelic Appearance 216
Arcane Curses 216
Armor Beater 216
Arrow Cutting 217
Arrow Stop 217
Assault 217
Astral Spy 217
Astral Tracking 217
Backbiter 217
Bind Spirit 217
Boarding Action 217
Bounce 218
Braiding Threads 218
By the Fingernails 218
Calm Herd 218
Cat's Skill 218
Claw Riposte 218
Claw Tool 218
Cosmetics 218
Covet Item 219
Create Orichalcum 219
Create Armored Matrix Object 219
Create Enhanced Matrix Object 219
Create Shared Matrix Object 219
Create Spell Matrix Object 219
Create Thread Item 219
Creature Remains 219
Deathbed 220
Deathsight 220
Deflect Blow 220
Defuse Mob 220
Diagnose 220
Disassociate 220
Epic 220
Explosive Flame Arrow 220
Extend Range 220
Far Speaking 220
Faulty Bowyer 221
Faulty Goods 221
Feinting Lunge 221
Feinting Retreat 221
Fire Arrow 221
Flaming Wounds 221
Flying Kick 221
Forge Arrow 221
Gaping Wounds 222
Glide 222
Halt Disease 222
Hard Glare 222
Head Butt 222
Heal Others 222
Here's the Deal 222
Hold Multiple Threads 223
Horror Analysis 223
Identify Tracks 223
Improvised Missiles 223
Improvised Weapons 223
Lasting Memory 223
Liar 223
Lift the Curtain 223
Lightning Throw 224
Maintain Spell Threads 224
Matched Weapons 224
Mighty Throw 224
Mimic Music 224
Mind Trick 224
Mountain Hoof 224
Name Spell 224
Offguard 225
Orbiting Watcher 225
Photographic Memory 225
Pin Down 225
Pin Up 225
Placed Shot 225
Placed Throw 225
Rapier Wit 225
Remember Conversation 226
Second Riposte 226
Setup 226
Shadow Hide 226
Share Sense 226
Signature Spells 226
Smooth Armor 226
Songs of Inspiration 226
Spell Stacking 227
Spirit Flame 227
Spirit Shield 227
Subliminal Mutterings 227
Swab the Deck 227
Swift Hoof 227
Swinging in the Rigging 227
Talent Linking 227
Telling the Tale 228
Thread Masking 228
Translator 228
Unraveling 228
Vertical Jump 228
Water Mount 228
Weave Element 228
Weapon Scream 229
Whispered Conversation 229
Wound Heal 229
Wound Share 229

SKILLS 230
Learning and Improving Skills 230
Using Skills 230
Default Skill Use 230
Skill Tests 231
Artisan Skills 231
Using Artisan Skills 231
General Skills 231
Knowledge Skills 231
Using Knowledge Skills 232
Making Knowledge Tests 232
Knowledge Skill Limits 233
Language Skills 233
Skill Descriptions 234
Acrobatic Strike 234
Acting 234
Air Sailing 234
Alchemy 234
Animal Bond 235
Animal Handling 235
Animal Training 235
Anticipate Blow 235
Arcane Mutterings 235
Artist 235
Artisan 236
Avoid Blow 236
Bardic Voice 236
Battle Shout 236
Blade Juggle 236
Bribery 236
Champion Challenge 237
Charge 237
Climbing 237
Cold Purify 237
Conceal Weapon 237
Conversation 237
Craft Armor 237
Craftsman 238
Craft Weapon 238
Creature Analysis 239
Critical Hit 239
Dead Fall 239
Detect Trap 239
Detect Weapon 239
Disarm 239
Disarm Trap 239
Disguise 239
Down Strike 239
Emotion Song 239
Engaging Banter 240
Entertainer 240
Etiquette 240
Evaluate 240
Evidence Analysis 240
False Shackles 240
Fast Grab 240
Fast Hand 240
Fence 241
First Impression 241
Fishing 241
Flirting 241
Forgery 241
Graceful Exit 241
Great Leap 241
Haggle 241
Heartening Laugh 241
Hunting 242
Hypnotize 242
Impressive Shot 242
Impressive Strike 242
Knowledge 242
Lip Reading 242
Lock Picking 242
Maneuver 242
Mapmaking 243
Melee Weapons 243
Mimic Voice 243
Missile Weapons 243
Momentum Attack 243
Mount Attack 243
Navigation 243
Physician 244
Picking Pockets 244
Pilot Boat 244
Pin 245
Quickblade 245
Read and Write Language 245
Read and Write Magic 245
Read River 245
Research 245
Resist Taunt 245
Rhetoric 245
Riposte 246
Rushing Attack 246
Sailing 246
Second Attack 246
Second Weapon 246
Seduction 246
Shackle Shrug 246
Shield Charge 247
Silent Walk 247
Slough Blame 247
Speak Language 247
Spellcasting 247
Streetwise 247
Sure Mount 247
Surprise Strike 247
Swift Kick 247
Swimming 248
Tactics 248
Tame Mount 248
Taunt 248
Throwing Weapons 248
Tracking 249
Trading 249
Trample 249
Trap Initiative 249
Trick Riding 249
Unarmed Combat 249
Unmount 249
Weapon Breaker 250
Wheeling Attack 250
Wheeling Defense 250
Wilderness Survival 250
Wound Balance 250

WORKINGS OF MAGIC 251
The Cycle of Magic 251
Magic in Our World 251
Patterns 251
True Patterns 252
Names and Naming 252
Pattern Knowledge 253
Pattern Items 253
Threads 254
Astral Space 254
The Nature of Astral Space 254
The Astral Landscape 255
Astral and Physical Forms 255
Astral Imprints 255
True to Form 256
Astral Regions 256

Contents

Astral Sensing 257
Using Astral Sensing 257
Patterns in Astral Space 257
Astral Sensing Methods 258
Blood Magic 259
Common Blood Magic 259
Blood Oaths 260
Sacrifice Magic 262
Familiars 263

THREAD MAGIC 264
Nature of Threads 264
Threads and Legend Points 264
Using Thread Magic 264
Limits on Threads 264
Losing Threads 265
Weaving Threads to Magic Items 265
Pattern Knowledge 265
Key Knowledges 265
Deeds 266
Obtain the Key Knowledge 266
Spend Legend Points 267
Weave the Thread 267
Weaving Threads to Pattern Items 268
Obtain the Key Knowledge 268
Spend Legend Points 269
Weave the Thread 270
Unweaving Threads 270
Thread Magic and Group True Patterns 271
Creating a Group True Pattern 271
Character Death or Separation 272
Adding New Members 272
Key Knowledges of Group Pattern Items 272
Weaving Threads to Group True Patterns 272
Group True Pattern Thread Limits 272

ENCHANTING 273
The Enchanting Process 273
Creating or Obtaining the Item 273
Imbuing the Item with Magical Power 273
Making an Enchanting Test 275
Creating Magical Items 276
Common Items 276
Blood Charms 276
Living Armor 277
Spell Matrix Objects 277
Thread Items 278
Legendary Items 278
True Elements 278
Properties of True Elements 279
Gathering and Mining True Elements 280
Orichalcum 281
Purchasing True Elements 281

SPELL MAGIC 282
About Spellcasting 282
Talents for Casting Spells 282
Spellcasting Talent 282
Thread Weaving Talent 282
Spell Matrix Talent 282
Willforce Talent 283
Spell Threads 283
Learning Spells 283
Grimoires 284
Spell Learning Cost 284
Spell Legend Point Cost 284
Untutored Spell Learning 284
Casting Spells 285
Concentration 285
Human Versatility and Spellcasting 285
Targeting Spells 285
Observing Spellcasting 286
Spellcasting Sequence 286
Weave Threads into Spell 286
Make Spellcasting Test 286
Check Success 287
Determine Spell Effect 287
Determine Duration 287
Spellcasting Methods 287
Spellcasting (Matrix Casting) 287
Casting Raw Magic 289
Casting from a Grimoire 290
Dispelling Magic 291
Named Spells 291
Casting Named Spells 291
Dispelling Named Spells 292
High-Circle Spells 293
Spell Descriptions 293
Threads 293
Weaving Difficulty 293
Range 293
Duration 294
Effect 294
Casting Difficulty 294
Description 294

ELEMENTALISM SPELLS 295
First Circle Spells 295
Air Armor 295
Crunch Climb 295
Earth Blend 295
Earth Darts 296
Flameweapon 296
Heat Food 296
Moonglow 296
Plant Talk 296
Purify Earth 296
Purify Water 296
Resist Cold 297
Resist Fire 297
Second Circle Spells 297
Air Mattress 297
Billowing Cloak 297
Boil Water 297
Detect Elementalism Magic 297
Flame Strike 298
Gills 298
Hunter's Sense 298
Ice Spear 298
Icy Surface 298
Path Home 298
Shield Willow 298
Slow Metal Weapon 299
Small Slayer 299
Sterilize Object 299
Stick Together 299
Third Circle Spells 299
Astral Sense Elementalism 299
Behind Eye 300
Dispel Elementalism Magic 300
Fingers of Wind 300
Fuel Flame 300
Grounding 300
Ice Mace and Chain 300
Lightning Bolt 301
Plant Feast 301
Porter 301
Puddle Deep 301
Repair 302
Rust 302
Sky Lattice 302
Smoke Cloud 302
Snuff 302
Sunlight 303
Thrive 303
Throne of Air 303
Winds of Deflection 303
Fourth Circle Spells 304
Air Blast 304
Blizzard Sphere 304
[Element] Spear 304
Falcon's Cloak 304
Fire Whip 304
Great Sticky Vines 304
Lighten Load 305
Lightning Shield 305
Lightning Step 305
Liquid Arrow 305
Lodestone's Touch 306
Root Trap 306
Shield of Warping 306
Spirits of Death's Sea 306
Suffocating Paste 307
Uneven Ground 307
Weapon Back 307
Fifth Circle Spells 307
Balloons of Mist 307
Earth Staff 308
Fireball 308
Inflame Self 308
Ironwood 308
Metal Scream 308
Metal Wings 309
Nutritious Earth 309
Resist Poison 309
Shattering Stone 309
Stone Cage 310
Sixth Circle Spells 310
Drastic Temperature 310
Ease Passage 310
Fireweave 310
Flameshaw 310
Living Wall 311
Ricochet Attack 311
Stone Rain 312
Tossing Earth 312
Tree Merge 312
Seventh Circle Spells 312
Beastform 312
Calm Water 312
Cloud Summon 313
Death Rain 313
Earth Q'wril 313
Earth Surfing 313
Engulf [Element] 313
Fire Hounds 314
Flame Darts 315
Grasping Hand of Earth 315
Storm Manacles 315
Thunderclap 315
Whirlwind 315
Eighth Circle Spells 316
Blade Fury 316
Crushing Hand of Earth 316
Earth Wall 316
Perimeter Alarm 316
Silence Metal 316
Silver Shadow 317
Waterspout 317
Ninth Circle Spells 317
Burning Water 317
Cloud Banish 317
Cold Embers 318
Dragon's Breath 318
Fire Wall 318
Moon Shadow 318
Water Wall 318
Tenth Circle Spells 319
Air Fortress 319
Earth and Air 319
Elemental Merchant 319
Fire and Water 319
Frozen Harbor 320
Petrify 320
Weather Change 320
Eleventh Circle Spells 320
Wood Blade 320
Twelfth Circle Spells 321
Crop Blight 321
Fourteenth Circle Spells 321
Council of the Forest 321
Fifteenth Circle Spells 321
Call Forth the Maelstrom 321
Purify Forest 321

ILLUSIONISM SPELLS 322
Illusions and Damage Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions 322
First Circle Spells 323
Assuring Touch 323
Bellow of the Thundras 323
Best Face 323
Blazing Fists of Rage 323
Catseyes 323
Disguise Metal 324
Displace Image 324
Fun With Doors 324
Light 324
Pauper's Purse 324
Rope Guide 325
True Blazing Fists of Rage 325
Unseen Voices 325
Second Circle Spells 325
Blindness 325
Crafty Thought 325
Disaster 326
Encrypt 326
Ephemeral Bolt 326
Impossible Knot 326
Innocent Activity 326
Monstrous Mantle 327
Remove Shadow 327
Send Message 327
Tailor 327
True Ephemeral Bolt 328
Weather Cloak 328
You Got Me 328
Third Circle Spells 328
Alarm 328
And Then I Woke Up 328
Astral Sense Illusionism 328
Blinding Glare 328
Dampen Karma 329
Detect Illusionism Magic 329
Dispel Illusionism Magic 329
False Floor 329
Impossible Lock 329
Mind Fog 329
Nobody Here 329
Phantom Warrior 330
See the Unseen 330
Soothe the Savage Beast 330
Suffocation 330
Fourth Circle Spells 330
Aura 330
Bleeding Edge 330
Circle of Well Being 331
Clarion Call 331
Conceal Tracks 331
Eyes Have It 331
Great Weapon 331
Hunger 331
Improved Alarm 332
Memory Blank 332
Multi-Missile 332
Nightmare of Foreboding 332
Stop Right There 332
Unmask 333
Fifth Circle Spells 333
Awaken 333
Bond of Silence 333
Clothing Gone 333
Enter and Exit 333
Eye of Truth 333
Flesh Eater 333
Flying Carpet 334
Illusion 334
Improve Karma 334
Noble Manner 335
Phantom Fireball 335
Pleasant Visions 335
Switch 335
Wall of Unfire 335
Sixth Circle Spells 336
Astral Shadow 336
Bouncing Blaster 336
Chosen Path 336
Dancing Disks 336
Foreseeing 336
Illusory Missiles 337
Memory Scribe 337
Spotlight 337
Stench 337
Seventh Circle Spells 337
Dream Sight 337
Drunken Stagger 338
False Enchantment 338
Rebel Limb 338
Reversal of Passion 338
Silent Stampede 338
Stampede 339
Time Flies 339
Twisted Tongues 339
Vertigo 339
Walk Through 339
Eighth Circle Spells 339
Astral Nightmare 339
Dreamsend 340
Form Exchange 340
Illusory Spell 340
Leaping Lizards 341
Massive Missiles 341
Other Place 341
Shadow Spell 341
Ninth Circle Spells 341
Do Unto Others 341
Grim Reaper 342
One of the Crowd 342
Revulsion 342
Shift Walls 342
Thundering Walls 342
Tenth Circle Spells 343
Afterlife 343
Astral Materialization 343
Eclipse 343
Eternal Day 343
Haunted House 344
Thirteenth Circle Spells 344
Restore Pattern 344
Fourteenth Circle Spells 344
Shadow Palace 344

NETHERMANCY SPELLS 345
First Circle Spells 345
Astral Spear 345
Bone Dance 345
Chilling Circle 345
Command Nightflyer 346
Detect Undead 346
Dry and Wet 346
Experience Death 346
Insect Repellent 346
Mount Call 346
Putrefy 347
Spirit Dart 347
Spirit Grip 347
Undead Struggle 347
Second Circle Spells 347
Bone Circle 347
Detect Nethermancy Magic 348
Ethereal Darkness 348
Fog Ghost 348
Gadfly 348
Life Circle of One 349
Pocket Guardian 349
Repel Animal 349
Shadow's Whisper 349
Shield Mist 350
Third Circle Spells 350
Arrow of Night 350
Astral Sense Nethermancy 350
Dark Messenger 350
Death Trance 350
Death's Head 350
Dispel Nethermancy Magic 351
Fog of Fear 351
Grave Message 351
Pack Bags 351
Pain 351
Preserve 352
Shadow Meld 352
Spirit Double 352
Summon Bone Ghost 352
Fourth Circle Spells 352
Animate Skeleton 352
Astral Flare 353
Blood Servitor 353
Dark Spy 353
Evil Eye 353
Fatal Food 353
Friend or Foe 354
Last Chance 354
Nightflyer's Cloak 354
Spirit Servant 354
Viewpoint 354
Visions of Death 355
Fifth Circle Spells 355
Animate Spirit Object 355
Astral Horror 355
Astral Mount 356
Astral Whisper 356
Blind 356
Circle of Astral Protection 357
Incessant Talking 357
Pass Ward 357
Sculpt Darkness 357
Sense Horror 357
Shadow Hunter 357
Spiritual Guidance 358
Star Shower 358
Target Portal 358
Tears of the Scourge 358
Whisper Through the Night 359
Wither Limb 359
Sixth Circle Spells 359
Blessed Light 359
Bone Puppet 359
Bone Shatter 359
Bone Walker 359
Dust to Dust 360
Foul Vapors 360
Friendly Darkness 360
Recovery 361
Soul Armor 361
Wall of Darkness 361
Seventh Circle Spells 361
Astral Beacon 361
Astral Maw 361
Banquet of Dis 362

Bone Pudding 362
Cold Storage 362
Constrict Heart 362
Damage Shift 362
Marathon Run 363
Restrain Entity 363
Reverse Withering 363
Spirit Bolt 363
Spirit Portal 363
Steal Strength 363
Step Through Shadow 364
Wit Friend 364
Eighth Circle Spells 364
Control Being 364
Globe of Silence 364
Horror Call 364
Netherblade 365
Restrain Horror 365
Shadow Tether 365
Translator Spirit 365
Visit Death 366
Wall of Bones 366
Wither Away 366
Ninth Circle Spells 366
Create Life 366
Dark Sword 366
Disrupt Magic 367
Mystic Vessel 367
Shift Skin 367
Silent Darkness 367
Talent Shredder 368
Void Wave 368
Walking Dead 368
Tenth Circle Spells 368
Animate Dead 368
Astral Slice 369
Damage Transfer 369
Fragile Pattern 369
Gateway 370
Soul Trap 370
Spirit Tempest 370
Strong Pattern 371
Tap Horror Karma 371
Eleventh Circle Spells 371
Alter Life 371
Shatter Pattern 371
Unnatural Life 372
Twelfth Circle Spells 372
Forge Falsemen 372
Pervert Emotion 373
Thirteenth Circle Spells 373
Erase Horror Mark 373
Eternal Youth 373
Fourteenth Circle Spells 373
Call Forth the Army of Decay 373

WIZARDRY SPELLS 374
First Circle Spells 374
Astral Sense 374
Bedazzling Display of Logical Analysis 374
Crushing Will 375
Dispel Magic 375
Divine Aura 375
Flame Flash 375
Ignite 375
Iron Hand 375
Mind Dagger 375
Silent Converse 376
Triangulate 376
Wall Walker 376
Second Circle Spells 376
And His Money 376
Astral Shield 376
Clean 376
Dodge Boost 376
Rope Ladder 376
Seal 377
Vines 377
Wake-Up Call 377
Third Circle Spells 377
Aura Strike 377
Catwalk 377
Combat Fury 377
False Aura 377
Healing Sleep 378
Identify Spell 378
Leaps and Bounds 378
Levitate 378
Notice Not 378
Ork Stoke 379
Quicken Pace 379
Seeking Sight 379
Shatter Lock 379
Water Wings 379
Wizard Mark 379
Fourth Circle Spells 379
Ball of String 379
Binding Threads 380
Buoyancy 380
Dust Devil 380
Hair Frenzy 380
Icy Fingers 380
Identify Magic 380
Inventory 381
Juggler's Touch 381
Kaer Knocking 381
Karmic Connection 381
Relax 381
Thorny Retreat 382
Trust 382
Wizard's Cloak 382
Fifth Circle Spells 382
Counterspell 382
Giant Size 382
Heat Metal Armor 383
Invigorate 383
Kaer Pictographs 383
Mage Armor 383
Makeshift Missile 383
Mystic Shock 383
Sanctuary 384
Slow 384
Solo Flight 384
Study Thread 384
Sixth Circle Spells 384
Blood Lost 384
Displace Self 384
Doom Missile 385
Karma Cancel 385
Loan Spell 385
Makeshift Weapon 385
Mental Library 385
Multi-Mind Dagger 385
Rampage 385
Razor Orb 386
Sleep 386
Spellstore 386
Seventh Circle Spells 386
Astral Gift 386
Blood Boil 386
Call 386
Confusing Weave 387
Dislodge Spell 387
Lightning Cloud 387
Liquid Eyes 387
Move on Through 387
Mystic Net 387
Spell Cage 388
Eighth Circle Spells 388
Catch Spell 388
Compression Bubble 388
Delay Blow 388
Peacebond 388
Safe Opening 389
Spell Snatcher 389
Wound Mask 389
Ninth Circle Spells 389
Absorbing Sphere 389
Channel Raw Magic 390
Draining Eye 390
Glowing Swarm 390
Observe Event 391
Reattach Limb 391
Tell Tale 391
Wipe Matrices 391
Tenth Circle Spells 392
Death Vow 392
Draw and Quarter 392
Hold Pattern 392
Journey to Life 392
Onion Blood 393
Spell Fusion 393
Warp Astral Space 393
Eleventh Circle Spells 393
Block Magic 393
Twelfth Circle Spells 394
Alter Form 394
Thirteenth Circle Spells 394
Cleanse Astral Space 394
Fifteenth Circle Spells 394
City in a Bottle 394

COMBAT 395
Combat Summary 395
Declare Actions 395
Determine Initiative 395
Resolve Actions 396
Begin a New Round 396
Actions 396
Movement 396
Standard Actions 396
Simple Actions 397
Resolving Actions 397
Resolving Attacks 398
Make an Attack Test 398
Determine Success 398
Make a Damage Test 399
Adjust Damage for Armor 399
Check for Wounds 400
Make a Knockdown Test 400
Check for Unconsciousness or Death 401
Using Shields 401
Shields and Armor-Defeating Hits 402
Armor Bonuses 402
Spell Defense Bonus 402
Effects of Injury 402
Recovering From Damage 402
Wounds 403
Combat Options 403
Aggressive Attack 403
Aiming 403
Attacking to Knockdown 403
Attacking to Stun 404
Called Shot 404
Defensive Stance 404
Giving Ground 405
Going Inside a Shield 405
Jumping Up 405
Shattering a Shield 406
Splitting Movement 406
Setting Against a Charge 406
Situation Modifiers 407
Blindsided 407
Cover 407
Darkness 407
Distance 408
Harried 408
Impaired Movement 408
Knocked Down 409
Stunned 409
Surprised 409
Types of Combat 409
Close Combat 409
Melee Attacks 410
Unarmed Attacks 411
Ranged Combat 412
Missile Attacks 412
Thrown Attacks 412
Spell Combat 413
Mounted Combat 413
Charging Attacks 413
Mounted Unarmed Attacks 414
Staying Mounted 414
Mounted Movement 414
Ranged and Spell Combat 415
Aerial Combat 415
Flying Movement 415
Close Combat 415
Swooping Attacks 415
Charging Attacks 415
Ranged and Spell Combat 415
Knockdown 415
Creature Combat 415
Initiative 415
Number of Actions 415
Karma Use 416
Creature Attacks 416
Creatures and Combat Options 418

BUILDING YOUR LEGEND 419
Earning Legend Points 419
Player vs. Character Experience 419
Tallying Legend Points 419
Current Legend Points 419
Total Legend Points 419
Spending Legend Points 420
Improving Attribute Values 420
Improving Talent Ranks 421
Improving Skill Ranks 421
Learning Talent Knacks 423
Learning New Spells 423
Purchasing Karma Points 423
Weaving Threads 423
Advancing Discipline Circles 424
Conditions for Circle Advancement 424
Minimum Talent Requirements 424
Training Requirements 424
Reaching the Next Circle 425
Learning New Disciplines 425
Improving New Discipline Talents 427
Durability 428
New Discipline Talent Knacks 428
Characteristics Bonuses 429
Karma 429
Human Versatility 429
Personal Visions 429
Deeds of Atonement 429
Legendary Status 430
Status Levels 430
The Price of Fame 430
Adventuring Groups 430
Adventuring Logs 431
The Great Library of Throal 431
The Players' Role 431
Log Payment 431
Log Legend Points 431
Group Legendary Status 431

GOODS AND SERVICES 432
Purchasing Goods 432
Taking Extra Time 432
Quality of Goods 433
Currency 433
Currency Denominations 433
Gems 434
Elemental Coins 434
Weapons 434
Repairing Damaged Weapons 439
Armor and Shields 439
Repairing Damaged Armor 442
Creating Piecemeal Armor 442
Magical Equipment 443
Blood Charms 443
Common Magic Items 447
Healing Aids 450
Adventuring Equipment 451
Services 453
Accommodation 453
Provender 454
Trade Services 455
Transport 456
Animals and Mounts 456
Mounts 456
Other Animals 458
Tack and Harness 458
Clothing 459

PASSIONS AND QUESTORS 460
The Nature of Passions 460
The Passions in Conflict 461
Worship of the Passions 461
Harbingers 461
Passion Descriptions 462
Astendar 462
Chorrolis 462
Dis (Mad Passion) 463
Floranuus 464
Garlen 464
Jaspree 465
Lochost 465
Mynbruje 466
Raggok (Mad Passion) 466
Thystonius 467
Upandal 467
Vestrial (Mad Passion) 468
Questors 468
Becoming a Questor 469
The Questor Talent 469
Acts of Devotion 470
Questor Powers 472
Absorb Damage 472
Animate Plant 472
Break Shackles 472
Cause Pain 473
Change Thoughts 473
Command Animal 473
Comfort 473
Confusion 473
Create Structure 473
Create Weapon 474
Deceit 474
Discover Desire 474
Ease Suffering 474
Enchanted Gift 474
Encourage Trade 475
Enslave 475
Fortify Structure 475
Heal 475
Incite Greed 475
Increase Initiative 475
Increase Perception 476
Increase Speed 476
Increase Stamina 476
Increase Strength 476
Inspire Rage 476
Inspire Rebellion 476
Instill Love 476
Living Death 477
Locate Valuables 477
Manipulate Desire 477
Perceive Emotion 477
Plant Growth 478
Raise Undead 478
Return Youthful Spirit 478
Seal Home 478
Speed Ship 478

BARSAIVE PROVINCE 479
Overview 479
The Land 479
Climate 479
Population 479
Travel and Trade 480
Plains 480
The Badlands 480
The Wastes 481
Hills and Mountains 481
Caucavic Mountains 481
Delaris Mountains 481
Dragon Mountains 481
Scol Mountains 481
Scytha Mountains 481
Thunder Mountains 481
Throal Mountains 481
Twilight Peaks 481
Tylon Mountains 481
Jungles and Forests 482
Blood Wood 482
Glenwood Deep 482
Liaj Jungle 482
Poison Forest 482
Servos Jungle 482
The Serpent River 483
Coil River 483
Mothingale River 483
Servos River 483
Tylon River 483
Notable Settlements 483
The Serpent Lakes 484
Lake Ban 484
Lake Pyros 484
Lake Vors 484
The Mist Swamps 484
Scavia 484
Seas and Oceans 485
Aras Sea 485
Death's Sea 485
Scarlet Sea 485
Government 485
The Kingdom of Throal 485
Cara Fahd 486
The T'skrang Aropagoi 486
Blood Wood 486
The Theran Empire 486
The City States 487

APPENDICES 489

CHARACTER SHEET 509

INDEX 516

CONTENTS

INHERITANCE

When the Scourge ended, we were determined to reclaim our heritage.
But we were not yet ready to pay the price.

• Tolan Oddear, Historian of Landis •

Yes, it is a fine axe, and tempered in many battles, my friend. Its head has even tasted the blood of a Horror. How did I gain possession of such a fine weapon? Well, fill my mug with more of that fine dwarf stout and I'll gladly tell you the tale.

'Twas during an expedition to the lost city of Jalendale. I shall never forget it. We set out on a cold, wet day, much like today—the elven magician, myself, and the warrior who wielded this mighty axe, the troll called Lorm ...

I ran up the steep, rocky slope, breathing in steaming gasps. Over the din of rain pelting the nearby rocks, I could hear the ork scorchers below. I stumbled and rolled down a few lengths then regained my feet, strands of moss now clinging to my matted red beard. As I fumbled to put my helmet back on my head, arrows hissed past, striking rocks upslope. Fear gave my legs new strength and I quickly crested the hill, diving for cover behind the boulder I had seen my companions use earlier.

Glancing up, I saw Lorm's green wart-covered fist holding his huge axe a finger's width away from Mestoph's face. The hair tufts in Lorm's large ears twitched and his nostrils dilated. His rough tongue rimmed his left tusk, and his yellow eyes glared from the slits formed by his pockmarked eyelids. Lorm was one unhappy troll.

"Where's all the gold? Where's this lost city? *Where is Jalendale?*"

Mestoph shook his long white hair away from his face, revealing an ugly sneer. He stared at Lorm with the orb of magical amber that served as his left eye.

I wheezed over to Lorm, reached up and tapped him near his belt.

"Wouldn't you rather kill some scorchers?"

"No thanks, dwarf."

"Then perhaps you would consider killing some scorchers before killing me?" Mestoph asked.

Lorm blinked at the elf's question, then pulled his axe away from our magician. Mestoph slumped away from Lorm into a puddle, rain dripping from his aquiline features. Noticing that Lorm and Mestoph had leaned their packs against the boulder, I took mine off too. As feeling returned to my shoulders I looked downhill.

The ork scorchers had taken cover about halfway up the hill. Apparently they were concerned about what sort of defense we would concoct and wanted to consider the possibilities before charging up the last open stretch of ground. They were giving us more credit than we deserved.

I took a step toward Mestoph, and the elf fixed me with his amber eye.

"I swear the maps put Jalendale here, or close to here."

"Well that's great. How about whipping up a spell to take care of a few angry scorchers?"

"I am afraid my 'destroy angry ork' selection is limited."

"Then how about something from your 'take action to make angry troll happy' collection?"

Mestoph nodded. He squatted and crabbed along the ground, careful to stay behind the boulder as he gathered a few pebbles and began to weave a spell.

Lorm and I had seen this one before. I drew my short sword. Lorm grabbed his axe with both hands.

Suddenly the sky above us darkened and within minutes we were enveloped by a blackness so deep we could barely make out the stones at our feet. This was midnight dark, copper-cavern-no-lamp dark. This was Mestoph's darkness. I crouched and waited.

A few moments later we were back to the murky-storm light. A quick glance told me Mestoph had cast the darkness on the pebbles, then tossed the pebbles down the hill at the orks. Confused shouts now came from three large bubbles of darkness where the orks had stood.

Lorm and I scrambled down the hill and waited at the edge of the darkness. An ork stumbled out. Lorm smashed him and the scorcher fell back into the darkness, leaving a trail of red on the rocky slope.

Apparently unable to coordinate their movements in the dark-

ness, the orks kept wandering out haphazardly. Lorm and I took care of as many as we could. As soon as four orks made it out of the darkness at the same time, Lorm and I rushed back up the hill.

The plan now called for Mestoph to take care of the most determined ork pursuer or two with a different spell. Nothing happened.

Lorm strode on ahead while the orks gained on me. They say never look behind you when you're in a close chase because it slows you down. I looked. The orks were maybe fifteen of their strides back, swinging their swords across their bodies as they pumped their arms in time with their legs. They looked angrier than Lorm had looked. Two of them stopped to draw their bows.

I heard Lorm yell, a peculiar fading yell. The lead ork made an extra effort, and I promptly did the same. I reached the crest at top speed and dived for the cover of the boulder. I remember thinking, "That doesn't look like Mestoph's darkness spell," then falling.

Darkness again surrounded me as I fell, interrupted by an occasional flash of blue light ahead of me. Then I hit something, more gently than I expected, and my descent stopped. A blue glow enveloped me, then I was falling again, but not too fast. Another hit. Another blue glow. Another fall.

Soon I realized I was inside some type of shaft carved into the hill, and the blue glows were coming from runes carved into the shaft's walls about every three body lengths. I passed about a dozen levels of runes before landing on the rocks at the bottom of the shaft.

As I checked for broken bones, a flame sputtered, died, then another sputter turned into a warm yellow glow. Mestoph had lit a torch. While Lorm just sat there, looking a bit dazed, Mestoph walked over and handed me the torch. He took another from his pack, but this one took some time to light because it was damper than the first. The torch popped and hissed as it caught, illuminating my pack lying a few feet away. Lorm was already picking his up. Mestoph cleared his throat. "An illusion hid this shaft until one of my spell castings revealed it. Rather surprising."

"Mestoph, take a look at this," Lorm said, pointing to the section of wall near his pack. Mestoph walked over and leaned toward the wall, holding his torch just above his head.

After a moment of exploring the wall with his fingers, he shivered, pulling his hand back. He took a deep breath. His fingers went back to the wall.

The wall was covered with curving lines just slightly thicker than my fingernail. They were carved into the rock to different depths, some as deep as a finger length. Pacing around the shaft wall, I saw that the lines covered nearly every inch of its surface, except for occasional palm-sized blank spots. I counted out seventy paces to circle the shaft. The curlicues rose perhaps five or six dwarf-lengths from the floor of the shaft. The lines were deepest near three pitted, metal triangles hanging above a pillared entrance. We had found Kaer Jalendale.

Stone doors four dwarf-lengths tall lay cracked on the ground. Apparently, we were not the first to discover the city.

Mestoph pointed at the triangles.

"Those metal triangles look like they contain orichalcum. They must have been the wards protecting the town."

Lorm ran his axe across the wall. The rasp was just loud enough to hear above the splatter of rain overhead.

"And this?"

"I think a Horror etched all this. Every single line has an astral image. I think these designs sapped the magic from the wards. But carving these lines would take a year at the very least, and probably closer to five."

"A Horror spent five years breaking into Jalendale?" My voice rose in pitch as I spoke. I thought of something carving a few lines, stepping back, then carving a bit more, scratching lines a jeweler would be lucky to make as precisely. Something carving day after day, year after year, just waiting to get into the town. My desire for treasure was lessening.

"Did they know?" Lorm asked.

"The citizens? Probably not at first, not until the first ward failed. And by then it would have been too late to do anything."

Lorm took a long look through the doorway. I decided to check out my short sword. Mestoph laughed, a quick, high-pitched sound.

"We can wait for the monster out here or look for treasure inside." Mestoph spun in a half turn, then walked over the broken gates. I took a swig of water and thought a bit. I suppose only a desperate dwarf thinks on water. Lorm hurled a stone as far up the shaft as he could, then followed Mestoph inside. I made my most gallant "after you" bow, before crunching over the broken rock just behind our troll.

The town smelled dry, musty, like leaves during a parched autumn. I thanked the Passions for the dry part. Mestoph's map showed a Jalendale built along dwarf lines. The large central marketplace housed the guild building, the courts and jail, and the Passions' temple. Eight streets radiated out from the market to the edge of town, bisected by evenly spaced cross streets, giving Jalendale's road grid the appearance of a spider web.

Give humans and orks a couple of centuries, however, and they can foul up any dwarf plan. My first clue was the rope ladders and hemp-and-slat bridges above us. Jalendale's population must have been larger than planned, and the settlement had expanded up rather than out. A few buildings were even hewn from the rock of the cavern ceiling and used as supports to suspend thick cables and ropes. These ropes, in turn, held platforms and precarious dwellings. Other shacks stood on platforms resting on pillars set atop the roofs of Jalendale's original buildings. An incompre-

hensible series of ropes, rods, and beams connected the entire construction.

I found a night post with a light quartz that still responded to touch, and Lorm fashioned a lantern from the quartz, some rope, and one of his sacks. It gave off better light than the torches, but Mestoph and I kept ours lit. Light frightens some things, but fire hurts more of them.

Mestoph tried to lead us to the guild building. We started down the main avenue, but an array of pillars and cables supporting the city overhead blocked our passage before we had walked even fifty paces from the gate.

Blocking the main avenue seemed downright ork-stupid. Then I realized that once the gate was sealed, it wouldn't matter if they blocked the avenue this far from the market. Nobody would be coming through the gate until the day the Horror came along, that is. The walls all around the jumble showed more of the scrolling lines, even more intricate than the writing outside the gate.

Mestoph tried another street. It was blocked by shanties. His next choice got us closer to the marketplace before a thicket of stone spikes closed it off. A few of the spikes penetrated the walls of nearby buildings.

As we backtracked, Lorm wandered from one side of the avenue to the other, peering into buildings. I squinted in the glare of the light quartz as he walked over to me. Lorm shifted the lantern to his other hand, then whispered, "Where are all the bodies?"

"Maybe the Horror ate them all."

"Even all the bones?" Lorm blinked his eyes.

"Maybe it's a very tidy Horror. Maybe it stacked all the bones in a corner somewhere."

"Thief, take a look at these."

I heard the strain in Mestoph's voice. He was standing at the mouth of an alley. Five cracked crystalline shells lay next to a heap of pottery shards. I took a few steps toward them.

A sharp odor stung my nose as I held my torch close enough to one of the empty shells to see the gray-streaked ooze. The shells were cysts. Whoever was in charge had just awakened a welcoming committee.

The shadowmants attacked us when we were nearly halfway to the center of Jalendale. I heard a fluttering sound and looked up just as two dark shapes swooped at Lorm. Blunt heads fanned out into pairs of sleek, featherless wings. Bodies tapered to scorpion-like tails that curved along the under of the creatures. Crystalline-pointed stingers tipped the tails.

Lorm roared, swinging the light over his head like a sling, and the creatures rose out of sight on silent wings.

As I drew my sword, four more of the creatures plunged from the darkness above. Mestoph performed a nimble dive-and-roll to avoid three dark shapes, and I heard him begin a spell.

I had my sword out and up, hoping to impale a swooping shadowmant. But the dark form in front of me furiously beat its wings, halting its forward motion in time to avoid my blade. I parried its tail strike, the stinger coming within an inch of my face.

I stabbed upward without looking and struck something soft. The shadowmant fluttered back a few paces, then came at me again. I blindly thrust my sword again and felt the thud of its stinger against my hardened leather breastplate.

The shadowmant dove at me again. I swung my blade and the creature wobbled back. I crouched low, and when I heard the flutter I struck, driving as hard as I could with my legs and arms. I felt a weight on my blade writhe for a moment, then become still, and I began congratulating myself just as Lorm howled.

I spun to see a shadowmant flopping at his feet, an axe embedded in its dark flesh. Another fluttered over the troll, its stinger lodged in Lorm's neck. I ran and hacked the tail off and the shadowmant careened away. Lorm dropped his axe and fell to his knees, head to the ground, left hand opening and closing spasmodically, right hand clutched to his neck. I pulled out a poultice.

"Don't touch me, worm beard!"

I stepped back, hands to my shoulders, palms facing outward and my fingers apart. Lorm needed the poultice, but I could wait until he felt less like pulling off my arms.

Three shadowmants lay on the ground. Mestoph eyed two dark shapes circling above his head. He spoke and the shadowmants spiraled up and away from us.

Lorm nodded to me. Mestoph walked toward us, but when he saw what I was doing, he turned away. The elf made a big display of studying his map.

I drew one of Lorm's knives, testing it on a plucked beard hair to make sure it was sharp. I tried to cut a small slit near Lorm's wound.

"Ahhoww!"

"Sorry. If troll skin were a little less tough, this would be easier."

"If dwarf hands didn't shake, it would be easier."

I finally managed a clean cut. I applied pressure around the wound with both hands, then tried to suck the wound clean. I felt his neck buzz as he spoke.

"Have you ever seen a Horror?"

I pulled away, remembering to spit. I didn't know whether the bitter taste was the poison or the troll blood.

"No. You?" I went back to the wound.

"Years ago my father's captain received a mind-plea from some Caucavic kin. We launched our ship, flew all damn night, arrived exhausted. We found all the adults dead, lying all about the place in different stages of rot. The children were alive, except for the babies who died from neglect."

I spit a second and third time. Lorm kept talking.

"I was scouting for survivors when I saw the Horror. It was like a slug, mottled yellow and white. It was only half my size, around a corner and two steps away."

"You mean twice your size?" I started shaking the vial containing the poultice. It began to warm.

"No, half. I caught myself thinking, this can't be what killed all these people. It didn't make sense. I took a step toward it. That was as far as I got. Glittering silver lines appeared where its eyes might have been, and I stopped dead. It looked at me, then turned away, moving slower than I could ever walk. I couldn't move until it was out of sight."

I took the poultice from the vial. Warm and moist, it smelled of basil. I carefully placed it into the wound. Lorm flinched very little.

"We took the children back home with us. As time passed, the Horror touched each of them, one by one. One's voice became painful to hear, another congealed mead when she got too close. One by one, we threw the children out of the hold. A couple left before we had the chance."

"Can you sit up?" I helped the troll as best I could by getting a good grip on his shirt near his shoulder blades.

"I remember thinking that the Horror had gotten two holds."

"Can you stand?"

"Not yet. I always wondered what would have happened if I could have taken that second step."

"Probably it would have blown you to flaming bits. Come on, let's try the standing thing now."

I put my back to his hip, planted my feet and pushed. Lorm pushed back, sliding up my back to a standing position. He leaned forward, hands on his knees, gasping for breath.

"Sure your poultice is going to work?"

"Should. I chose these carefully."

"Doesn't feel right yet. Just like this place. This whole place feels wrong. The smell."

"Smells like leaves to me."

"Dry leaves. It's pouring outside. It's desert dry in here."

"Maybe," I stopped talking. None of my maybes sounded good. I finished with a weak, "You should be fine."

Lorm took a step. He winced, a funny expression on a wart-covered old troll. One tusk poked through his familiar, lopsided grin.

"Maybe. Thanks for your help, Ragnar."

I blinked. The three of us had met in Throal. Somewhere on the road to Jalendale they lost "Ragnar." I became "dwarf," sometimes "thief." It struck me that a person's name was the only thing you could steal by refusing to use it.

"If the short and the tall are ready to go?" I matched Mestoph's mocking bow up with one of my own.

Mestoph led us, which is to say he walked a few steps ahead of us. Each time we found the way blocked, Mestoph would then stand and contemplate the next direction to try, and thus we lurched through the maze of Jalendale.

While Mestoph pondered, Lorm and I poked around in nearby buildings. The shops were in ruins. Not the buildings themselves, just the items inside. A porcelain shop with every plate pulverized, every vessel shattered. A goldsmith's every case shattered, every flattening hammer bent, every foil knife broken in two. I saw not one undamaged piece of furniture, not one whole item of merchandise.

Lorm spent less time searching than sitting down. He was still breathing, so the poultice must have had some effect. Ragged breaths said it was not yet enough.

Following Mestoph's latest direction, we came to a crossroads that led to the marketplace. The intersecting road was gone, replaced by a trench some twenty-five paces wide and, well, much deeper.

As Mestoph and I approached the trench, lights winked on in the square across the way. New lights appeared with each heartbeat, revealing a massive shadow. Mestoph and I gazed at the marketplace. A huge, irregular structure stood where Mestoph's map showed three buildings. Built like a primitive mound, stones of all sizes formed its walls and roof. Soon the open plaza shimmered with the sheen of iridescent blues, purples, and silver-whites.

"Cadaver men!"

Until Lorm's shout I had been unaware that I was staring at the plaza. Mestoph had three steps on me by the time I turned around and saw eight shapes walking toward us.

Lorm had taken cover in an empty shop. He sat inside the doorway, axe lying on the ground beside him.

Mestoph stopped running and crouched in a defensive posture, walking crab-style toward the nearest building. Apparently he'd decided he wasn't going make it past the cadaver men. My heart and legs thought it was worth a try, but my mind told me to stick with Mestoph. I sidled along with him. My sword only shook a little.

The cadaver men had been orks once. Two still had their ornamental gold tusk-caps. Their braided black hair was dusty and their mummified flesh creaked more than the leather armor they wore. The two with the tusk-caps carried swords and had backpacks slung over their shoulders. Six more staggered along with spears in one hand, rope or wood in the other. They smelled of pepper and rot, as if a chef had tried to conceal the smell of a bad piece of meat.

They walked right past us.

Let me say that again, in case you missed it. Eight cadaver men had us pinned, and they walked right past us. They walked to the edge of the trench. They dropped two coils of rope. The rope twitched, then snaked its way through the air to the other side of the trench.

Mestoph inhaled sharply. His face was contorted in pain. Little by little, he regained control of his expression. His features calmed.

"The Horror is close."

Lorm joined us. We watched the cadaver men as they moved away from the trench one by one. One lone cadaver man pounded in a final stake. He finished his task with a ringing strike, then gathered his tools and rejoined his companions.

The eight cadaver men blocked the road we had taken coming in, and I knew they would stand there forever. Lorm wrung the haft of his axe as if it were a wet cloth.

"Ragnar, when a Horror asks you to visit him, is it foolish to say no?"

Mestoph stared blankly at the bridge. His amber eye went milky, as if the color of his hair had somehow bled through. His eyebrows furrowed, then shot up high on his forehead. He started toward the bridge.

"If he wanted us dead, the cadaver men would have attacked. He wants something from us he cannot get if we are dead."

"So he kills us after we do his bidding," I said.

Mestoph stopped for a second, legs apart and arms raised. "We can try to out-think him, out-wait him, or out-fight him. I know which is my best chance." He turned and began walking again.

Lorm took one wobbly step, steadied himself, and followed Mestoph. So did I.

Hundreds of carvings like those by the gate covered the plaza. Our boots made a scratching sound as we walked, as if we were sliding across invisible sand. Each step was like a knife-edge gliding along the soles of my feet, feather-soft yet sharp.

We made our way toward the mound in the center of the plaza. It seemed the only place to go. I could see a pointed archway. Inside the mound was a cool darkness.

I blinked, then it was next to Mestoph. Twice as tall as me, it wore high boots the color of burnished brass. Six-fingered gauntlets curved into moving tendrils the size of my little finger. Each tendril ended in a clear, sharp gem, each with an edge finer than a knife-blade. A brass breastplate of at least a finger's width covered its torso, and gritty, dun-colored smoke seemed to flow from the breastplate to form its neck and limbs.

The face froze me in my tracks. The whitish-gray color of mushrooms and tree-rot, it looked like a skull built entirely of worms. The worms squirmed in a pattern most active around its eye sockets. A single worm protruded from the center of each socket.

Two droplets of blood burst from Lorm's wound, drawn by magic to the Horror. They exploded with a white flash and sizzle on its armor. The Horror flinched and the worms of its face twitched and rolled a bit faster.

It opened its mouth to speak, revealing the writhing mass of its tongue. When it spoke my lungs burned and my mouth dried.

"The one who brings me the small orichalcum shield shall live. The others..."

The Horror swept his hand past me. One of the gems on his finger-tendrils touched my face and bones in my legs snapped. Blinding pain accompanied popping sounds as muscle disconnected. I fell forward. Several of my ribs twisted and snapped. I screamed, I blubbered, I tried to crawl away, but I could not control the spasms of my body. I spit up a mouthful of vomit, bitter bile spilling over my lips and matting my beard. My legs jerked wildly. I could not even beg.

Then the pain stopped. My body was mine again, impossibly whole. The Horror stood over me, watching me carefully.

I ran. I ran in a blind panic toward the mound. I slammed into a wall, bounced and fell. I got up, slammed into the wall again, still screaming. Lorm reached out of the mound to pull me the few feet sideways to the door. I lunged inside.

I do not know how long I sat rocking myself. I remember Lorm persuading me to drink something, and Mestoph asking me questions.

"I think our dwarf is with us again."

Mestoph knelt beside me, then handed me one of his flasks. I took a sip of wine, passed it back to him.

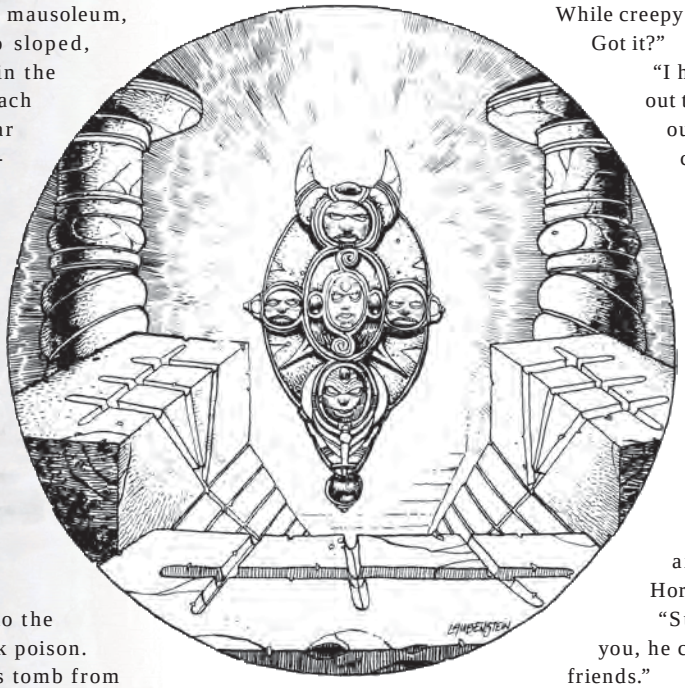
"You have been out for some time. Welcome to your new home."

"Where are we?"

"We are in the biggest mausoleum I have ever seen."

The sweep of Mestoph's arm took in the entire building. Atop eight pillars sat light quartz illuminating perhaps forty box-frames, each nearly fifty arm-lengths high. Each frame was like a gigantic library shelf, filled with bodies rather than books. Most were wrapped in burial shrouds, a few in robes or armor. The place smelled overwhelmingly of cloves, with just a hint of dry rot.

Mestoph rose, gesturing to me to follow. As I walked behind him I noticed a couple of new books in his backpack. In the middle of the mausoleum, eight altars surrounded two sloped, square pits, each pit deepest in the center. One altar stood on each side of each square. Each altar was carved with troughs leading to the pits. The troughs fed into notches running to the center of each pit, each holding a brilliant golden shield. The light struck the shields, flowing and dazzling in a way impossible even for pure gold. Orichalcum.



Mestoph brushed a lock of hair away from his ear.

"The shields are magical protections. The magic was strengthened by the blood of the citizens."

"They killed themselves?"

"Sacrificed, almost down to the last man. Last few in here took poison. The larger shield protects this tomb from being entered or harmed by the 'destroyer of our brethren' or his 'unliving servants.' The smaller prevents the 'destroyer of our brethren' from moving more than a few hundred yards away from it."

"Destroyer of our brethren?"

"I think they enchanted eight of their citizens, left them outside this tomb. Their deaths triggered the magic in the shield."

"Those are the cadaver men?"

"Yes, but they would have been alive then."

I thought about the citizens of Jalendale. A Horror gnawing his way through the town's defenses. No magic strong enough to stop him from coming in. But they had one desperate way of preventing the abomination from harming another town.

"They left plenty of loot." Lorm nodded toward a wall. I could see the gleam of neatly stacked gold. Items in chests and bins, weapons laid out in a panoply. It all looked attractive. But not as attractive as I thought it would.

"Pick something light." Lorm held up a gleaming dagger. Its pommel was carved into a wolf's head and its blade gleamed with the same fire as the shields. "Our plan requires speed."

I walked toward the treasure. Lorm directed me to a small pile.

"Mestoph separated out some of the more promising items."

I started sorting through the loot. I rejected a sword with five matching emeralds in its hilt, but paused to consider a helmet that was as clear as glass and lighter than ten coins.

"Those bracers," Lorm said, pointing to finely hammered copper bracers adorned with jade and lapis lazuli, "probably have defensive magic. Might as well take something that will help you get out of here."

I fingered the bracers, but took the helmet. Lorm grinned. I tried it on. Fit was a little big, but the helmet felt cool and somehow reassuring. I stashed my old helmet in my pack.

Mestoph was reading one of the books when we walked over. Lorm nodded in his direction.

"While you were worthless, Mestoph read. He's already reversed the levitation magic in the shaft. It should now push us up and out."

"How do we get past the Horror?"

"Mestoph starts working on a spell. I take the shield outside. When creepy comes for the shield, I whack him long enough for the spell to finish. You run out and throw the shield back in here, out of his reach. Elfie throws the spell. While creepy recovers, we head out of town. Got it?"

"I have my doubts about running out there to get the shield. And serious doubts about you whacking creepy long enough for Mestoph to take a breath, let alone finish a spell."

Lorm swung his axe in a lazy arc, stopping the axe in mid-swing. He loosened his grip, letting the haft slide down until his right hand rested just below the axe-head. His left hand tested the edge.

"This is my axe. My grandfather made it for my father. He told my father the axe was destined to blood a Horror, perhaps slay one."

"Sure, once the Horror kills you, he can use your axe to whack his friends."

A page rustled.

"You are unduly pessimistic, dwarf."

"Name's Ragnar."

Mestoph closed his book and regarded me with that amber eye.

"Ragnar. The good people of Jalendale did not die in vain. They left detailed records behind, and so we know this Horror is somewhat vulnerable to life magic. Are we ready?"

Lorm nodded vigorously. I shrugged. Mestoph reopened his book. Lorm set his axe down. He drew his newly acquired wolf-handled dagger and carefully cut his left forearm three times. He sheathed the dagger. The troll picked up his axe and began to apply his own blood to the blade.

I walked back to the pit and got the smaller shield. When I returned I saw Lorm had spread a generous coating of blood on his axe. He looked up.

"Just in case things go wrong, I want you to know the poultice finally worked. You chose well."

"What could possibly go wrong, Lorm?"

The troll snorted. I handed him the shield. We watched Mestoph work his way through the spell. The elf spoke softly, his fingers moving in time with his words. His right eye was closed. His left eye swirled with light. He began to speak more slowly.

"That's the signal."

Lorm took four steps out, then dropped the shield and stood on it.

"Here's your cursed shield!"

The Horror appeared a yard from Lorm, its tongue flailing

like a snake on fire. Lorm stepped toward it, swinging his axe. The weapon found the Horror's breastplate, and the blood on the axe flared into white fire. The Horror hissed and screeched. Lorm roared.

I finally remembered to get the shield. I scrambled for it, picked it up as Lorm rang another blow off the Horror's armor. I carried it back into the tomb. Once inside I saw Mestoph fling his arms up and heard him shout three elven words.

Thousands of droplets of water appeared, then coalesced into dozens of spinning blades. The blades flew around Lorm, striking the Horror. The screech turned into a scream. The blades tore whisps of dun-colored smoke from its legs and arms and sliced a tendril off its left hand. They rang and sizzled against its breastplate. The Horror spun around. Two of the blades caught it in the side of his head, sending shreds of white worm through the air.

Mestoph was already running, and so I followed his lead. Lorm took one last swipe then brought up the rear.

"Follow me! I found more maps in the tomb and I think I can get us to a clear avenue!"

We crossed the bridge and turned left. We ran past a plaza with four brass poles, through dusty alleys, down a road with shops with blue doors, then turned right at a dry fountain with lion-head spouts onto a broad avenue. Mestoph's laugh boomed down the dead streets of Jalendale. The magician slowed to a walk. I caught up. Lorm was huffing half a dozen paces behind. Lorm bellowed.

"Whacked him pretty good, I'd say."

The Horror appeared next to Mestoph. Its left eye-worm twitched uncontrollably as it reached out to touch the magician. Mestoph tried to dodge, but the elf reacted too slowly. A sucking, tearing sound came from within him and he began screaming. Then his hair whipped up and forward and his screams suddenly grew strangely muffled.

I screamed too, a dry, pitiful noise. I was staring at Mestoph's eyes and mouth, which were on the side of his face. The Horror had torn the skin loose from muscle and was shifting it around the elf's body.

Mestoph's blood did not flow so much as gush toward the Horror, transforming into burning white ribbons that wrapped around the entity. The Horror's triumphant screams drowned out our own.

The Mestoph-lump collapsed to the ground. The left side of the Horror's face was a smoking, ruined mass. It pointed at Lorm.

"Get me the shield."

Lorm started to run. He took five fast steps, then stopped and turned around. His eyes shone with a silvery web. The Horror hissed.

"Once Horror-touched, never free. Get me the shield!"

I tried to tackle the troll as he started to move, but he batted me aside. The Horror turned his gaze on me.

"Nothing more from you."

I was frozen to the ground. The Horror stared at me with his one good eye. Its seared tongue wiggled back and forth, as if it tasting my fear and anguish.

Apparently the Horror's momentary distraction provided Lorm a brief second of self-control, because he suddenly flung himself at the entity, the wolf's-head dagger flashing in his outstretched hand. The Horror snapped its head around and Lorm crumpled to the ground with a strangled cry. Blisters boiled up on the troll's green skin, releasing rivulets of blood as they burst.

"Noooo!"

I do not remember whether that was my scream, or the Horror's. The entity tried to reach the troll, but the blood now pooling on the ground sparked when it approached. The Horror staggered back and began to hiss rhythmically.

I struggled to gain control of my legs, then knelt by Lorm. His cloudy yellow eyes met mine for a split second then darted toward the axe at his side.

I grabbed for the weapon, but could barely lift the damn thing. Finally I worked the blade around the pool of troll blood. Lorm's breathing rose and fell in time with the Horror's hiss.

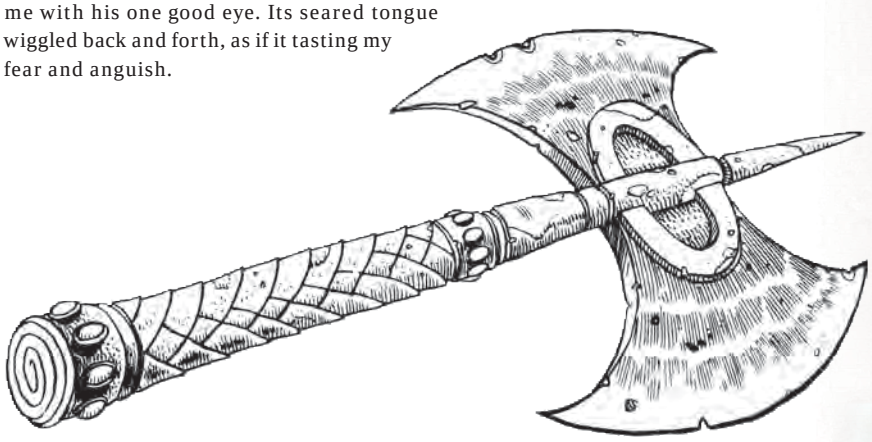
When I charged, the Horror looked up but did not move; its hiss just grew a little louder. The axe wobbled a bit at the top of its arc and my resolve wavered, then I crashed the weapon onto the thing's head. I felt a jolt, heard a brittle crunch and smelled the odor of rotted wood.

The Horror lurched back. I held onto the axe, which jerked free as the Horror moved. The creature had no working eyes. But it kept hissing. I could no longer lift the axe. I looked over at Lorm, and saw he was dead.

I clutched the axe to me. The hiss told me to leave it. I turned around. This hiss told me to stay. I took a step. The hiss grew louder, almost strident. Another step. Then another. The hiss grew weaker, thinner. Then I could no longer hear it.

I found my way back to the shaft. Struggling to climb up to the first blue rune, I was dimly aware of the cadaver men entering the chamber, climbing after me. I heard them scrabble at the wall. I reached the rune. A warm sensation lifted me, then hurtled me upward. I passed from rune to rune, gathering a little more speed with each.

I shot out of the shaft, over the unsuspecting sentries the scorchers had posted. They might have pursued me if the cadaver men had not appeared to keep them busy. I walked as far as I could, reaching the village of Twin Chin well into the next morning. There I stopped and slept for days. I do not think I let go of Lorm's axe that whole time.



Many years have passed since that night, and I have survived my share of adventures. But one task remained unfinished, one I believed I would take to my grave undone. Tonight I walked into this tavern and saw you and heard your tales, the stories of your adventures. Now I have hope that it will be completed.

Take this axe. It is Lorm's axe. His grandfather made it for his father. It has blooded a Horror. Perhaps now it shall slay one ...

Game Concepts

The magic of the world follows rules. Understand them and use them, as others will surely use them against you.

• Kors Blackshard, Troll Wizard of the Crystal Raiders •

This chapter introduces you to the **Earthdawn** game and explains the key concepts and terms used. Some are terms common to most roleplaying games, others are unique to **Earthdawn**.

Whether you are an experienced gamer or new to roleplaying, once you understand how these concepts operate in **Earthdawn**, the rest of the rules will fall easily into place.

We Live in an Age of Legend

After centuries of hiding beneath the earth, humanity has ventured out into the sunlight to reclaim the world. Trolls, dwarfs, elves, orks, and humans live side by side with other, more exotic, races: the lizard-like t'skrang, the small, winged windlings, and the earthen obsidimen. Creatures both magical and mundane dwell once more in the forests and jungles. Arcane energies offer power to those willing to learn the ways of magic.

Once, long ago, the land grew lush and green. Thriving forests sheltered plants and animals, and people grew and prospered off the land's bounty. Then the Horrors came, and drowned the world in darkness. The world's flow of magic rose and at its height dread creatures from the darkest depths of astral space crossed into our world, leaving suffering and destruction in their wake. The world's inhabitants named these fell creatures the Horrors. They laid our world waste in a terrible time now known as the Scourge. The lush forests died. Bustling towns vanished. Beautiful grasslands and majestic mountains became blasted, barren terrain, home to the Horrors' twisted mockery of life.

The Horrors lusted to destroy all life, but they did not succeed. Before their coming, the magicians of the Theran Empire warned the world, and the people of the Earth took shelter under it. They built fantastic underground cities called kaers and citadels; their children and their children's children grew up within these earthen enclaves, never seeing the light of the sun. For four hundred years the Horrors roamed the land, devouring all they touched while the people hid in terror, until the slow ebb of the world's magic forced these loathsome creatures to retreat to the astral pit that spawned them. The Horrors departed before the magicians and wise men had believed they would; the wary people emerged slowly from their kaers, facing the world half in hope that the Scourge had truly ended and half in fear that the Horrors lingered. Though most of the Horrors left this world, many of them remain, inflicting cruel anguish and suffering on other living creatures. As humanity struggles to remake the shattered world, they must combat the remaining Horrors who seek to prolong the destruction and despair of the Scourge.

Now heroes travel the land, rediscovering its lost legends and exploring its changed face. For the world has changed, almost beyond recognition. Many people died during the Scourge; the Horrors breached some kaers and citadels and destroyed their inhabitants. Other kaers remain sealed, from unknowable disaster or simple fear; their contents await discovery by bold explorers. Should they find any folk still living within, these brave adventurers may lead such fear-darkened souls out to live again in the light.

The dwarf kingdom of Throal lies at the center of the province of Barsaive, the largest inhabited province in the known world. The dwarfs seek to unite Barsaive's far-flung cities and people under one crown and banner, the better to repel the advances of the Theran Empire that ruled Barsaive before the Scourge. The Therans returned to the province shortly after the Scourge ended, seeking to bend it again to their yoke, but the people of Barsaive rejected the Therans' iron rule and rallied behind the dwarfs of Throal. Beaten for the moment, the Therans gather strength and wait to strike again. As Barsaive's heroes search for lost treasures and battle fantastic creatures, they must also fight the Therans, who plot to rob Barsaive of its new-found freedom and make its people pawns of their vast Empire.

In the Age of Legend, heroes band together fighting the Horrors and reclaiming the wounded world for those born in it. As they explore the altered land, searching for legendary cities and treasures, they become the legends that will light the coming days. Like those who went before them, tales of their deeds will live forever in men's hearts. From many paths, the heroes come to join in common cause. Those who seek honor and glory come from many Disciplines, and battle evil to redeem the world with a multitude of gifts. A band of heroes may include an Illusionist, a magician who combines deception and reality to confuse those around him; a Swordmaster, one trained in the art of fighting with bladed weapons; or a Beastmaster, able to train and command the beasts of the earth and sky. The world holds countless heroes, but all share one trait: a willingness to fight to reclaim the world from that which threatens it. Through noble deeds and sacrifice, the heroes of the world will forge its future.

The World of Earthdawn

Earthdawn is a roleplaying game designed for two to six players. Like many other roleplaying games, **Earthdawn** has an open-ended style of play. That is, the game has no definitive ending, no preset time limit or number of turns of play, and no single goal that, when achieved, marks the end of the game. Unlike other types of games, however, there is no winner or loser. The object of the game is to have fun while exercising your imagination. When this happens, everybody wins.

The world of **Earthdawn** is one of legend. Its people and places are larger than life, the stuff of song and saga. Heroes fight the monsters of this and other worlds; their bold exploits light a beacon of hope for the future, as word of their deeds spreads across the troubled, fearful land. **Earthdawn** is a world of high adventure, high magic, and terrible danger. Those dangers lurk not only within long-forgotten kaers, but also within the minds of people forever corrupted by the Horrors. To rebuild its heart and soul as well as its outward aspect after the devastation of the Scourge, the world needs heroes. The players of **Earthdawn**, by creating their characters and playing the game, provide these heroes.

In contrast to many other roleplaying games, characters in **Earthdawn** do not simply survive each adventure and become

a little smarter or a little richer. **Earthdawn** adds another dimension to roleplaying; its characters become heroic figures, accomplishing deeds so impressive that generation after generation will honor their memory in song and story. The world of **Earthdawn** brims over with legends, heart-stirring tales of famous adventurers told by the fireside to while away the night. **Earthdawn** player characters can become the figures in those legends. As they build their characters' legends through play, they create the fireside tales that their descendants will tell about them. Gaining this heroic stature through daring deeds is as important a part of playing **Earthdawn** as any lesser gain in riches or experience.

For those with experience in roleplaying, some of the following explanations will sound familiar. Those readers might want to skip ahead to **Action Tests**, p. 18, or the **How it Came to Pass** chapter (p. 21) and dive right into the history and background of **Earthdawn**. The opening short story—**Inheritance**—provides atmosphere and a taste of the language and style of **Earthdawn**. Specific chapters cover every aspect of the game and how to play it in detail.

For those who are new to roleplaying, the following text introduces the concept. This introduction will not answer all your questions, because most roleplaying games are more easily learned from other players than from reading a book. This brief overview will give you the idea behind roleplaying; to learn more, find others who are familiar with roleplaying games and learn by playing. Together you can explore the world of **Earthdawn**, and discover the fun of roleplaying in the Age of Legend.

What is a Roleplaying Game?

Everyone has read a book or seen a movie where the protagonist does something so utterly wrong that the reader or viewer wants to shout a warning to the character. But no warning from the audience can keep that character from doing what the plot demands, no matter how much trouble it lands him in. The readers and viewers can't change the character's behavior; we're just along for the ride. A roleplaying game turns this situation on its ear. In a roleplaying game the **players** control the actions, or play the roles, of their characters and respond as they wish to the events of the plot. If the player doesn't want his character to go through a door, the character won't. If the player thinks his character can talk himself out of a tight situation rather than resorting to that trusty sword, he can talk away. The plot of a roleplaying game is flexible, ultimately based on the decisions the players make for their characters.

In roleplaying, stories (the adventures) evolve much as they do in a movie or book, but within the flexible story line created by the **gamemaster**. The story outlines what might happen at certain times or in reaction to other events. The story remains an outline, with few concrete events, until the players become involved. When that happens, the adventure can become a drama as riveting as that great movie you saw last week or the book you stayed up all night to finish.

Though the players all contribute to the story, creating it as they play, the gamemaster creates the overall outline and controls events. The gamemaster keeps track of what happens and when, describes events as they occur so that the players (as characters) can react to them, keeps track of other characters in the game (referred to as gamemaster characters), and uses the game system to resolve the players' attempts to take action. The gamemaster describes the world as the characters see it, functioning as their eyes, ears, and other senses. Gamemastering takes both skill and practice to master, but the thrill of creating an adventure that engages the other players, tests both their gaming skills and the characters' skills in the game world, and captures the players'

imaginations makes the gamemaster's job worthwhile. While there are many published game supplements and adventures to aid the gamemaster, talented gamemasters always adapt the game world to suit their own and their players' style.

A roleplaying game offers its players a level of challenge and personal involvement unmatched by any other type of game. Because the players and gamemaster create the adventures they play, what happens in the course of a roleplaying game is limited only by your imagination. The game is not a contest between the players and the gamemaster, however. The gamemaster may control all the bad guys, but he should work with the players to build and experience a tense, exciting adventure.

How to Use This Book

If you are new to **Earthdawn**, you might wonder what our intentions are by confronting you with several massive tomes of rules. While experienced **Earthdawn** players might love us for that, beginners might feel they have a reason to get scared. Don't worry, the **Earthdawn** game is actually very easy to learn.

The **Player's** and **Gamemaster's Compendiums** contain all of the rules you will ever need to run an **Earthdawn** game. Since most roleplaying games are played as ongoing campaigns, these books provide *everything* required for years of play. Advanced rules, high-Circle opponents, legendary spells—you name it, you'll probably find it in one of these books. However, you only need to be familiar with a fraction of the material in order to get started.

The best advice we can give beginning players and gamemasters is this: **only use the rules you need**. You can safely ignore everything else; optional rules, for instance, can be integrated later when you are more comfortable with the game. Much of the content in the **Player's** and **Gamemaster's Compendiums** is sorted alphabetically—talents, skills, creatures, and so on—with other content organized in a similarly accessible order—spells, for instance, which are grouped by the type of magic.

While you might want to read both books from cover to cover, you will soon realize how boring it can be to read hundreds of talent descriptions at a sitting (something your brain might just take serious umbrage at being subjected to). You don't need to memorize everything. Instead, focus on remembering where to find the information you need. A comprehensive **Contents** and **Index** are included in each book to help you find things quickly. The **Appendices** should prove useful as a quick reference to the abilities and spells found in this tome.

In addition, this chapter summarizes a number of basic rules and game mechanics that are covered in detail in later chapters. Armed with this knowledge, you should be in a good position to quickly get up to speed with the **Earthdawn** game and thus get your first game running as soon as possible. Welcome aboard!

Optional Rules

By design, the Earthdawn game is extremely flexible. This means there are many places where more complex rules can be used for those who like more detail in their games. Throughout this book you will find sections presented as optional rules. The Rule of Three, p. 18, is an example of an optional rule.

Optional rules are intended for use only where the gamemaster and players feel that they add to the overall playing experience. This requires trying the rule out for a while to see if it suits the group's playing style. We have presented a number of different rule options, but they are by no means the only ones available.

Another reason for including optional rules is for those players using older published rulebooks and supplements. Some optional rules in this book are actually standard rules for earlier editions of the **Earthdawn** game. They are included here for players and gamemasters who still want to use them.

Game Terms

The following summary of terms used in the game should help you start playing **Earthdawn** quickly. Complete examples and definitions appear in the body of the rules.

Adepts and Disciplines

The world of **Earthdawn** is filled with magic. The most talented characters, including yours, are initiated in the use of magic. Such characters are called **adepts**. Some adepts train to cast spells, some train to use swords or other weapons; others train to work with animals. The form of magical training chosen by your character is his **Discipline**. This training focuses the magical energies of your character into special abilities called **talents**. Each Discipline offers unique talents. Characters of some Disciplines—collectively known as **magicians**—possess the ability to cast **spells**.

All adepts can be rated in their Discipline according to their knowledge and experience. These ratings are called **Circles**. Adept characters usually begin the game at First Circle. Though characters tend to specialize in one Discipline, some learn talents from other Disciplines, or learn a new Discipline in addition to their first.

The gamemaster awards **Legend Points** after each gameg session. Your character uses Legend Points earned through successful adventuring to increase the ranks of your character's talents and abilities, in turn allowing him to advance his Circle. Each time an adept reaches a new Discipline Circle, he gains new talents and abilities. Your character gains Legend Points based on how well he performed during the gaming session, but based also on how well you, as a player, roleplayed your character.

The different Disciplines are fully detailed in the **Disciplines** chapters (starting on p. 65). The talents available to each Discipline are described in the **Talents** chapter (p. 166). Descriptions for non-magical skills can be found in the **Skills** chapter (p. 230). See the **Workings of Magic** chapter (p. 251) for more information on magic and magical theory in **Earthdawn**.

See the **Building Your Legend** chapter (p. 419) for more information on how you use Legend Points to improve your character's talents and skills, and how the accumulation of Legend Points affects those who come into contact with the character, in person or by reputation.

Character Record Sheet

Characters represent the players in the game of **Earthdawn**. As a player, you control a character. Everything you know about your character will be noted on a **Character Record Sheet** (see p. 509 for a reproducible copy, or download one from our web site). This is where you record your character's abilities, possessions, physical appearance, and other facts about him. During the course of the game, the gamemaster will describe to you events or situations.

Using your Character Record Sheet as a guide, you tell the gamemaster what your character would do in a given situation. The gamemaster will probably ask you to roll some dice, and the resulting numbers will represent your character's attempted action. The gamemaster uses the rules of the game to interpret the dice rolls and the outcome of your character's action.

Attributes measure a character's natural abilities, what he can accomplish without training or magic. **Talents**, **skills**, and **spells** also appear on the Character Record Sheet. Like Attributes, these are measured in step numbers (see p. 17).

The Health section of your Character Record Sheet tracks any damage your character takes. The number of Damage Points a character has taken is reflected in his Current Damage total. When the Current Damage total equals your character's **Uncon-**

sciousness Rating, he falls unconscious. When the Current Damage total equals or exceeds your character's **Death Rating**, he dies.

The **Wound Threshold** represents the amount of damage it takes to wound your character from a single attack. **Wounds** are serious injuries that heal more slowly than normal damage and can impair your character's ability to carry out actions. You use your character's **Recovery Tests** to recover from injury. The test result reduces your character's Current Damage total or allows you to heal Wounds. Your character may make only a limited number of Recovery Tests each day.

More information on the game statistics of your character can be found in the **Creating Characters** chapter (p. 41).

STEPS AND ACTION DICE

Almost all abilities in **Earthdawn** are rated by rank and step numbers. The **rank number** is the measure of proficiency in a skill or talent. Rank numbers are often added to an Attribute step to determine a **step number**. The step number determines what **Action dice** a player rolls to attempt an action, cast a spell, and so on. Action dice are ordered on a scale, from lowest to highest. **Each level of this scale corresponds to a step number.** The Step/Action Dice Table lists consecutive step numbers and their corresponding Action dice.

Whenever a player rolls his Action dice, he is making an **Action Test** (p. 18). All individual die results are added together to determine the **test result**. **Earthdawn** uses six different types of polyhedral dice: four-sided (D4), six-sided (D6), eight-sided (D8), ten-sided (D10), twelve-sided (D12), and twenty-sided (D20) dice. These dice don't come with the game, but are available in most gaming stores.

Me'gana has a Dexterity step of 7 and Rank 3 with the Melee Weapons talent. This gives Me'gana a Melee Weapons step of 10 (7+3=10). Looking up this step number on the Step/Action Dice Table, Me'gana notes that she rolls D10+D6 Action dice when making a Melee Weapons Test. When Me'gana hits an opponent in combat, she uses Step 12, which is the result of adding her broadsword's Damage step of 5 to her Strength step of 7.

Increasing or decreasing the step number changes the Action dice rolled. Adding +1 step to Step 10 puts you on Step 11, which resolves to a D10+D8 Action die. Subtracting –2 steps from Step 8 puts you on Step 6, which resolves to a D10 Action die.

The step number corresponding to an Action dice combination equals the average roll for that combination of Action dice, taking into account the chances of rolling one or more Bonus dice (see below). For example, the average result of a D10 roll is 6 (Step 6 uses a D10). The average result of a D8+D6 roll is 9 (Step 9 uses both a D8 and a D6).

Bonus Dice

When you roll the highest possible number on an Action die, you immediately get to roll another die of the same type—this is a **Bonus die**. Add the result of the Bonus die roll to the result of any Action dice already rolled to determine the test result. If you roll the maximum on a Bonus die, you roll another Bonus die of the same type. This continues for as long as the player continues to roll the maximum possible result for the Bonus die.

A player rolling for Poohrt, a windling Thief character, rolls a D8 and a D6 Action dice (a Step 9 Action Test). The results are an 8 and a 6, the highest numbers possible on each die, respectively. He gets two Bonus die rolls. On his D8 Bonus die he rolls a 2, and then a 6 on his D6 Bonus die—this entitles him to another D6 Bonus die for which he rolls a 3. Adding together the final rolls gives the player a total of 25 for his Action Test result (8+6+2+6+3=25).

STEP/ACTION DICE TABLE

Step Number	Action Dice	Attribute Value
1	D4–2	—
2	D4–1	1–3
3	D4	4–6
4	D6	7–9
5	D8	10–12
6	D10	13–15
7	D12	16–18
8	2D6	19–21
9	D8+D6	22–24
10	D10+D6	25–27
11	D10+D8	28–30
12	2D10	31–33
13	D12+D10	34–36
14	D20+D4 *or* 2D12*	37–39
15	D20+D6	40–42
16	D20+D8	43–45
17	D20+D10	46–48
18	D20+D12	49–51
19	D20+2D6	52–54
20	D20+D8+D6	55–57
21	D20+D10+D6	58–60
22	D20+D10+D8	61–63
23	D20+2D10	64–66
24	D20+D12+D10	67–69
25	D20+D10+D8+D4	70–72
26	D20+D10+D8+D6	73–75
27	D20+D10+2D8	76–78
28	D20+2D10+D8	79–81
29	D20+D12+D10+D8	82–84
30	D20+D10+D8+2D6	85–87
31	D20+D10+2D8+D6	88–90
32	D20+2D10+D8+D6	91–93
33	D20+2D10+2D8	94–96
34	D20+3D10+D8	97–99
35	D20+D12+2D10+D8	100–102
36	2D20+D10+D8+D4	103–105
37	2D20+D10+D8+D6	106–108
38	2D20+D10+2D8	109–111
39	2D20+2D10+D8	112–114
40	2D20+D12+D10+D8	115–117

* For Step 14, you may roll either D20+D4 *or* 2D12. Statistically the results are similar; psychologically some players prefer to avoid the D20 at this step number. You should choose one or the other for all rolls, however.

Step 1 and Step 2

When rolling Action dice for Step 1 or Step 2, total any Bonus die rolls before subtracting the modifier (–2 or –1) from the result. **Regardless of modifiers, the minimum result is 1.**

Karma

All adepts, as well as some of the more powerful creatures of the world are able to tap into the magical energy of the world in order to enhance their use of magic and magical abilities. This magical energy is known as **Karma**. The use of Karma is simulated through Karma Points and Karma dice. Each of the Name-giver races uses a different type of dice when using Karma.

When an adept uses Karma on an action, he spends a **Karma Point**. Unless noted otherwise, this allows him to roll additional dice when performing the action. The result of the **Karma dice** is added to the result of the other dice rolled for the Action Test. Karma dice can be re-rolled as Bonus dice.

Adepts cannot use Karma on any Action Test; they can only use Karma on talents that allow the use of Karma. As they progress to higher Circles, adepts are allowed to spend Karma Points on other actions as well.

Action Tests

Whenever characters attempt to take actions such as casting a spell, swinging a sword at an opponent, tracking a Horror, or flirting with a barmaid, the gamemaster or the player rolls dice to determine the action's outcome. These dice rolls are called **Action Tests**.

To make an Action Test, the player or gamemaster rolls the appropriate Action dice and adds the individual die results together to determine the **test result**.

Bonuses and Penalties

Test results may be modified by a **bonus** or a **penalty**, indicated in the rules where appropriate. Simply add or subtract the modifier from the test result. For example, a character using the Aggressive Attack combat option adds +3 to his Attack and Damage Test results. A character who is Harried subtracts –2 from all of his Action Test results. **Regardless of modifiers, the minimum test result is 1.**

Note that some modifiers explicitly state a step bonus or penalty. Usually, this is where a change is permanent or likely to alter what is written on a Character Record Sheet. In such cases, make sure that you modify the step number instead.

The Rule of Three

Optional Rule: Characters in **Earthdawn** act by drawing on a large number of talents and abilities, many of which can be combined to allow characters to perform impressive feats. While this can result in incredible maneuvers by the characters, there is a limit to the number of talents or abilities that can be combined. This limit is called the **Rule of Three**.

Simply put, the Rule of Three allows a character to use a maximum of three sources to improve an Action Test. These sources generally include:

- One or more of a character's own talent or skill ranks.
- One of a character's own spells, or another character's spells or talents.
- One or more magical items.

Unless the rules for a given talent or skill specifically contradict this rule of thumb, apply the Rule of Three to every Action Test the character makes. For example, a character engaging in combat may use up to three sources to increase his Initiative, then up to three more for his Attack, then up to three more to increase his Damage.

The Rule of Three also takes into account the effects of long-duration talents and spells. For example, a Strength spell with a duration of a year and a day cast on a character would prevent any other Strength-related spells from working on him, and would also count as one source of increase for Strength-based Tests while the spell is in effect. A sword improved by a Weaponsmith's use of the Forge Blade talent contains magic from that talent, and counts as one source of increase against the Rule of Three for Damage Tests made using that sword.

Threads woven to a character's abilities do not count toward the limits set this rule. See **Using Thread Magic** in the **Thread Magic** chapter, p. 264, for more information.

Step Modifiers

Optional Rule: Instead of modifying the test result, bonuses and penalties may also be interpreted as step modifiers. If this optional rule is used, the modifier is applied to the step number of the Action Test before the Action dice are rolled.

For example, a character using the Aggressive Attack combat option adds +3 steps to his Attack and Damage steps. A character who is Harried subtracts –2 steps from all of his Action Test steps. **Regardless of modifiers, the minimum step number is Step 1.**

Using this option can slow down game play while players recalculate step numbers and Action dice on-the-fly. However, it is the standard method of calculation for earlier editions of the **Earthdawn** game and some gamers may like to retain this mechanic.

Test Results

A test result is interpreted or used in several ways. In most cases, the test result is compared to a **Difficulty Number**. If the result is at least equal to this number, the test succeeds (see below for more information on Difficulty Numbers).

Sometimes the test result simply represents a value and is not compared to a Difficulty Number. The most common examples of these tests are Recovery Tests, in which the die roll result equals the amount of damage healed, Damage Tests, which determine the amount of damage inflicted on a target, and Initiative Tests, which are used to find out who acts when and in what order during a combat round.

Test results can also determine the duration of a spell, a creature's Attribute values, the Difficulty Number for tests made by opponents, and so on. For example, a character casting the Mind Dagger spell makes a Spellcasting Test to determine whether he succeeds in affecting his target. If successful, he makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage his spell inflicts.

The Rule of One

If all of the Action dice rolled to make an Action Test each show a result of one (1), then the character automatically fails to accomplish the action, even if the total result is greater than the required Difficulty Number. This is known as the **Rule of One**.

The character is considered to have achieved a Pathetic test result (see **Result Levels**, p. 19).

The Rule of One is not applicable to Action Tests in which the test result represents a value—such as Initiative Tests, Recovery Tests, Effect Tests, Damage Tests, and so on.

At the gamemaster's discretion, the Rule of One is only applied to the results of Action Tests where two or more Action dice are rolled.

Difficulty Numbers

The **Difficulty Number** represents how easy or hard it is for each character to accomplish any given task.

In many cases when the player characters must make a test, the required ability is shown with the Difficulty Number of the task in parentheses. For example, a Perception (13) Test means a character uses his Perception step to make an Action Test against a Difficulty Number of 13. The Difficulty Number is

RESULT LEVEL TABLE

Difficulty Number	—Result—					
	Pathetic	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent	Extraordinary
2	*	1	2–4	5–6	7–8	9+
3	*	1–2	3–5	6–7	8–9	10+
4	*	1–3	4–6	7–9	10–11	12+
5	*	1–4	5–8	9–10	11–13	14+
6	1	2–5	6–9	10–12	13–16	17+
7	1	2–6	7–11	12–14	15–18	19+
8	1–2	3–7	8–12	13–15	16–19	20+
9	1–3	4–8	9–13	14–17	18–21	22+
10	1–4	5–9	10–14	15–18	19–23	24+
11	1–4	5–10	11–16	17–20	21–24	25+
12	1–5	6–11	12–17	18–21	22–26	27+
13	1–5	6–12	13–19	20–23	24–28	29+
14	1–6	7–13	14–20	21–25	26–31	32+
15	1–7	8–14	15–21	22–26	27–32	33+
16	1–7	8–15	16–23	24–28	29–34	35+
17	1–8	9–16	17–24	25–29	30–36	37+
18	1–9	10–17	18–25	26–31	32–37	38+
19	1–10	11–18	19–26	27–32	33–38	39+
20	1–11	12–19	20–27	28–33	34–40	41+
21	1–12	13–20	21–28	29–34	35–41	42+
22	1–12	13–21	22–30	31–36	37–43	44+
23	1–13	14–22	23–31	32–37	38–44	45+
24	1–14	15–23	24–32	33–39	40–46	47+
25	1–15	16–24	25–33	34–40	41–47	48+
26	1–16	17–25	26–34	35–41	42–48	49+
27	1–17	18–26	27–35	36–42	43–50	51+
28	1–17	18–27	28–37	38–44	45–51	52+
29	1–18	19–28	29–38	39–45	46–53	54+
30	1–19	20–29	30–39	40–46	47–54	55+
31	1–20	21–30	31–40	41–47	48–55	56+
32	1–21	22–31	32–41	42–48	49–57	58+
33	1–22	23–32	33–42	43–50	51–58	59+
34	1–22	23–33	34–44	45–51	52–60	61+
35	1–23	24–34	35–45	46–52	53–61	62+
36	1–24	25–35	36–46	47–54	55–63	64+
37	1–25	26–36	37–47	48–55	56–64	65+
38	1–25	26–37	38–49	50–57	58–66	67+
39	1–26	27–38	39–50	51–58	59–67	68+
40	1–27	28–39	40–51	52–59	60–69	70+

* A Pathetic result only occurs on a roll of all ones on the Action Dice for this Difficulty Number (see the **Rule of One**, p. 18).

otherwise given in the ability description or determined by the gamemaster.

Result Levels

Frequently, a test result determines not only success or failure, but the degree of success. A test may have one of six result levels: Pathetic, Poor, Average, Good, Excellent and Extraordinary.

The test result is compared to the appropriate Difficulty Number on the Result Level Table. If the result falls within the range of numbers on that row, it achieves the result level indicated at the top of the table for that column. For example, an Action Test result of 9 made against a Difficulty Number of 7 indicates an Average result. An Action Test result of 15 against the same Difficulty Number would be an Excellent result.

A **Pathetic** result is a bad enough failure that the gamemaster may impose unpleasant side effects. A **Poor** result usually indicates simple failure. An **Average** result, equal to or barely exceeding the Difficulty Number, means that the character accomplished his action—but only just. A somewhat better roll yields a **Good** result, and a roll close to double the Difficulty Number means an **Excellent** result. To achieve an **Extraordinary** result requires an even better roll again. The Result Level Table shows the test result range required to successfully achieve each different result level.

Better than Average result levels may give the character an extra reward for his efforts—additional information or clues, reduced armor for foes, and so on. The amount of gain for each result level is usually provided in the ability description, but is ultimately determined by the gamemaster.

Leandra swings her sword at a charging Theran guard. The Difficulty Number to hit the guard is 10. Leandra's player rolls a 21 on the Action dice. The gamemaster tells the player that 21 is an Excellent result. Leandra hits the guard with a blow that punches right through his armor, ignoring the protection it would normally provide, and inflicting considerable damage on the unfortunate Theran.

TIME

Time is important in **Earthdawn**. A standard **day** is 24 hours. A **week** is equivalent to 7 days—this corresponds to the length of the Throalic week in the **Earthdawn** game. The Theran Empire measures the passage of time in 5-day weeks. Unless stated otherwise, all references to a week in the game rules are assumed to be a standard 7-day period. A **month** is 30 days long. A **year** is made up of 12 months, with a separate 5-day adjustment period in the middle of the year bringing the total number of days per year to 365.

Round

A **round** is a time-keeping unit used to keep the action of the adventure flowing. It represents the time required to carry out most actions and equals approximately 10 seconds of game time.

During combat, a round of action is referred to as a **combat round**. See the **Combat** chapter (p. 395) for more information on what you can do during a combat round.

Distances and Weights

Throughout the **Earthdawn** game you will see references to various distances and weights, usually expressed in the Imperial system of feet, yards, and pounds. Recognizing that many gamers are more familiar with the metric system, we have attempted to make conversions from Imperial to metric as simple as possible.

While not strictly accurate, Imperial units can be converted to metric units for game purposes as shown in the Distance/Weight Conversion Table. These approximations have been used to make the math simpler for 'on-the-fly' game calculations.

Most distances are given in yards in the **Earthdawn** game, making it a simple matter to replace "yards" with "meters" to get a (near) metric equivalent. This is especially useful when taking into account the tactical distances in which most action occurs in **Earthdawn**.

DISTANCE/WEIGHT CONVERSION TABLE
Distance
1 inch = 2.5 centimeters
1 foot = 30 centimeters*
1 yard = 0.9 meters**
1 mile = 1.6 kilometers
Weight
2 pounds = 1 kilogram
2 pints = 1 liter
1 quart = 4 pints
1 ton = 1,000 kilograms
General
1 foot = 12 inches
1 yard or meter = 3 feet
1 mile = 1,760 yards
1 pound = 16 ounces
1 ton = 2,000 pounds

* Round to .33 meters
** Round to 1 meter

If the gamemaster or players have a problem with using these approximations, there are many conversion calculators available on the Internet which will provide you with an accurate result.

The Passions

The **Passions** represent the spiritual beliefs of the people of Barsaive. The Passions are the physical embodiment of the life forces of the universe, the living manifestations of emotion. Each of the twelve Passions in the pantheon embody a number of emotions and passions that lie at the source of everything the Name-giver races do and believe. **Questors** embrace the emotions and ideals of a particular Passion, representing their patron Passion in both word and deed. Questors serve to bridge the gap between their patron and the denizens of the world.

See the **Passions and Questors** chapter (p. 460) for more information on the different Passions of Barsaive and those who serve them.

The Horrors

For hundreds of years, the world of **Earthdawn** suffered under a reign of terror perpetrated by beings known collectively as the **Horrors**. Though the world always had magic, the level of ambient magic gradually increased, and so did the activity of the Horrors. Magic eventually reached a level that allowed the Horrors to routinely breach the extra-dimensional barriers between their world and the world of **Earthdawn**.

The time during which the Horrors freely roamed the world, causing terror and destruction, is known by many names, the most common being **the Scourge**. During the Scourge, many cities and nations fell to the Horrors' power. Some individuals and communities embraced dark magics to defend themselves, some becoming little better than that which they feared. Now the Scourge is over. Many Horrors remain, but their power is enough diminished that civilization has begun to rebuild. Many people still tremble inside the walls they built to protect themselves and their families, afraid to venture out into the strange, changed world. The few brave enough to face it are the heroes of **Earthdawn**.

For information on many of the major and minor Horrors still lurking around post-Scourge, see the **Horrors** chapter on p. 434 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**.

Names

The **Names** of people, places, and things affect how they interact with the universe. The universe gave certain races the ability to Name themselves and others, allowing them to better interact with magic and the life forces of the universe. All of the major character races in **Earthdawn** are **Name-givers**. In the world of **Earthdawn**, a character's Name becomes more than a simple label; a Name represents that person's very being. This holds true for the Names of specific places, items, and creatures. Even the Horrors bear Names, for they also interact with the universe.

See the **Workings of Magic** chapter (p. 251) for more information on **Names and Naming**. The **Name-giver Races** chapter (p. 33) describes the different races and includes some hints on how to portray them in the game.

Blood Magic

Characters in **Earthdawn** have access to a special type of magic known as **blood magic**. Blood magic requires the character to sacrifice a small amount of his own blood in order to power the magic. Because this magic is powered by self-sacrifice, it is sometimes known as life magic. Blood magic is very powerful, and often endures as long as a year and a day. Characters use blood magic to increase the power and potential for success when using abilities and talents. Blood magic also allows characters to use certain powerful charms and to seal oaths. Blood magic is inherently dangerous.

See **Blood Magic** in the **Workings of Magic** chapter (p. 259) for more information on blood magic and how it works.

How It Came To Pass

Though we must be thankful for the here and the now, we must always remember what was. Some things must never *be allowed to happen again.*

• King Varulus III of Throal, 1438 TH •

The following is abridged from a speaking by the ork Storymaster Jallo Redbeard to a group of dwarf scholar students in the Great Library of Throal, 1509 TH.

Regardless of what one believes of the Therans, the story of the lands we now call Barsaive would not be complete unless we started with them. Without the Therans Barsaive might have ended up as nothing more than the scores of warring tribes and city-states that dotted the land a thousand years ago.

Though the Therans brought us oppression, deceit, slavery, and inhumanity, they also gave us culture, politics, commerce, and a glimpse of the power that unity can bring.

What we know of the origins of the Therans comes from their mouths and their writings. It is their tale, their legend, that we recount here. How much is truth, how much is lie, and how much falls between may never be known while the halls of Thera still stand. Despite that, it is a tale worth telling, the story of the creation of an empire.

The Martyr Scholar

The saga of Thera begins nearly one century before the founding of the dwarf kingdom of Throal.

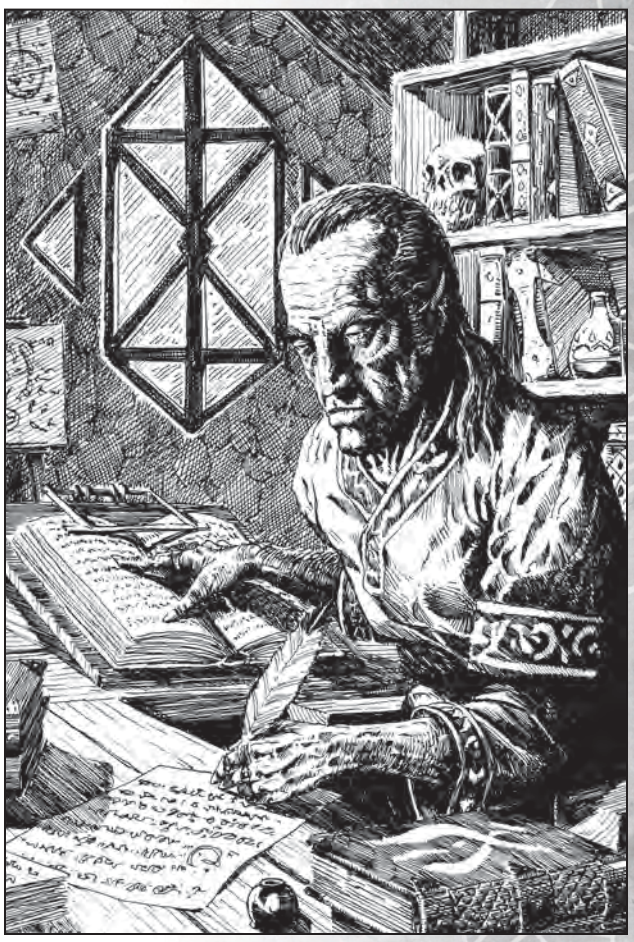
The elf Elianar Messias, who will one day be revered or cursed as the Father of Thera and the Martyr Scholar, is an honored follower of the elven Spiritual Path. In addition, Messias is an important advisor to High Queen Failla of the Elven Court at Wyrm Wood, the center of elven culture. Messias has a falling-out with Failla over the desire of the elven nation of Shosara to loosen the cultural shackles that bind it to the Court. Messias believes the elves of Shosara should be allowed to develop their national culture as they see fit. Failla disagrees: the Court is the center of elven culture and all elven nations must emulate her. Failla will allow no exception.

Failla declares Shosara "separated" from the elven Court, an act of such gravity it threatens to fracture that nation. Messias adamantly opposes Failla and her Declaration of Separation and is banished for his challenge. Queen Failla casts him from the Court for one hundred years, and orders that he may return after that period only if he "has learned the value of heritage and a quiet tongue." Messias never returns.

TIMELINE

Year*	Event
~400 BT	First recorded settlement at what is now Vivane.
~100 BT	Elianar Messias is banished from Wyrm Wood when he disagrees with Queen Failla over the Separation of Shosara.
~50 BT	Elianar Messias is found dead with the *Books of Harrow*. His successor, Kearos Navarim, travels to an island in the Selestrean Sea and founds Nehr'esham.

* References to years in the Timeline use the Throalic Calendar. BT refers to the time before the founding of Throal.



As part of his banishment, he is dispatched to a small monastery set in the foothills of what are known today as the Delaris Mountains in southwestern Barsaive. There, along with a cadre of scholars dedicated to Mynbruje, the Passion of Knowledge, Messias works to recover, translate, and transcribe volumes of books and scrolls recently recovered from a nearby mountain cavern. The scholars believe this cache of knowledge to be thousands upon thousands of years old, dating from early in the time when the magical aura of our world still lay dormant, before it rose to become the vibrant energy of our own time. What little learned men had deciphered of the works prior to Messias' arrival indicated that the documents spoke of an even older time, when the world's aura was as strong as it is now.

Messias focuses on a group of six books barely kept intact by the magic and climate of the cavern where they are stored. The six are a set, matched in size and style, even down to the odd, blood-inscribed rune on each of their covers. Messias can tell just by looking at them that they contain powerful, probably dangerous, information. He also believes them to be a warning, though against what he does not know. He devotes his life to untangling their secrets. In the end those secrets eagerly take the life he has offered.

Late one evening some years later, his fellows discover his body twisted and wracked with his dying agonies. Messias has torn his eyes from his head and then thrust his clenched fists and their bloody contents into the fire raging in the hearth of his quarters. He has also left a brief note nearby. It says:

These are the Books of Harrow.
They are our doom and our salvation.
Learn from them, or we will all perish.

That night, something horrid stalks the corridors of the monastery and six of Messias' brethren die terribly. The next morning, an elder elven scholar named Kearos Navarim takes the six *Books of Harrow,* three of his fellow scholars, and ample provisions, and sets out on a long journey to the land of his birth far to the south and west of Barsaive. In that place, in the protection that he knows he can find there, he intends to continue Messias' work and unlock the secrets of the *Books of Harrow.* He and the others settle on an island in the midst of the great Selestrean Sea and found a place of learning called *Nehr'esham,* or "center of the mind."

This place marks the beginning of Thera, the beginning of the learning that would reveal the Horrors to us, and the beginning of the great war of the mind to save us all.

The Eternal Library

Word of Nehr'esham and of its Great Project to translate the *Books of Harrow* spreads quickly throughout the lands of the world. The island soon becomes a gathering point for magicians, adepts, and scholars of all types and races. Nehr'esham grows rapidly from its humble beginnings into a small city. Though Navarim nominally leads the burgeoning city, he keeps around him a tight circle of scholarly and magical advisors who administer the city's needs. Navarim himself concentrates on unlocking the secrets of the *Books of Harrow.*

Realizing that more books like the *Books of Harrow* must have survived elsewhere, Navarim sends scholars and adepts out from the island to find these books and bring them back to Nehr'esham. To hold these tomes and scrolls the city's overseers arrange for the construction of what will become known as the Eternal Library. Magically protected and controlled, it will be a place where these and other ancient works can be kept and studied in safety for both the works and the reader.

Ironically, as the first stones for the Eternal Library are laid, thousands of miles to the northeast, dwarf miners are taking up permanent residence in the giant mines and caverns that will someday compose Thera's greatest rival: the dwarf kingdom of Throal. The Throalic Calendar, by which Barsaive will one day mark its time, counts forward from that day.

TIMELINE

Year*	Event
~1 TH	Construction begins on the Eternal Library at Nehr'esham.
12 TH	King Thandos I of Throal mysteriously vanishes. His son, Thandos II, succeeds him.
~100 TH	The Eternal Library is completed. Jaron completes translation of the *First Book of Harrow* and re-Names Nehr'esham to Thera. The very first signs of Horrors appear in the kingdoms of Scytha, Landis, and elsewhere. Discovery of a corrupt sect of Chorrolis results in The Invae Burnings. The ork hero Hrak Gron frees her people from slavery, which comes to be known as the Great Uprising.
~200 TH	Kearos Navarim named first Elder of Thera. The t'skrang House K'tenshin is founded.

* References to years in the Timeline use the Throalic Calendar. TH refers to the time after the founding of Throal.

The First Horrors

As the Eternal Library nears completion, one hundred and fifty years after the founding of Nehr'esham, the first signs of the Horrors begin to appear in the world. In the city of Majallan, in the human-dominated lands of Landis, dark wraithlike spirits stalk the streets, driving men to violence against each other. For a year in the city of Draoglin, in the ancient dwarf kingdom of Scytha, every dwarf child shrivels and dies before reaching its first month of life, its essence devoured by something unseen. And across the entire land that will one day be Barsaive, hordes of twisted, insect-like creatures are found nesting in isolated urban and rural areas. In southern Barsaive their infestation is so great that sworn enemies find themselves working side by side to destroy the creatures. This time, known as The Burning, is the closest Barsaive comes to unification prior to the arrival of the Therans. Hopes of unity collapse, however, in the face of the tragic famine that grips Barsaive in the following years.

To the aged Navarim and his followers, the dreadful tidings from Majallan, Scytha, and the city-states of southern Barsaive portend the beginning of something terrible. What these awful signs warn of becomes frighteningly clear shortly thereafter. Navarim's brilliant student and assistant, the dwarf Jaron, breaks through to understanding and completes the translation of the first of the six *Books of Harrow.* This book, named simply The *First Book of Harrow,* speaks of terrible days ahead, of the coming of the Horrors, their nearly unstoppable power, and the possible ruination of the world.

The Horrors, the book says, are terrible spirits dwelling in the darkest corners of the netherworlds. When the magical aura of this world reaches a certain strength, the Horrors will be able to build mystical bridges between this world and the twisted realm where they dwell. And then the Horrors will come. Terrible and powerful, they are beyond reason. They seek only to consume.

Some desire anything physical: rocks, trees, it matters not. Others want flesh, blood, and living creatures. The more powerful live on pain, terror, and the dark emotions those experiences arouse in their victims.

The Horrors will come, the book says, and little can be done to stop them.

Thera is Born

Word of the *First Book of Harrow* spreads quickly. The city around Nehr'esham begins to swell just as quickly until it covers the entire island. It is soon renamed *Thera*, meaning "foundation." In time, the island becomes a center of trade and commerce as well as the center of learning and thought in the eastern Selestrean Sea.

The growth of Thera does not come without its price, however. Unable to support the enormous tasks of physical labor required to keep up with the swelling population and commerce, the Therans must import workers from other lands. Theran slavery begins with these laborers. The great Theran merchant houses that arrange for the transport of the workers maintain "control" over the workers they import. Financial arrangements must be made with the merchant house for the use of the workers. Soon, "control" of workers becomes commonplace as the powerful and influential arrange to import workers specifically as servants and minor laborers. Within seventy years from the arrival of the first work-ship, "control" becomes ownership and true slavery is as common on Thera as the ocean breeze.

Within a year of the translation of the *First Book*, Navarim dispatches copies to all the leaders in all the lands he has ever heard of in an effort to warn them. Few listen.

Meanwhile, work on deciphering the other *Books of Harrow* continues in the hopes of finding some way to stop or defend against the Horrors. Early on, Navarim establishes the School of Shadows as the center for this effort and charges it to find ways of defeating the Horrors. From that School groups of adepts and magicians travel across the known world to confront the burgeoning Horrors and learn what they can from those confrontations.

At the same time, Thera's leading citizens create a more formal organization to govern the island. Navarim, named the Elder of Thera, presides over a body of advisors and administrators known as The Twelve. This body controls and manages the various areas of Thera and her growing influence. In one of their first acts, The Twelve establish a military force to defend Thera against increasing bandit and pirate raids.

TIMELINE

Year	Event
212 TH	Theran emissaries first contact Landis with news of the coming Scourge.
216 TH	The first Theran trading fleet arrives in Barsaive.
220 TH	Thandos V of Throal dies without an heir. A brief civil war erupts in Throal when it is learned that Thandos V was not of royal blood. Braza I becomes king and begins excavation of Braza's Kingdom.
275 TH	Braza I of Throal dies. That same year, a Theran military armada arrives in Barsaive.
300 TH	The Therans conquer the city of Vivane with a tremendous display of magical might.
309 TH	Construction begins on Sky Point, a staging platform for the Theran Fleet in Barsaive.
341 TH	Kearos Navarim dies. He is succeeded by Meach Vara Lingam.
346 TH	Meach Vara Lingam unveils the Rites of Protection and Passage.

The research conducted at the School of Shadows proves to have more uses than at first expected. Theran scholars and magicians discover insights and understandings into the ways and makings of magic that have far-reaching ancillary results. Their research opens up to the Therans the ability to work the powerful elemental magic contained in the True forms of air, earth, fire, water, and wood. Using that knowledge, the Therans build their stunning cities, none of which could exist without the aid of magic. They also create their airships, vessels of all kinds that fly through the air. Their research also gives them knowledge of magical warding and protection, illusion and healing, the transformation and manipulation of physical objects, and insight into the deepest reaches of the netherworlds. Thera becomes an island, a nation, and eventually an empire built on magic.

The Therans and Barsaive

As Thera grows, the land that will someday become Barsaive exists in ignorance. Unnamed, the area is home to independent tribes and isolated city-states. Little trade exists between these powers, the only real contact coming through intermittent attacks on rich Thera by the poorer city-states. Occasional efforts by the Elven Court at Wyrm Wood to bring the area under their control fail. Though rulers of a great empire, the elves of Wyrm Wood do not see enough worth conquering in Barsaive to exert the necessary political and military pressure. Their failure ultimately leaves Barsaive vulnerable to Theran domination.

In the Throal year 212 TH, the Therans finally arrive in Barsaive. They first make contact with the humans of Landis near the city of Vivane and what will someday become Sky Point. From there, Theran representatives and ambassadors travel across Barsaive making contact and trade alliances with every group they can find. This land, they discover, abounds with the natural and magical elements and materials the Therans covet. The Theran envoys promise a glittering future through trade to Barsaive's city-states and tribes; dazzled by the prospect of Theran riches, the local leaders sign agreements without reading between the lines.

The arrival of the first Theran trading fleet in 216 TH comes as a great surprise to Barsaive's local powers. They had signed treaties and agreements with the Theran envoys, but without any real understanding of the implications. The sight of dozens of Theran airships drifting slowly through the air over their palaces, castles, and tents is a literal and symbolic blow to them. A new power has come to Barsaive now, and it is second to none.

Birth of an Empire

The Therans enjoy their growing power. The island itself, its central citadel, the Eternal Library, and other great works of architecture and culture are renowned across the world. Thera's position in the heavily traveled Selestrean Sea makes her an ideal port of trade and commerce. For mystical thought and pure magical power, Thera has no equal. The potency of her magicians and the skill of her adepts are envied the world over. She needs little else to seal her position in the world. Nevertheless, Fate gives it to her.

Nearly four hundred years after the founding of Nehr'esham, in the Throal year 341 TH, Kearos Navarim dies of old age. His body is sealed in amber and placed in the great plaza of the citadel at the heart of Thera, next to the cenotaph of his friend Elianar Messias. Word spreads quickly that Navarim died while putting the finishing touches on the culmination of the Great Project and the researches of the School of Shadows. The rumors are correct.

Five years after Navarim's death, his successor as Elder of Thera, the human Meach Vara Lingam, announces to the world that though the scholars have found nothing beyond a keen blade and an iron will to defeat the coming Horrors, they have discovered something to protect against them. Lingam unveils to the world Kearos Navarim's crowning and final work, the Rites of Protection and Passage.

Rites of Protection and Passage

Despite Lingam's brave words, the Rites of Protection and Passage does not offer any truly effective methods of protecting against the Horrors, but it does present the theoretical means by which that protection can be discovered. In his four-volume work, Navarim concluded that isolation from the Horrors is the only true means of protection against them. Because of their individual power and sheer overwhelming numbers, direct confrontation with the Horrors would ultimately prove suicidal.

To hide from the Horrors, Navarim proposed to construct great underground fortresses. Dubbed kaers, these dwellings would protect their occupants against the Horrors on the theory that strong enough walls will keep out even the most physically powerful Horror. The natural, solid, earthen walls of the kaer would also provide protection against those Horrors that travel through astral space or by means as yet unguessed. However, Navarim warned an earthen barrier might not be enough to withstand every Horror.

Navarim's book also offered other means of protection. Cities could be shielded under domes woven of True air. Kaers could be built beneath the sea and protected by True water, and so on. Navarim believed that the underground kaer would offer the strongest defense, though even it might be breached.

To shore up the kaers' defenses, Navarim offered additional protections to defend against the Horrors on a primal level. Navarim believed that magicians could learn to create wards and runes that would "call" to a Horror through magic. Once the Horror examined the rune, its mind would become caught in the magical web and mathematical maze of the rune's construction.

Because the Horror comes from a place deep in the mystical netherworlds, a Horror must always devote some degree of its concentration to keeping itself in this world. A rune entrapping its mind would break the Horror's concentration and force the thing either to retreat or lose its grasp in this world and be flung back to the pit from whence it came.

Unfortunately for Thera and her sister lands, only the theory for these runes and wards exists. Navarim believed they could be devised and had charged the School of Shadows with their creation just prior to his death. In the meantime, he recommended that kaers be built wherever possible in preparation for the day when the infestation of Horrors would become so overpowering that they would render the surface of the world all but uninhabitable. This would occur, Navarim believed, in just over eight hundred years.

The School of Shadows continues to work on mastery of the runes, intending to make them available to all once their secrets are unlocked. And unlock them they do, but instead of sharing them, Thera closely guards the secrets of the runes. Soon she will use them as a bargaining tool to extend the Theran sphere of influence.

The immediate reaction to Navarim's work is mixed. Many dismiss its conclusions outright, while others look upon it with almost religious reverence. Most, though, cannot take seriously a threat eight hundred years in the future. They read Navarim's words and vow to prepare, later.

Orichalcum Wars

Thera, however, does not wait. The mighty, magic-rich island needs significant and perhaps extravagant protection against the Horrors. To this end its leaders begin to collect vast quantities of the magical metal orichalcum. The Therans begin striking favorable trade agreements in order to obtain large quantities of the rare material. No one can guess what manner of protection the Therans wish to build that requires so much of that metal, but as long as they pay well for it, no one much cares.

For those who do not know, orichalcum can only occur from the natural mixing of certain other earthen materials that combine in the presence of True earth. Though not a part of orichalcum, True earth is always found in the same area as that rare ore. Orichalcum must usually be mined, but occasionally nodes of it are found close enough to the surface of the land to be gathered by hand.

Orichalcum trade with Thera proves profitable for the rest of the world, despite the hue and cry of some deprived local magicians. It is so profitable that shipments become the target of bandits and raiders. Sixty years after Thera has begun its extensive importation of orichalcum, the trolls of the Twilight Peaks, called the crystal raiders, lead their ramshackle airships in a stunning long-distance raid against Shosaran orichalcum stores being prepared for shipment overland to Thera. Other raids quickly follow suit as the crystal raiders hone their skill of raiding by air.

Rather than band together for protection against the raiders, the lords and leaders of various lands take the raid as a signal to start their own plundering. The provinces of Ustrect and Cara Fahd simultaneously attack Landis; Throal is nearly overrun by marauding bands of orks known as ork scorchers, the Elven Court in Wyrm Wood fights Scythan dwarfs and their human allies in a series of terrible battles. The wars last more than 40 years. Nations switch sides with a shift of the wind, migratory tribes become little more than mercenaries, and nobility plot against and betray their own kin. Only in Shosara and Throal are the rightful rulers not at least temporarily deposed. For the first 30 years, orichalcum and elemental mining and gathering operations are declared off-limits by unspoken agreement; each side needs the mines, and no one would profit from their destruction.

The ork kingdom of Cara Fahd changes hands when Landis retakes the area around a lava field ripe with True fire. In retaliation, the retreating ork commander, Cathon Grimeye, unleashes

TIMELINE	
Year	**Event**
~360 TH	Kingdom of Ustrect founded with King R'Graya Bash'ak on the Throne.
402 TH	Lugrul of Cara Fahd dies.
~405 TH	Crystal raiders attack a Shosaran trading vessel, sparking the Orichalcum Wars.
407 TH	The forgotten Queen of Ustrect declares war on Cara Fahd.
408 TH	King Wujemba ascends the throne of Cara Fahd.
423 TH	Two year peace in Cara Fahd begins.
425 TH	Landis attacks Cara Fahd.
~440 TH	Sacrifice of Cathon Grimeye at Cara Fahd lava field. The ork nation collapses.
443 TH	Battle of Sky Point. Theran behemoth destroys several crystal raider settlements in the Twilight Peaks. Queen Jonatha of Throal signs peace agreement with Thera, ending the Orichalcum Wars. Thom Edro proclaims the Theran Empire and Barsaive becomes Thera's first province, with Kern Fallo as Provincial Overlord.

every bound or trapped fire elemental present in the field. No ork survives, most of the vanguard of the Landis army is destroyed, and the mines are severely damaged. This action sets the stage for the final, brutal years of the war.

Theran Navy and Empire

As long as the flow of orichalcum and other magical elements remains steady, the Therans care little about the war. As the Orichalcum Wars rage on, more and more Theran mining vessels sail over Barsaive. These barges rarely touch down, instead mining and gathering True air from the clouds around the highest mountain peaks. Using new techniques known only to them, the Theran miners are very successful. That success makes them targets.

The crystal raiders, having set off the Orichalcum Wars, sit back and watch them rage. Because the furious fighting has halted nearly all mining in the area, they make only the occasional supply raid. The Theran air barges, however, offer them a target they cannot resist.

The raiders strike quickly and often, plundering and looting the air barges. Thera warns that they will not tolerate further interference with the air mining operations. The Therans begin protecting the air barges with warships, military airships. At first these ships are vedettes, air barges expanded and armored for war. The raiders thumb their noses at the Theran war vessels; they continue attacking the convoys, using their faster, more maneuverable airships to escape back to the Twilight Peaks with their booty.

The Therans then begin protecting the mining convoys with kilas, sleek, stone-hulled vessels built specifically for war. Despite mounting losses, the raiders step up their attacks. The final straw for the Therans comes after they lose a massive fleet of air barges, vedettes, and kilas to the raiders. Sixty days later the Therans reveal their true power.

As morning comes, the clan-moots of the crystal raiders awaken to the sounds of alarm across the Twilight Peaks. Drifting across the great plain to the southeast of the mountains, not far from Vivane, is the largest airship anyone has ever conceived of, let alone seen. Devoid of a true ship's hull and sail, the vessel is a massive shard of rock nearly a thousand feet long propelled by raw magic in defiance of the laws of nature. The Therans call this terrible machine of war a behemoth.

The crystal raiders are astounded by the sight, but swarm to their airships and move to attack. The Theran airship commander dispatches a messenger spirit to the raiders, telling them to surrender or be obliterated. Proud and defiant, the raiders destroy the spirit.

Moving to attack, the raiders encounter a thunderous rain of weapons fire from the Theran ship. Siege engines, mounted onto the ship's stone hull and guided by magic, catapult giant arrows of metal and wood at the attackers. Bolts of mystic energy lash from the airship as well, as Theran mages focus their powers against the raiders. The raiders scatter under the onslaught, straight into the waiting guns of kilas hidden in the clouds overhead.

The battle continues for hours until the Theran behemoth finally reaches the edge of the Twilight Peaks. Then, it turns its terrible destructive power away from the remaining raider airships and directs it against their homes. The siege engines pound the moot-homes, magics tear into the raider families who attempt to defend the surface buildings and caverns, and elementals unleashed from the Theran ship ravage what little defense remains.

Stunned at the massacre they are witnessing, the raiders surrender. They are taken prisoner aboard the stone airship, to be brought back to Thera as slaves in chains. The Theran forces burn their airships, though they do not bother to destroy the few remaining survivors in the Twilight Peaks. With what will become known as the Battle of Sky Point, the Therans prove they are a power to be reckoned with. No longer content to simply conduct trade and commerce subject to the whims of local lords, the Therans use Sky Point to show the world what awaits those foolish enough to interfere with Theran desires and aims.

One hundred days later, in the four hundred and forty-third year of Throal, the then-human Elder of Thera, Thom Edro, proclaims the Theran Empire. Thera declares the lands of Barsaive a Theran province, promising all those who swear loyalty to her protection from the ravages of the Orichalcum Wars, as well as first rights to new enchantments to defend against the Horrors. To enforce their power, the new Empire places a permanent Theran military presence at Sky Point and founds the provincial capital of Parlainth in the northwest corner of the land. Dozens of smaller city-states and kingdoms quickly submit to Thera. More powerful kingdoms submit more slowly, but visits from the Theran Navy prove persuasive.

A leading citizen of Thera, the human Kern Fallo, is named the first Overlord of Barsaive. Though Thera controls the province, Fallo sees the practical value of local administration and calls upon the dwarfs of nearby Throal to assist him. Throal, unwillingly allied to Thera out of need for the Theran enchantments against the Horrors, agrees.

Through this administration, Throal mediates between the Therans and Barsaive. The dwarfs provide a buffer between the governments of Barsaive and their Theran overlords, defusing much of the tension between them. Also through this administration, Throal spreads and promotes the dwarf tongue as the trading language of Barsaive. For the first time in its history, citizens of various Barsaive regions can communicate with relative ease.

Jaron and the Sphinx

When Thom Edro establishes the Theran Empire, he installs himself as its First Governor. Many know it is only a matter of time before Edro secures the backing to proclaim himself Emperor.

Other grumblings surface as well, rumors that Edro is using unnatural magics to extend his life and those of loyal human and ork followers. Of course dwarf adepts had long ago developed life-extending magics for themselves... but this is different.

Magic had extended the life of the dwarf scholar-magician Jaron as well, though it left him less energetic than previously. He fears that Edro is turning Thera into a mockery of the teaching

of Elianar Messias, called the Martyr Scholar. Each time Jaron voices his objections, another of his followers vanishes. He realizes that despite his deciphering of the *First Book of Harrow*, the expanding Theran Empire no longer considers him an asset.

The night after the disappearance of Jaron's closest apprentice, a great working begins in the open park across the harbor from Thera's central citadel. Three great earth elementals tear rock, stone, and True earth up from the very foundations of the island and begin to sculpt them under Jaron's watchful eye. Theran imperial guardsmen and magicians rush to the area, but a powerful shield surrounding the park holds them back. They gape in wonder as a giant stone Sphinx takes form. Its head is sculpted turning downward and seemingly asleep. As the Sphinx is completed just before daybreak, Jaron turns to address the masses gathered in the park. He speaks to them of the teachings of the Martyr Scholar and the dreams of Kearos Navarim. He also speaks of the dangers of power and the dark path he fears Thera is beginning to walk. He has constructed the Sphinx, he tells them, to watch over Thera and her governors. It will remain in the park as the guardian of the beliefs of the past and an eternal reminder to the future. As Jaron falls silent, the shield protecting the park dissolves. The three earth elementals gather Jaron within themselves and together the four merge with the Sphinx. The crowds rush forward, and the Sphinx slowly opens its stone eyes, which blaze from within with a blue-white light. The Sphinx lifts its head to stare out across the main harbor directly at the central citadel and the heart of Thera. From that moment on, it remains in that position.

Theran magicians examine the Sphinx's construction, but its magical weavings baffle them. None can penetrate it enough to even glimpse the Sphinx's True pattern, much less learn enough to gain power over it. Because they cannot predict what may happen, they fear trying to manipulate or unmake it. To this day, the great Sphinx sits staring out over the harbor of Thera as a reminder to all who come and to all who rule there. The leader of Thera remains the First Governor. None dares call himself Emperor.

Thera and the Dragons

Thera's domination of the cultures of the Selestrean basin and neighboring areas is not total. Kingdoms and peoples continue to search for their own solutions to the problem of the Horrors because success means greater independence from Thera's increasingly oppressive rule. They sponsor eager scholars and brave adventurers to seek out dragons, for the creatures are known to have survived the last Scourge (as the invasion of the Horrors has come to be known) remarkably intact. However, many dragons have no desire to share their secrets, greatly reducing the population of eager scholars. Some dragons, through bribery or entreaty, share the method of creating the dragon lair, which scholars believe protected them. A rare few actually contact kingdoms on their own, offering to help for their own dragon reasons.

The leaders of Thera see the dragon actions as a challenge to their power and position. Proposed responses spark fierce debate; Edro has no desire to antagonize the dragons at a time when Thera should be using all its power to prepare for the coming Scourge. But the factions that profit most from the trade in magical elements mount effective pressure. The Theran Navy organizes strikes against three powerful and influential great dragons. The first two succeed in killing the target dragons and destroying their lairs, though the action costs the Therans one of their mighty stone behemoths for the first time. The third strike, against the great dragon Icewing, fails. The Therans find only his lair, largely empty of anything of value and power.

Theran ambassadors pass firmly worded communiqués through discreet channels; they refuse to tolerate dragon interference in Theran domestic policy. The dragons appear to retreat; Theran merchants and guild adepts do a booming business as new orders for Theran protective enchantments flood in.

Then, one sunset, sailors and dock merchants spot a dragon atop the head of the Sphinx. As the Therans hesitate between staring and fleeing, the dragon flies off. The next morning twelve citizens are found dead. Two are provisioners to the navy, one an earth-element smith, one a clerk to the treasurer, two guild adepts, one a moneylender, and five are principal contractors for protective enchantments. Each of the twelve had agitated for or profited from, the action against the dragons. Over the next two weeks the dragons strike twice more. Two dozen more leading Therans die. Theran diplomatic channels convey a second message: Therans are to leave dragons strictly alone. No further Theran raids will be planned or executed. The dragons apparently take the Therans' message to heart and cease to disclose what they know of the Horrors and the coming Scourge.

TIMELINE

Year	Event
~450 TH	Jaron creates the Sphinx.
493 TH	Construction begins on Parlainth, the Theran provincial capital in Barsaive.
543 TH	Parlainth formally opens.
590 TH	Kern Fallo is recalled to Thera by Thom Edro.
634 TH	Queen Bevelona of Throal dies without an heir and there is brief unrest in Throal. House Avalus (the current royal line) takes power through Jothan I.
~700 TH	The first true Horrors appear in Barsaive.
870 TH	In Throal, King Jothan IV creates the guild system.

TIMELINE	
Year	**Event**
~900 TH	Queen Ulutur begins construction on Halls of Throal. Braza's Kingdom sealed.
950 TH	Varulus I ascends the throne of Throal.
960 TH	*Book of Tomorrow* commissioned.
997 TH	A group of Throalic nobles known as The Fourteen are banished for plotting against Varulus I.
1008 TH	Thera seals its citadel.
1020 TH	Ersh Wearg becomes Provincial Overlord of Barsaive.
1032 TH	The Raggok Incident in Throal becomes the first indication that the Passions were driven mad by the Scourge.
1044 TH	Theran provincial overlord Ersh Wearg arrives in Throal, fleeing from Parlainth.
1045 TH	Parlainth vanishes.
1049 TH	Varulus I journeys to an audience with the great dragon Icewing.
1050 TH	Throal seals its gates.

Race to the Shelters

As the Scourge draws nearer, the kingdoms and cultures of the world prepare for the mass invasion of the Horrors. Some build small underground villages with protective wards woven from the roots of the plants above. The dwarfs of Throal hollow out most of an entire mountain, the largest in the kingdom, to build their kaer. Other cities become fantastic citadels, with hand-written runic phrases carefully inscribed on every bit of masonry in the city. With each new report of a Horror, work becomes more frantic, ever more urgent. Fear and panic result in such a heavy spread of rumors that it becomes difficult to sort out the truth. Contact between cities, between kingdoms, becomes erratic. Some cities become so fearful that they isolate themselves years before the actual Scourge begins.

Throughout this time the most reliable communications come from, or through, Thera. The Theran Empire literally holds together the fabric of civilization until most of their client states are prepared.

Thera's demands for slaves greatly increase during this period. Life is cheap, so the demands are met. Rulers sometimes sell an entire town into slavery in order to obtain the Runes of Warding to protect two or three other towns. Throal and Landis balk at the increased demand for slaves and work furiously to pay Thera's dear price with raw elements.

The Elven Schism

Some reject Thera outright. Queen Alachia of Wyrm Wood, High Queen of all the Elves, despises the Therans for their use of slavery and for their political opposition to her rule. She commands that no elven nation, and no elf, follow the Theran ways of protection. She presents an alternative in which elven elementalists will use wood magics to weave the living plants of a forest into a kaer. The Horrors, she believes, will be unable to pass through living wood.

Elven scholars outside Wyrm Wood, and it is said even some within, are aghast at the proposal. They believe that though the Theran method is not foolproof, it would provide effective protection against the Horrors. These magicians and scholars doubt that any wooden kaer could possibly withstand the savage physical punishment the Horrors would inflict upon it.

Alachia, however, stands resolute. She vows that any elf who follows the Theran way will be forever separated from all of elven culture. This threat, far from cowing the other elven nations, shatters the great cultural elven empire Alachia commanded, presumably forever.

Word comes first from the elves of the far-away Northern Kingdoms. As the elves most distant from the Court at Wyrm Wood, they feel the least amount of true loyalty to its ways. Though little is known of those Northern Kingdoms in Barsaive, their rejection of Alachia represents a severe blow to her power. Before she can react, Alachia receives word from other elven nations and city-states that they refuse to follow her. They wish the Court well, but they will not follow Alachia to what they believe to be certain death.

Queen Alachia, in the end, does not formally declare these nations separate. Their refusal has bereft the Elven Court of much of its power, making any such declaration an empty gesture. Instead Alachia chooses to wait until after the Scourge when her continued existence can prove her wisdom. At her command, the elves of Wyrm Wood begin the construction of the wooden kaer that will be their downfall.

The Scourge

Scholars now place the beginning of the Scourge in the one thousand and eighth year of the Throal Calendar. The Therans count that date as the year TE 565. Both use the same indicator for the beginning of the Scourge: the sealing up of Thera. As a center and focus of magical power, Thera is beset by the Horrors earlier and with greater severity than the rest of the world. Thera's last words to her subject nations are wishes of luck and safety, and an affirmation of her power. Then, the great dome of True air and fire that surrounds the island ignites and seals Thera off from the world.

Though some other groups had previously sealed themselves off, the rest of the world sees the sealing of Thera as the last great

sign that the Scourge is beginning. Horrors appear with increasing frequency and are becoming more than a match for local militia, constabulary, and brave adventurers.

Within twenty years of the sealing of Thera, the rising tide of Horrors cuts off virtually all communication between kingdoms. Even astral space becomes too polluted to access, and magicians the world over learn the true benefits of the spell matrices devised by the Therans. Mindless herds of destructive Horrors roam the land, consuming every scrap of life they can find. Other, more intelligent Horrors probe existing defenses, and batter their way through weaker ones. Still others infiltrate society and slip with the people into their kaers. They wait and reveal themselves, violently or subtly, after the kaer has been sealed.

Throal and Parlainth

In Barsaive, the great powers of Throal and Parlainth, the Theran provincial capital, brace themselves against the Horrors and remain open and accessible for as long as they can. Both provide shelter for refugees until the last possible moment. Throal's kaer, though of Theran design, includes additional mystical dwarf craftsmanship. Parlainth intends to use a radical method of isolation: its magicians will cast a great spell to shift Parlainth from this world to another in the netherworlds, one out of reach of the Horrors. To further keep the city safe, part of the spell will reach out across Barsaive and wipe the memory of Parlainth from the mind of every living person. With no memory of Parlainth, no one will betray either its existence or its disappearance to the Horrors. (The tale of Parlainth holds both great deeds and great tragedy, and is best fully told elsewhere.) Ironically, at the last minute, the Theran Overlord of Barsaive loses faith in the plan he sponsored and flees to Throal with his staff. Parlainth seals itself off, disappears, and leaves the memory of Barsaive for nearly four hundred years. Supposedly safe in Throal, the Theran Overlord and much of his staff are killed when a portion of the Throal kaer collapses only a few months after Throal has sealed itself up.

In the years just before the Scourge, the dwarfs of Throal do not remain idle. Years of administering Barsaive under Theran domination have taught them much. They know that during the projected time of the Scourge, six hundred years, much of society and culture will wither within the kaers. The Theran plan prepared for every aspect of physical survival; they provided for magical plant nurturing, air and waste recirculation, and breeding cycles. However, the Therans had neglected the less tangible things.

To this end, the dwarfs created *The Book of Tomorrow*. In this book they set down the history of Barsaive and Thera, the great tales of the day and others past. They wrote out the dwarf language in its entirety so that children in the kaers could learn to speak, read, and write a common tongue. The book told them how to rebuild their homes and lands once the Horrors had gone. The book told them how to use arts and crafts as a continuing sign that one was free from the influence of a Horror, for the dwarfs had learned that a person Horror-tainted could not create things of art and beauty. And most important it told the dwarfs how to tell when the dark days of the Scourge were over.

Finally, in the year 1050 TH, Throal sealed itself off and prepared for the worst. Throal's leaders were virtually certain that some Horrors had entered the kaer with the refugees, and knew they would soon reveal themselves. Though the story has been lost to the mists of time, the strength of the dwarfs enabled them to discover and defeat one Horror before it could ravage the kaer. The time of the Scourge brought suffering and hardship, but the people of Throal endured through their physical strength and will to survive. During that time, other things change in Throal as well. The dwarfs as a people, and their friends inside with them, look forward to the future. Discussions begin about what the world will be like after the Scourge. In the court of King Varulus II, dwarf

TIMELINE

Year	Event
1057 TH	The Horror Whisper manifests in Throal and is defeated through the efforts of several of the kingdom's adepts.
1160 TH	King Varulus I of Throal dies at age 270. He is succeeded by his son, Varulus II.
1262 TH	The wooden kaer of Wyrm Wood collapses. The desperate Ritual of Thorns turns the forest into Blood Wood.
1270 TH	The *Council Compact* is completed after twenty years of work.
1373 TH	King Varulus II of Throal dies at age 258. He is succeeded by his son Varulus III.
1399 TH	Thera believed to have opened its citadel.

common sense links with imagination to provide a new vision of the world.

Philosophers, soldiers, priests, scholars, craftsmen, and nobles argue for years until a rough consensus emerges. For the first time the rights of an individual are argued and defined. The dwarfs write down these rights and the logic that bred them in the *Council Compact* of 1270 TH. This document will serve as a guide to forming the new dwarf society and that of their neighbors in the years after the Scourge. In broad terms, it defines individual rights, property rights, and the role of law.

For example, the section on individual rights contains the following passage:

> *We have shown that rights to property are a necessary good for an orderly society. What of the issue of slavery, the ownership of another person?*
>
> *Persons can certainly be considered property. But who owns a person? Our common sense dictates that the spirit born into the body owns the body. That spirit contains its movement, its thoughts, its actions. The spirit makes active use of the body it owns. Our language supports this view—an evil spirit who inhabits and controls a body is said to have "possessed" the body; this possession is seen as unnatural. The evil spirit has stolen the body from its rightful owner.*
>
> *Slavery removes the control of an individual's body from its natural spirit to the slaveowner. This transfer is made without compensation to the spirit, the true owner of the body. Involuntary servitude also steals the body.*
>
> *It is a crime.*

The *Council Compact* is a rigorously thought-out statement of principles. Its goal is to develop a fair, orderly society to aid the conduct of commerce. The *Compact* embodies common sense, and can serve as a shared belief among all people. During the time in the kaer, the *Compact* circulates among dwarf nobles who accept it without reservation. Those who believe in the *Compact* decide that the world following the Scourge will be different from the one that had existed before, and very different from the one the Therans expect.

Blood Wood

In 1262 TH, the wooden kaer of the Elven Court begins to fail. The loss of protection is slow, but inexorable. Panic strikes within the kaer as the elves desperately seek alternative means of protection. They haven't enough time to construct underground kaers, nor do they have sufficient reserves of elemental air or earth. Desperation and depression set in as the Horrors begin to break through. The elves create roving militia squads to respond quickly to breaks in the kaer barriers as elementalists strive to repair the existing breaks and shore up other weakening sections.

Then the elves of the Wood make a startling and ultimately terrifying discovery. Of those Horrors that break through, those most intelligent, most devious, and most difficult to destroy all but ignore elves who are already mad or in extreme, constant pain. The advisors to Queen Alachia are quick to realize that these Horrors need to inflict madness and pain themselves in order to feed. Existing madness and pain are not enough for them. A horrible seed begins to grow in the heart of the Wyrm Wood, a plan for protection so terrible that its implementation will be as heinous as anything the Horrors themselves can inflict.

Finally, with the Horrors on the verge of complete penetration of the elven kaer, the elves enact their desperate plan. Elementalists perform a twisted blood ritual that forces a physical change upon the surviving elves of Wyrm Wood. Thorns begin to grow out of their skin, ripping and tearing, leaving the elf in constant, excruciating, overpowering pain. The initial Ritual of Thorns kills many of the elves in Wyrm Wood, but those who survive learn to live with the pain and even draw upon it for strength. For the Horrors, nothing they want remains in Wyrm Wood. Some of the more bestial Horrors continue to attack and attempt to break through, but the more diabolical ones who feed on pain and suffering leave to find their nurture elsewhere. The Thorn Elves of what has become the Blood Wood have found a way to survive, but at a terrible price.

The Time of Hiding

Centuries pass as the people within the kaers and citadels huddle in fear and gradually learn to cope, all the while longing for the touch of sunlight and the taste of clean air. The inhabitants of many kaers will not live to see the sun again. Horrors batter or guile their way into more kaers than anyone even in their darkest thoughts believed possible. Whole cities are lost to the Horrors, entire societies and civilizations gone forever.

In Barsaive, the greatest loss may be the city of Parlainth, though none would remember her grandeur until many years after the end of the Scourge. We now know that sometime during the Scourge, Horrors somehow entered Parlainth. All anyone knows for certain comes from the tale of J'Role, the Honorable Thief, and his companions. By the time they found the magical Longing Ring, learned its secrets, and used it to return forgotten Parlainth to this world, all the city's inhabitants were dead or gone. Searchers found few bodies; unknown Horrors had left the city desolate. In the years following the Scourge, Parlainth became a center of adventure and danger as brave souls from all over Barsaive came there to find her lost treasures and unlock her dark secrets. But even after the Scourge, terrible things still walk the streets of Parlainth and hide in her darkest corners, and most of her secrets remain hidden to this day.

Those kaers that hold copies of the Throalic *Book of Tomorrow* know the magic ritual that will tell them when they may safely re-enter the world. Those lacking this ritual must guess and hope. The magic itself is basic: a simple ball of True earth is enchanted and placed over a dish of True water. The magics of the ritual keep the ball suspended over the water. As the strength of the world's magical aura wanes, and the Horrors are forced to retreat, the ball of True earth descends until it finally touches the True water and the two mix and neutralize each other.

All across Barsaive, the people in the kaers watch the ball descend. Slowly, ever so slowly, it drops toward the water. Finally, in the fourteen hundred and fifteenth year of the Throalic Calendar the ball stops falling, hanging an inch above water. Shocked scholars and magicians watch in wonder and dread. It is too soon by hundreds of years for the Scourge to have abated. And why had the ball stopped? No one knew the answer then, and no one knows to this day. We only know that for some reason on that day the mystical aura of our world stabilized and has remained constant from that point forward.

A few years pass and the people in the kaers begin to believe that the ball will not descend any further. The doors of the kaers begin to open into a bright, sunlit world ravaged by the Horrors. Most, though not all, of the Horrors are gone.

The Return

Throal begins the first, tentative return to the outside world just prior to the cessation of the ball's drop. Throal scholars and magicians believe that the strength of the world's magical aura may have dropped enough that most of the more powerful Horrors have already begun to flee. They doubt the accuracy of the Theran calculations of the Scourge's length, believing the Therans to have erred conservatively so that they might enter the new world first, and dominate it.

In 1409 TH the first scouting party sent outside Throal is destroyed within hours. Each year after that Throal sends out another scouting party, none of whom at first return. In 1412 TH the scouting party led by the female troll Vaare Longfang returns alive and intact. She reports that the Horrors are still present, but they are fewer and less active. Throal's leaders decide to launch a greater expedition to learn the extent of the Horrors' ravaging. They outfit a troll airship, give it magical protection and an elite crew, and offer Vaare Longfang command.

The Earthdawn

In 1416 TH, just after the world's aura has apparently stabilized, the expedition sets sail in the refitted airship, christened the *Earthdawn*. Its mission lasts almost a year. The battle-scarred *Earthdawn* returns to Throal with an exhausted but exhilarated crew. Vaare has charted most of Barsaive and found it predominately free of the Horrors. Those that remain have retreated into pockets of higher magic where they find it easier to exist. Few live in the open. A jubilant Throal prepares to emerge into the world.

In 1418 TH, Vaare again takes command of the *Earthdawn,* to begin contacting the nations of Barsaive and inform them that the worst is over. The mission proceeds slowly, for the people of the kaers and citadels assume the troll and her crew are some trick of the Horrors. After one year, only two kaers of twenty-one visited have opened their doors. King Varulus alters Vaare's mission, and orders her to take the *Earthdawn* to the largest kingdoms first.

TIMELINE

Year	Event
1409 TH	First Throalic scouting party heads outside. It is destroyed within hours of emerging.
~1410 TH	Crystal raiders emerge from their kaers in the Twilight Peaks.
1412 TH	Vaare Longfang returns from first successful scouting mission outside Throal
1415 TH	The magic level of the world stabilizes for some unknown reason. Elemental clocks cease to drop.
1416 TH	The first voyage of the *Earthdawn*.
1418 TH	During its second voyage, the *Earthdawn* disappears without a trace.
1420 TH	Throal opens its gates and begins to resettle the mountains.
~1430 TH	The city of Urupa is founded on the shores of the Aras Sea.
1442 TH	The Therans reconquer Vivane.
1449 TH	Theran vessels return to Barsaive, starting the First Theran War. The t'skrang House K'tenshin awakens.

The ship sails for Landis, but never arrives. Horrors attack and take control of the vessel, and the crew disappears. The haunted hulk of the *Earthdawn* sails through parts of Barsaive, but usually vanishes from sight shortly after being spotted.

Throal Opens

Despite this loss, King Varulus III orders the doors of Throal opened in the summer of 1420 TH. Patrols and magical surveillance remain high, to guard against unknown Horrors. No one leaves Throal for nearly sixteen months. Varulus then issues a proclamation granting land to those who farm, mine, forest, or otherwise make productive use of it. A trickle of brave souls turns into a flood of opportunists. Despite setbacks and encounters with some remaining Horrors, the resettlement of the Throal Mountains begins.

Over the next few years, merchants organize expeditions to reestablish trade routes with nearby communities. They find some kaers whose people refuse to open their doors; at those places they leave a small tent camp to wait patiently for the kaer to open. The traders find other kaers and citadels whose defenses have been breached; they mark these as dangerous and to be avoided. Many others open their doors; the merchants give them copies of the *Council Compact* and ask them to join the new world Throal envisions. As the merchants make more and more contacts, they expand their efforts deeper into Barsaive and into the areas held exclusively by humans, trolls, t'skrang, orks, and other races.

They move quickly, for they know that the Therans will return to Barsaive as soon as they can.

Conflict of Destinies

Thera herself does not move as quickly as feared. Little word comes to Barsaive concerning the condition of the island or its immediate resources, but Thera's unexpected absence leads many to believe that Thera did not escape the Scourge as unbruised as her leaders had hoped. The first Theran vessels do not arrive in Barsaive until 1449 TH, fifty years after Thera is believed to have opened herself to the new world.

The Theran emissaries meet with little welcome. The time of the Scourge and the few years immediately after have given the people of Barsaive the opportunity to live free of the Theran yoke, and they like the taste of freedom. The Theran emissaries, unprepared for anything but respect and cooperation, threaten Barsaive with violence. In answer, local Barsaivians burn the three Theran vedettes anchored at Sky Point and put their crews to the sword.

Theran First Governor Nikodus names Fallan Pavelis as the new Overlord of Barsaive. He orders Pavelis to reestablish Theran supremacy in Barsaive, for the Therans believe that the land is still their province. Pavelis chooses the strong hand over the soft voice. Theran vedettes conduct slaving runs over isolated villages. Shipborne troops attack coastal cities and seize "forgotten tribute." Ork mercenaries in Theran pay conduct bandit raids against kingdoms that resist Thera. Human tribal leaders are assassinated and replaced with more amenable rulers.

Besieged, the people of Barsaive turn to Throal for help. The dwarf kingdom has all but promised rebellion with the *Council Compact*; surely the dwarfs will counter the Therans and end the Empire's domination? In Throal, though all believe that the Therans must be stopped, the dwarfs realize bitterly how little they can do on their own. Throal has not the strength to defeat a combined force of Theran air and ground forces, nor does any other single power in Barsaive. Together, though, the combined will and might of all the peoples of Barsaive may prevail.

King Varulus III sends messengers and emissaries to the rulers of Barsaive. Together, his message says, Barsaive must either stand free or else fall into oppression and slavery. Though his words stir the hearts of many, the sight of Theran airships attacking and raiding at will stills their actions.

An act by the Therans themselves finally turns the tide. The First Governor has learned of the *Council Compact*, receiving a copy from Pavelis. Enraged by its contents, Nikodus sends a damning message to his Overlord of Barsaive. The message tells

TIMELINE

Year	Event
1452 TH	Parlainth rediscovered by Garlthik One-Eye and J'Role the Honorable Thief.
1456 TH	Theran Overgovernor Pavelis attempts to destroy the Floating City of House V'strimon, but fails miserably.
1458 TH	War with Thera ends with the Therans retreating to Vivane.
1474 TH	Prince Neden, only child of Varulus III, is born.
1484 TH	The Death Rebellion. Prince Neden of Throal is kidnapped by the Theran Nethermancer Mordom, who attempts to infect him with a Horror. Neden is rescued by J'Role the Honorable Thief and healed by the great dragon Mountainshadow.
1485 TH	The troll adventurer Torgak and his associates begin clearing the south-eastern corner of Parlainth to establish a permanent base of operations.
1488 TH	House Ishkarat seizes the Island of Filen from House Syrtis.
1491 TH	Haven officially opens in the south-eastern corner of Parlainth.
1497 TH	The Guild of Guildmasters created in Throal.
1498 TH	House T'kambras appears on the Tylon River, led by Jedaiyen Westhrall.
1502 TH	Battles between the t'skrang Houses Ishkarat and Syrtis end with the Battle of Sejanus. Seven-year old child becomes new *Shivalahala* Syrtis and becomes known as the Prophetess.
1507 TH	Varulus III travels to visit the Prophetess. The meeting ends with Varulus flying into an uncharacteristic rage and leaving hastily.

Pavelis that the dwarf logic of commerce and ownership outlined in the *Compact* makes it clear that every man, woman, and child in Barsaive owes their survival from the Horrors to Thera and the First Governor personally. This blood debt makes all the people of Barsaive the personal slaves of the First Governor, and his to do with as he wishes. He instructs Pavelis to begin the systematic destruction of all Barsaive cities not vital to elemental trade or gathering. The first target will be Throal.

As the First Governor shifts troops to Barsaive and Pavelis gathers them into the largest Theran armada ever assembled, Barsaive loyalists within the Overlord's palace in Sky Point obtain a copy of the message. They duplicate it and distribute it across Barsaive. The message raises anger strong enough to banish fear; the peoples of Barsaive no longer question that they must and will fight.

His army assembled, Pavelis moves on Throal. Though the dwarf kingdom is unprepared to fight the kind of war Thera brings to them, the rest of Barsaive is not. Goaded by such heroes as the human J'Role and the t'skrang Westhrall, Barsaive comes to the aid of Throal. Troll crystal raiders duplicate their ancestors' successes of the Orichalcum Wars and attack Theran ships. T'skrang riverboats run blockades and intercept supplies. Ork cavalry and elven bowmen assault supply convoys and base camps, and then vanish into the night. Windling thieves infiltrate Theran command ships and camps and learn valuable information, leaving behind nasty magical surprises.

Harassed and battered continuously from all sides, Pavelis takes a desperate gamble to settle the issue before Nikodus' patience runs out. He masses his forces for a frontal assault on Throal, but the hit-and-run fighters of Barsaive cut down half the armada and destroy its supplies. Facing disaster, the armada breaks and the Therans withdraw to Sky Point.

The Theran Behemoth

The first war with Thera ends, leaving an uneasy truce between Thera and the province of Barsaive in its place. Theran First Governor Nikodus is succeeded by the obsidiman Kanidris, who continues to believe that Barsaive is part of the Theran Empire. Still, most of Barsaive's people—led by the Kingdom of Throal—claim their independence. For a long time after the war, Theran troops engage small resistance cells and Throalic forces in minor skirmishes, but no large-scale battles are fought.

Almost five decades later, Kanidris and his advisors begin to believe that Pavelis' successor—Overgovernor Kypros—has failed to quell the growing anti-Theran resistance activities in Barsaive. The lack of a strong, military presence aids Throal's attempts to unite the powers of Barsaive into an independent nation and gives the people of Barsaive a taste of freedom. Thera pushes for a military solution; fortunately for Barsaive, conditions in Thera's other territories prevent the Empire from bringing its full military power to bear on the province.

Despite the problems with Thera's other provinces it still possesses a mighty force. Deciding that a display of such force is the way to finally bring the upstart province of Barsaive in line, the First Governor sends a military expedition. This expedition includes the ancient behemoth *Triumph* and is commanded by General Nikar, a t'skrang of House Carinci. The force moves to establish a permanent military base in Barsaive. To this end Carinci's forces bring the massive floating fortress to the shores of Lake Ban, landing it on top of the most famous and revered obsidiman Liferock in the entire province: Ayodhya. Through elemental magics the behemoth Triumph is reinforced and strengthened with elemental earth; the fortress becoming fastened to Ayodhya, trapping almost the entire Brotherhood of obsidimen inside.

Like a stone thrown into a pond, the landing of *Triumph* and the arrival of the Theran forces cause ripples that travel throughout the province. The Kingdom of Throal and the t'skrang houses of V'strimon and Syrtis begin to marshal their forces, waiting for the Therans to make the first move. Tension grows between the t'skrang houses when House K'tenshin demonstrates its alliance with Thera by claiming a neutral part of the Serpent River separating them from their nearest rivals, House V'strimon.

TIMELINE

Year	Event
1509 TH	The Therans return to Barsaive and land the giant behemoth Triumph on top of the Ayodhya Liferock. King Varulus III is assassinated. His son, Prince Neden ascends the throne and makes the Therans responsible for the loss. Throal withdraws with heavy losses from the Battle of Prajjor's Field near the fortress. The ork nation of Cara Fahd is rebuilt and declares its sovereignty.
1510 TH	Now.

Ayodhya was carefully chosen by Thera's leaders, who hoped to demoralize and intimidate the people of Barsaive by turning it into a fortified city. Ayodhya is a place of great importance for the Name-givers of Barsaive; not only obsidimen, but also the t'skrang, for whom Ayodhya marks the beginning of their sacred pilgrimage route. But an unforeseen event causes the Theran plan to have the opposite effect intended.

The obsidiman merchant Omasu, owner of the prestigious Overland Trading Company, has avoided politics all his life. As a member of the Ayodhya Brotherhood, the landing of Triumph enrages him. Faced with the slow death of his Liferock, and his brothers along with it, Omasu devotes the considerable resources of his company to build up resistance—the Liferock Rebellion. General Nikar's reluctance to stop caravans and trade ships, to avoid strangling trade in the region, combined with the vast wealth of Omasu, allows the rebellion to operate virtually unopposed. They become a serious thorn in the side of Thera's Barsaivian forces.

The King is Dead

Rumors of King Varulus III's failing health make their rounds throughout the province for many months. The rumors are true: King Varulus III has been suffering from a malaise of unknown origin for a long time. Concerned that his enemies might capitalize on his weakened condition, Varulus decides to keep his illness a secret and delegates as much of his authority as he can to his heir, Prince Neden. Despite the heavy toll of the mysterious illness it is not this that kills him. He is murdered whilst he is alone, albeit only briefly. The Kingdom of Throal is shocked to its very foundations.

Convinced that his father was killed by agents of Thera, the newly crowned King Neden I readies his armies to attack the Theran fortress at Ayodhya—disregarding the warnings of his advisors, who fear that Throal lacks the power to directly confront the Empire. General Nikar Carinci does not wish a war with Throal—not yet, in any case. His forces are considerable, but remain isolated from the bulk of Thera's military strength. On the other hand, he does not intend to let an upstart Throalic king force Thera's hand. Carinci tries to convince Neden that the Empire is not responsible for his father's assassination, but fails miserably. Soon, a hastily assembled Throalic strike force marches toward Triumph.

The battle at the fortress city—known to historians as the Battle of Prajjor's Field—ends with massive losses for the dwarf kingdom. During the fighting, however, King Neden I learns that the Denairastas of Iopos, not the Therans, were the engineers of his father's death. Throal has long considered the Denairastas as a minor power, but the exposure of the real culprits behind King

Varulus III's assassination transforms the Denairastas, and Iopos, into the kingdom's most immediate and dangerous enemy virtually overnight. Because neither side has made a formal declaration of war, the Battle of Prajjor's Field remains a humiliation for both Thera and Throal. Tension continues to rise between Throal and Thera—but, fortunately for the dwarfs, retaliation and war are not part of General Nikar Carinci's assignment.

King Neden's preoccupation with the Therans continues to cloud his judgement and results in other priorities falling by the wayside. To restore Throal's prestige and pride, Neden covertly authorizes a program to destabilize Theran forces and allies in Barsaive. A ruthless wave of assassinations against suspected Theran and Iopan spies washes over Bartertown, contributing to the growing lawlessness and violating the town's independent status. Enraged citizens spawn virulent anti-Throal sentiments, and known agents of Throal are faced with open hostility.

Facing two enemies leaves Throal shaken. While King Neden campaigns for greater spending on mercenaries and airships, the citizenry divides on the question. A slim majority wants to go to war and erase Throal's shame. Others advocate some type of accommodation with Thera that will enable them to resume business in a peaceful province. Perhaps most important of all, public discontent with King Neden emboldens his rivals among the Throalic nobility, forcing him to govern more cautiously.

As Neden's power wanes, the influence of his greatest rival grows. Selenda, leader of the old-guard of the dwarf nobility, encourages her conservative followers to whittle away at the edges of the *Council Compact*. As she strives to gain the crown for herself, the most influential power in Barsaive drifts closer and closer to the brink of civil war.

The Dragons Intervene

Although the dragons of Barsaive make no announcement of an official alliance with Throal, they begin to make life in Barsaive extremely uncomfortable for the Therans. Sightings of great dragons gliding lazily over Barsaive increase, and, every so often, they search out and pounce on a tasty-looking Theran trade or military caravan. Many believe that the great dragon Icewing is behind this open hostility.

When the gnawed and broken bones of *Triumph's* chief magician Hefera are personally delivered to General Nikar, it becomes clear that this is Icewing's none-too-subtle signal for his open wrath against Thera. But the message is just the tip of the iceberg: a partial glimpse of a war fought behind the curtain of events in the province.

The Rise of Cara Fahd

Once known as a proud kingdom of warriors, the ork nation of Cara Fahd lay in ruins since the end of the Orichalcum Wars. The ork tribes remain scattered throughout Barsaive, wandering the hinterlands and raiding settlements—sometimes even hiring themselves out as mercenary cavalry. Ancient feuds divide these tribes, and ever since the fall of the kingdom, no leader has proved wise and strong enough to unite them and rebuild the ork kingdom—that is, until now.

With the help of the Passions, a series of letters, called the *Seeds of Nation*, arrives in Barsaive. Word of this manifesto spreads like wildfire among Barsaive's orks—from scorcher tribes to city-dwellers. The letters re-ignite the dream of Cara Fahd among those who had almost forgotten it, and convince the scorcher tribes that the time of the orks is at hand. As excitement and hope reaches a fever pitch among Barsaive's orks, the author of the letters returns to Barsaive—an ork Named Krathis Gron.

As a descendant of the legendary ork hero Hrak Gron, Krathis becomes the living embodiment of the ork's love of freedom. Like Hrak Gron, who once freed the ork race from slavery, Krathis Gron is expected to lead them to unity. Hailed by the orks of Barsaive, she begins to preach her vision of a new ork nation. Krathis Gron was sent by the Passions, who visited her in a vision while she was in the desert. Bestowing her with the task of rebuilding Cara Fahd the passions rejuvenate the vigor of her youth. She spends many years in distant Cathay, preparing herself for the task and, with the help of many scholars, magicians, and adepts, masters many new talents.

Intoxicated with their impending freedom, the orks of Barsaive start to migrate to the lands of ancient Cara Fahd along the southern edge of the Delaris Mountains. Finally, it seems that the time has come to reclaim their birthright. Nothing stands in the way of the new ork nation—especially since the new king of Throal has proven to be somewhat of a weakling.

Months later, the orks have consolidated their power under the rule of Krathis Gron. When Throalic and Theran forces clash in a minor skirmish at Claw Ridge, thousands of ork warriors appear on the surrounding hills, forcing both armies to surrender their weapons. Appearing at the head of the ork forces, Krathis Gron announces the rebirth and the sovereignty of Cara Fahd. Outnumbered and unarmed, the forces of Throal and Thera are forced to leave, reporting the news of the event to their leaders. Although the dwarfs of Throal are natural allies in the fight against Theran oppression, the young ork nation begins to fight for its own place in the world.

A Different World

The world after the Scourge is truly different, in ways the sages and scholars did not imagine. Our world's magical aura does not diminish, as all of our learning tells us it should, but instead remains strong. We see this as proof of our survival; the world goes on, holding a steady course into the future. Faced with a renewed Theran threat, the nations of Barsaive struggle to survive the great war looming on the horizon. The arrival of the Theran behemoth has divided the t'skrang houses of the great Serpent River, whose daily life of trading, pirating, and engaging in occasional raids, is now supplemented by the bitter taste of death in war.

Enraged by the humiliation brought upon the liferock of Ayodhya, the durable, earth-bound obsidimen roam Barsaive in search for retaliation against the Therans. Weakened by internal politics, the dwarf kingdom of Throal fights a new, dangerous enemy close to their homeland. The elves of Blood Wood have survived the Horrors in their own way; a dark way that has divided the entire race of elves. In the south, troll crystal raiders battle among themselves and build airships for future raids on the lowlands, and on Theran and Throalic airships passing too close to their domains. The ork tribes of Cara Fahd enjoy a new-found unity and roam the land mounted on fierce chargers, finding danger and adventure where they can. Only the windlings continue to enjoy their freedom and live life to its fullest, despite the long shadows of war.

But still more danger lies just off the trade roads, along with the lure of the treasures amassed and hidden away by now-forgotten people. The Horrors have receded, but they still hold fast in the darker places of the world. Some wait within conquered citadels, curled upon the sprawling wealth of the vanquished. Others roam the world, their magic weakened, but still powerful enough to wreak havoc on anyone and anything that crosses their paths.

In this, the fifteen hundred and tenth year since the founding of Throal, the world looks vastly different from the one those early pioneers saw when they looked south across the plains. Only the brave dare explore this world. Only heroes can carve a future from the ruins of the past.

NAME-GIVER RACES

Many of my people say the other races are too big, take up too much space, and use up too much air. Theirs is a short-sighted view—they fail to see the irony. After all, what a boring place the world would be if there was no one to make fun of!

• Seethian, Windling Thief •

Many different species and races of sentient beings populate the world of **Earthdawn**. This chapter describes the most numerous races in the region of Barsaive. They vary in size and shape, color and culture, and together bring the game world to life. These races are all **Name-givers**.

Your character will belong to one of the major races of Barsaive. In this fantasy world, the word "race" means the same as and replaces "species." Besides the human race there are elves, trolls, and even more exotic races such as the obsidimen and the t'skrang. The descriptions in this chapter provide basic information about each of the races populating the world of **Earthdawn**.

These descriptions contain broad generalizations. Though we may say that orks are slow-thinking but quick-tempered, you may choose to play your character differently, creating an ork who is quick-thinking and quick-tempered. Players are always free to customize their characters. When roleplaying, remember that other races, particularly gamemaster characters, may treat your character as though he or she is merely a stereotyped version of the description given here. You may even be able to take advantage of their misconceptions.

Also included in this chapter are some suggestions for roleplaying each race. Players are encouraged to use this information as a guide to enhance, not limit, game play.

More detailed information on each race can be found in the **Name-giver's Compendium**.

KINSHIP BETWEEN THE RACES

The elves possess fragmentary records claiming that dwarfs, elves, humans, orks, and trolls are profoundly similar members of a single, as-yet-unnamed species. Most scholars no longer accept this opinion as valid. Theran scholars, especially those in the school of Darok Thanalea, believe that the current high level of magic increases the differences between the races.

The libraries in the ancient realm of Landis tell us that all Name-givers were born of magic acting upon the human bloodline.

—Kallarian of Jerris

King Varulus was a wise ruler. Young Neden seems a bit hasty in his policies. We need to trade with everyone in Barsaive, that much is true. But just because I trade with the t'skrang doesn't mean I want one of their damned lizard tongues in my cask of ale.

—Counselor Holliz of Throal

DWARFS

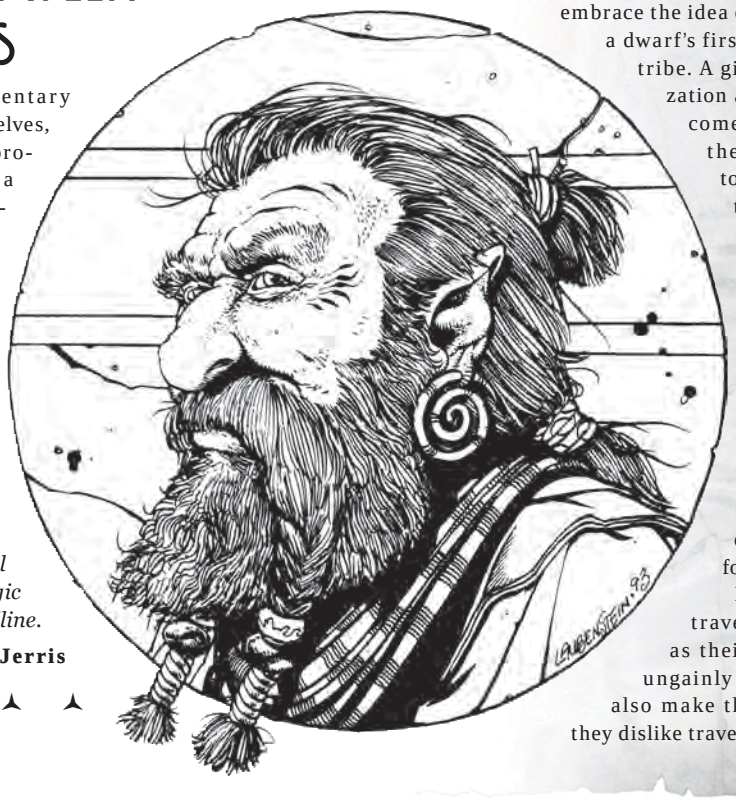
Dwarfs are of stocky build, with an average height of 4 feet and weight of 120 pounds. Their skin tone ranges from pinkish white to dark ebony. Some reports seem to indicate possible other skin colorations, but these variations are more likely the result of ritual tattoos begun during the time dwarf groups began to seal themselves off from the Horrors.

Dwarf hair grows in abundance, particularly the hair on their heads. Dwarfs are broad-chested, tough, and strong for their size. They are slow runners, as their legs are disproportionately short for even their squat bodies. Dwarf ears usually come to a gentle point on the tip, though less pronounced than elven ears. Dwarfs reach physical maturity some time after 10 years of life, and their lifespan averages 100 years.

Dwarfs organize themselves into families, tribes, and nations. Though their social instincts comfortably embrace the idea of kingdoms and nations, a dwarf's first loyalty is to family and tribe. A gift for large-scale organization and unshakable loyalties come naturally to dwarfs, as they are aggressive, quick to latch onto a single solution, and quite stubborn. Even other dwarfs admit that members of their race often seem curt and lacking in social graces.

Dwarfs prefer to live underground or as close to the earth as possible. While not adverse to travel and life above ground, they often develop a "home sickness" for subterranean life.

Dwarfs generally dislike traveling on riding animals, as their short legs make them ungainly riders. Their short legs also make them poor swimmers, so they dislike traveling over open water.



Roleplaying Hints

The three aspects central to dwarf characters are the dwarfs' view of themselves as builders, their sense of loyalty, and their connection with the earth.

Dwarfs love to build, and they take immense pride in their ability to construct anything from a house to a poem to a system of government. They particularly love to work with their hands and are taught at least one craft from a very early age, becoming extraordinary craftsmen by the time they reach adulthood. Virtually all dwarfs, whether craftsmen or not, own tools of some kind. As a natural extension of a dwarf's love of building, a dwarf craftsman values his tools very highly.

Adepts count as their tools not only the appropriate artisan tools, but also their weapons, armor, and adventuring equipment, taking as good care of them as of chisels, quills, and needles. A player might decide that his character exhibits this trait as a personality quirk; perhaps the character cleans his tools every day without exception, pursuing that task as devoutly as his Karma ritual. Such a roleplaying quirk might have interesting consequences for adventurers exploring a ruined kaer or citadel. Another way of expressing this trait might be to have a craftsman character be extremely sensitive about his tools. Perhaps he becomes agitated whenever someone else touches them or asks to use them; he may even go so far as to treat his tools better than his traveling companions!

Loyalty is another trait that influences almost every aspect of a dwarf's life. Depending on where a dwarf hails from, he may feel intense loyalty to family, tribe, nation, and/or kingdom. A dwarf born and raised in a village in the hinterlands may feel no loyalty to a kingdom such as Throal, but he will owe strong allegiance to his family and perhaps to his tribe. A dwarf from Throal might show as much loyalty to that kingdom as to his family. In general, dwarfs feel less strongly about tribal and national loyalties since the Scourge, but those loyalties still may show up as bouts of good-natured rivalry between dwarfs of different tribal or national backgrounds. Determining where a dwarf character's loyalties lie can serve as an excellent roleplaying hook, particularly when attempting to resolve ethical dilemmas.

Players should give careful consideration to a dwarf character's family, as it is to family that dwarfs owe their primary loyalty. Is the character married? Is he a parent or grandparent? Is the character the eldest, youngest, or a middle child? If forced to choose between supporting two family members, whom will the character choose, and why? Every dwarf character must also deal with the common belief among other Name-givers that all dwarfs feel loyal to Throal. Many dwarfs loudly and frequently oppose the doings of the dwarf kingdom; some see Throal's actions as harmful and feel more loyalty to the province as a whole than to the Throalic government. Because other characters automatically will perceive a dwarf character as loyal to Throal, the player should decide what his character actually thinks and feels about that kingdom.

A dwarf's affinity for and connection to the earth also presents interesting possibilities for roleplaying. Most dwarfs prefer to live beneath the earth, or at least on it. Few consent to live in a set of rooms above the ground floor of a building, for example, even temporarily. Many dwarf travelers insist on ground-level accommodations wherever they stay, willingly paying extra for such a room if necessary.

On the same general principle, dwarfs prefer walking to riding horses or mules because riding separates him from the earth. This preference for walking may slow down a dwarf's traveling companions unless they can reach some compromise. Many dwarfs will ride in a cart or wagon of dwarf craftsmanship and will gladly pay to hire one; airship travel makes a dwarf somewhat uncomfortable, but he can deal with not being able to touch the earth as long as he can see it. Most dwarfs refuse point blank to travel over large bodies of open water because such a journey takes them out of sight of the earth as well as out of touch with it.

The sheer numbers of dwarfs living in Barsaive and the pervasiveness of their language also should affect the players' roleplaying. Because dwarfs are more populous than any other race in Barsaive, player characters should expect to find dwarfs living in almost every corner of the province. The number of dwarfs in Barsaive allowed them to develop a larger, more complex society than any other race; that, and the elevation of their Throalic language to the province's common tongue, prompts most dwarfs to consider their race as the "elder sibling" of the other races. This attitude also may serve as a broad hook on which to hang a character trait; the big-brother routine can come across as particularly grating or condescending, among other things.

Players can use the pervasiveness of the dwarf language in a number of ways. A dwarf will be able to communicate with the local folk in his own native language almost everywhere he travels because virtually everyone in Barsaive speaks Throalic, and most know it better than they do their own racial language. Even in the few racially pure areas that use a different primary language, the inhabitants know Throalic well enough to understand it. In many circumstances, this easy communication can make traveling across Barsaive less hazardous, though using Throalic in lands occupied by the Theran Empire can buy a dwarf character considerable trouble. The wide-spread use of Throalic leads some dwarfs to become complacent about learning other languages; these few never bother to learn any other tongue.

Common Disciplines

Dwarfs most often follow those Disciplines focused on study or building, two activities they value highly. This includes the magician Disciplines and the Weaponsmith Discipline. Many dwarf adepts also follow the Discipline of the Warrior. Somewhat fewer dwarfs follow such specialized Disciplines as the Archer, Beastmaster, Swordmaster, Thief, and Troubadour.

Few dwarfs follow Disciplines that take them away from contact with the earth, such as the Air Sailor, Cavalryman, and Sky Raider Disciplines.

Our great Queen's bright, terrible beauty shines like a beacon. Her whole court reflects that beauty, and reflects the choices made by the elves of Blood Wood. I think we must soon choose again, this time for ourselves. I think we should choose a different path.

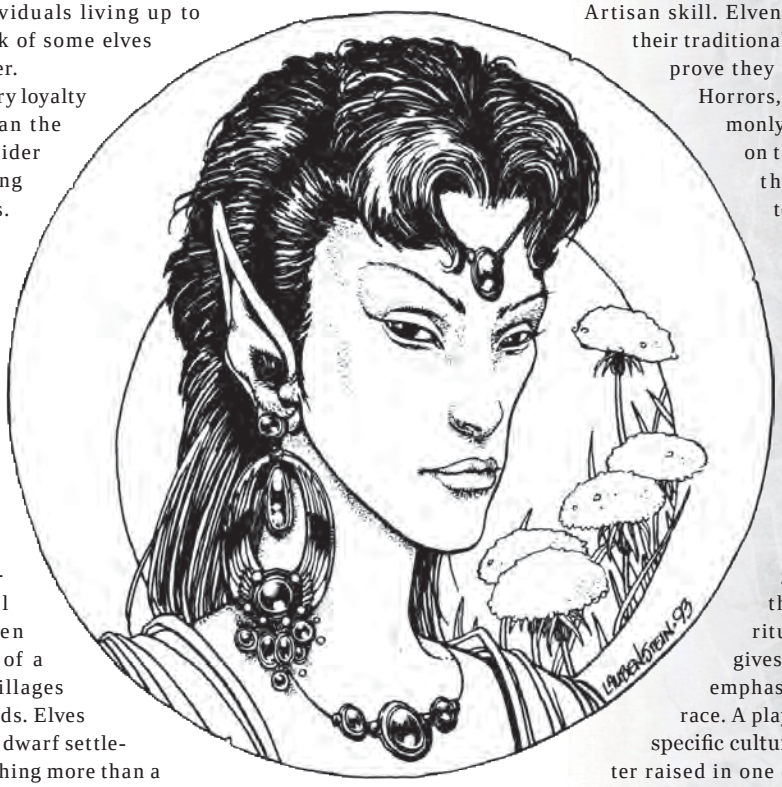
—Elven Elementalist Furnithann in a letter to his friend, the Nethermancer Mestoph

Elves

Elves grow to an average height of 6 feet 3 inches, and weigh an average 150 pounds. Elven facial features appear completely symmetrical, often flawless, and many of the other races of Barsaive find elves attractive. Elven skin color varies wildly by tribe and region, but the most common are pure white, pink, tan, brown, and midnight black. Elves with skin of a pale green or iridescent, pearly color called *cetharel* exist, but remain rare. Elves produce sparse body hair, but grow luxuriant facial and head hair, often in uncommon colors. In addition to white, blond, brown, and black, naturally occurring violet, blue, and even metallic colors have been seen.

Elves have elongated, sharply pointed ears and move with unmatched grace, but the slight build that makes that gracefulness possible also makes them vulnerable to injury. They have long legs for their height. Elves reach physical maturity in their twenties, and enjoy a natural life span of 300 years. Some records show individuals living up to 400 years. Legends speak of some elves rumored to live even longer.

Elves give their primary loyalty to their family, rather than the tribe or nation, and consider blood ties the most binding relationship of their lives. Before the Scourge, most elves in Barsaive felt some loyalty toward the Court at Wyrm Wood, which stood as the center of elf culture. Since the Scourge, and the corruption of Wyrm Wood, this loyalty has generally been replaced by a sorrow for what has been lost.



Elves prefer to establish and live in small communities, and elven cities generally consist of a loose confederation of villages grouped into neighborhoods. Elves may also live in human or dwarf settlements, but rarely feel anything more than a congenial friendship for such a settlement.

Elves prefer living in wilderness areas. They construct dwellings and other structures from living plants, integrating their community with the surrounding natural world. They find underground settings uncomfortable, and may experience a kind of claustrophobia in human or dwarf settlements if unable to visit a wilderness area two or three times a year.

Many elves follow a spiritual way called *Draesis ti'Morel*, or the Wheel of Life. The Wheel is made up of five paths: the Path of Warriors, the Path of Scholars, the Path of Travelers, the Path of Sages, and the Path of Lords. Each path is traditionally associated with certain Disciplines, as well as other ritual symbols such as colors and elements.

Elves with a more traditional mindset are called *Sa'mistishsa*, or "strict followers," and strive to adhere to the ancient traditional associations of each Path. Other elves are *Dae'mistishsa*, or "free followers," and view the Paths as metaphors that represent the different stages of life's road.

Roleplaying Hints

More than other races, the elven people attempt to live their lives in such a way that they integrate all aspects of their culture and personalities into a seamless whole. Players creating elf characters should consider how to combine the racially specific aspects of their character, like pride in their culture and sorrow for Blood Wood, with all other elements of the character's life.

For most elves, the most basic part of their being lies in their connection to nature and the world around them. The elven people consider themselves defenders of nature; its destruction always destroys a bit of the elven people, too. Elves design all their rituals to preserve harmony with nature, try to capture nature's beauty in art and craftsmanship, and keep alive those traditions that honor and revere nature.

Artistic endeavor offers the elves a way to express their love for and reliance upon nature. All elves learn many different forms of artistic expression beginning soon after they are born, and most continue to practice at least one art form throughout their lives. Many elven adepts choose a racial art form as their Artisan skill. Elven Troubadours often hone their traditional music and dance skills to prove they remain untouched by the Horrors, and elven magicians commonly embellish the embroidery on their robes with the unique threads created by elven textilers.

Traditions inspire every part of elven life, and the traditions of his culture are an integral part of an elf's upbringing. Beyond the traditions they maintain through their rituals of nature, and more than the traditional art forms, cultural traditions guide and influence elves throughout their lives. The rituals and customs a player gives his elf character can help emphasize this aspect of the elven race. A player might choose to create specific cultural traditions for a character raised in one of the elven communities that lie deep within the forests of Barsaive or may adapt a forest tradition for an elf family that has lived in a city for generations.

While elves cannot be characterized as humble, openly demonstrating their pride in their ancient traditions, they tend to keep any feelings of superiority over other Name-giver races to themselves; it becomes a more subtle aspect of their personality. The elven population of Barsaive must also constantly struggle with the knowledge of the existence of the blood elves.

Rather than regarding elves with awe, the other Name-giver races often look down on all elves as corrupt because of the choices made by the blood elves. Because their traditions make up such a fundamental part of their personality, many non-blood elves feel a deep sense of loss at their separation from Wyrm Wood (now Blood Wood). Their lack of contact with the historical seat of their culture and government causes these elves further anxiety; the anguish they feel colors all their perceptions, affecting every part of their lives.

Common Disciplines

Elven characters most commonly follow those Disciplines they consider more refined or requiring greater focus. These Disciplines include the magician Disciplines, the Archer, Beastmaster, Scout, Swordmaster, and Troubadour.

Less popular Disciplines for this race include the Air Sailor, Thief and Warrior. Elves rarely follow the Cavalryman and Weaponsmith Disciplines.

Thera and the Kingdom of Throal. Those are the giants straddling this land. Our best strategy is to keep to ourselves, choose only if we must, and then choose Throal. Dwarf condescension is easier to shrug off than Theran shackles.

—Adviser Kaj Ther of Landis

Humans

Humans average 5 feet 7 inches in height and weigh an average of 150 pounds. They produce less body hair than most races, but more than elves. Skin tone ranges from ebony to tan and pinkish-white. Their ears are small and rounded. Humans reach physical maturity in their teens and live a natural life span of 75 years, though individuals have been known to live 100 years or longer.

Humans feel a natural loyalty to their families. Inclined to form social groups, humans easily transfer this loyalty to tribes, cities, or kingdoms, though they do not adapt to large-scale society as well as dwarfs. This reluctance to pledge allegiance to a government does not prevent them from quickly adapting dwarf advances into their own cultures.

Humans prefer to live in roofed dwellings, clustered with others of their kind. They have adopted the dwarf invention of the city, though many human cities spring up in too haphazard a fashion for dwarf tastes. Most humans find elven communities unsettling.

Humans display a wider variety of cultural practices than any other race in Barsaive. As a result, few generalizations about human culture can be made.

Roleplaying Hints

The keys to a human character are adaptability and versatility. As much as any other trait, these two represent what it means to be human in Barsaive. Humans are the most ordinary race of all the Name-givers of Barsaive, and while other races think of this as a disadvantage, most humans consider it their greatest advantage.

Freed from the necessity of devoting constant effort to reminding other races of how special they are, humans have a way of thinking and acting that allows them to readily adapt to a variety of environments and situations and they feel no need to conform to or deny a stereotype. Their flexibility allows humans to be the only race among the Name-givers able to follow the majority of Disciplines.

Their ability and willingness to restrain their racial pride makes humans very good at negotiation, especially when dealing with more than one other race. Their unique viewpoint of the world helps them see the larger picture and gives them a wider perspective.

Common Disciplines

In accordance with their world view of adaptability and versatility, human characters follow the majority of Disciplines available in **Earthdawn** with equal frequency. Humans do not choose to follow certain Disciplines more often than any others. Human characters do tend to use the Versatility talent to learn talents from other Disciplines, and learn multiple Disciplines more often than other Name-giver races.

Listen to the rocks of the earth. Those around you want to hurry, for they listen to the waters of their blood and the fire of their hearts. You are hewn from living rock. Listen to the rocks of the earth. The call of those around you is the call of the volcano. The fire of other hearts burns hot enough to melt your world around you. Listen to the rocks of the earth.

—Saying from *The Liferock*, Dwarf translation

Obsidimen

Obsidimen are tall, reaching an average height of 7 feet 3 inches. Seen from a distance they seem squat, because their massive average weight of 900 pounds offsets their height. Their craggy skin and bodily tissue incorporate the properties of stone, and the most common coloration is black or gray. Their blood is blue-gray. The skin of a few obsidimen shows veins of semi-precious stone, such as tourmaline. Obsidimen are mostly hairless and have internal ears completely covered by a thin layer of skin.

Obsidimen do not have a gender, nor do they reproduce as other races. They are 'born' by emerging from a Liferock, a large stone formation imbued with a spirit of elemental power. Obsidimen feel loyalty to their Liferock, and their Brotherhood–the other obsidimen connected with his Liferock. These loyalties only loosely resemble human or ork loyalties to a tribe. Obsidimen do not form villages or cities, though they may erect ceremonial structures on or near their Liferock.

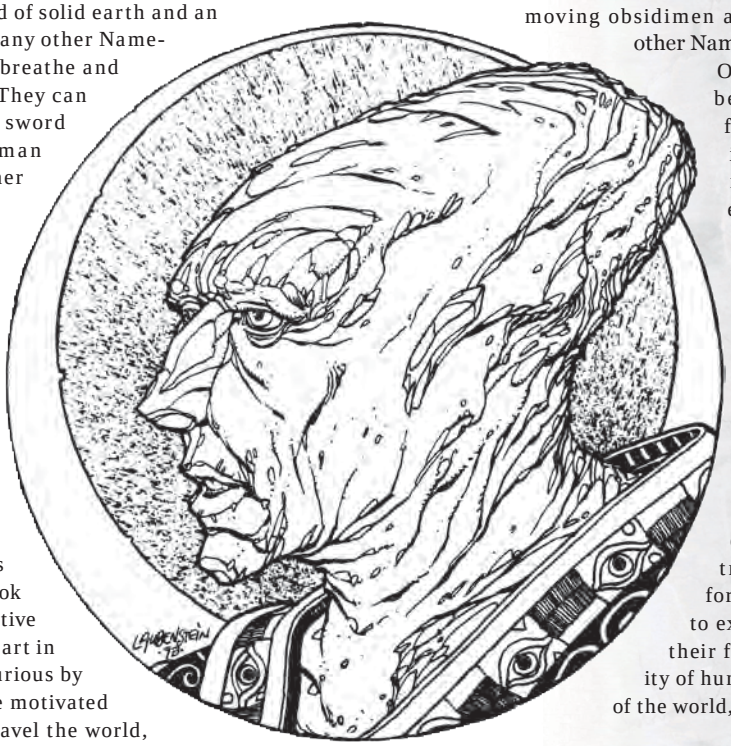
Obsidimen mature over the first century of their life, which they spend attached to their Liferock. During this time, the obsidiman communes with the elemental spirit of his Liferock and the other obsidimen attached to it in a state called the Dreaming. After this learning period, they are given their Name, and are free to travel the land as they wish.

Obsidimen will return to their Liferock from time to time to share their experiences with their brotherhood. As they age, obsidimen spend more and more time attached to their Liferock; they may spend decades showing no sign of being aware of their surroundings, then emerge again in a time of crisis.

The average obsidiman has a lifespan of approximately 900 years, but many of an obsidiman's later centuries will be spent attached to his Liferock.

Roleplaying Hints

Because the nature and ways of obsidimen are most alien to human experience, even the most advanced roleplayers will likely find portraying a 7 foot tall, 900 pound, stone-like being a challenge. Though often called "rock-men," obsidimen actually are formed of a unique blend of solid earth and an elemental earth spirit. Like any other Name-giver race, they need air to breathe and food and drink to survive. They can be wounded, even killed; a sword slash will make an obsidiman bleed as readily as any other type of character.



While a part of every obsidiman comes from astral space, they have no more insight into the workings of the astral plane than any other Name-giver race in Barsaive. Their dual nature as beings part physical and part spirit is simply what they are. At best, the elemental component of an obsidiman's being inclines him toward a spiritual outlook on life, giving him an instinctive understanding of his small part in the universe around him. Curious by nature, many obsidimen are motivated by this self-knowledge to travel the world, seeking knowledge of all its aspects in order to better understand their role in the universe.

Though other Name-givers commonly refer to obsidimen as "he," this race has no gender in the human sense of the term. Obsidiman adventurers, who spend considerable time with other Name-givers, often adopt behaviors common to men or women of other races to make their companions more comfortable, but each obsidiman character chooses to be "male" or "female." Players who wish to roleplay female obsidimen, therefore, may do so.

An obsidiman's Liferock and his Brotherhood represent to him what loved ones and friends are to humans. The Liferock serves as an obsidiman character's "parents," and his Brotherhood as his family. An obsidiman will react to any threat or affront to either with fierce, often violent, anger. Though even tempered and level-headed in most instances, an obsidiman roused to anger or action stands among the fiercest of Name-givers, easily rivaling orks and trolls.

Obsidimen rarely react angrily to personal insults; few obsidimen care to waste the time and energy required for anger on the fleeting sting of an insignificant word. Any insult aimed at the Brotherhood or Liferock, however, denigrates all that an obsidiman loves most, and so no obsidiman will let such a taunt pass. Some obsidimen take such insults as affronts against the earth itself, which further fuels their outrage.

Because an obsidiman is part and parcel of the earth, his connection to nature is stronger than that of other Name-giver races. Obsidimen rarely take any natural phenomenon for granted, but appreciate them all as wonders. They take great joy in the sight and smell of a flower bed coming into bloom, the music of a wildly rushing river or waterfall, or the violent beauty of a raging thunderstorm. Obsidimen particularly love trees; trees are made of wood and an elemental wood spirit, and obsidimen therefore regard them as brothers. Any defilement of nature rouses obsidimen to anger as fierce as if their Liferock had been harmed.

Obsidimen feel intense curiosity about the behaviors of the other Name-giver races, whom they fondly refer to as energy-wasters. Because obsidimen live for 900 years, they perceive time differently than those with shorter life spans, and so they do not understand the pace at which other races live. They find particularly puzzling the urgency with which other races often insist on performing tasks; when told that a certain thing must be done quickly, obsidimen wonder why the task could not wait until the next day or even later. When necessary, however, the slow-moving obsidimen act with an immediacy that other Name-givers find impressive.

Obsidimen also find other behaviors common to their fellow Name-giver races incomprehensible but fascinating, including the intense emotionalism of t'skrang and windlings, the "unbalancing" aggression common to orks and trolls, the dwarfs' insistence on tinkering with everything in their path, and the fear of death among most races. Obsidimen also admire many of the other races' beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors: the love of nature felt by elves and windlings, the trolls' and dwarfs' affinity for the earth, the orks' desire to experience all possibilities to their fullest, the dazzling versatility of humans who can learn so much of the world, and so on.

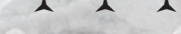
Common Disciplines

Obsidimen follow the fewest Disciplines of any Name-giver race because the requirements of many Disciplines run counter to an obsidiman's physical and emotional nature. Obsidimen most often follow those Disciplines that require a love of learning and a strong connection with the earth. Most obsidimen adepts follow the Elementalist, Wizard, or Warrior Disciplines.

Many also follow the Illusionist, Nethermancer, Troubadour, and Weaponsmith Disciplines.

Dwarfs pay well, but I don't like their attitude. Of course, I don't like most peoples' attitudes.

—Kraeg Yelloweye, ork Cavalryman in service to the Kingdom of Throal



Orks

Orks have a powerful build, averaging 6 feet 3 inches in height and 225 pounds in weight. Large lower canines protrude over their upper lip and their body hair has a coarse texture, almost always colored black or gray. Some orks appear nearly hairless, and head hair usually grows in sparsely but with the thickness of fine wire. Common skin colors include olive green, beige, pinkish-white, tan, and ebony. Their ears are pointed, and about a quarter of the population show elongated ears. Natural life span for an ork averages 40 years, though some live 60 years or more. Orks reach their physical maturity in their early teens.

Orks recognize only a loose concept of family, giving greatest loyalty to their tribe. Social organization within the tribe varies considerably, as orks often adopt social structures of the other

races with whom they interact. Isolated tribes usually contain only two authority figures, however, the war chief and the shaman. Most ork tribes live in tents as nomads, but will willingly inhabit any kind of dwelling.

Roleplaying Hints

Of the Name-giver races, orks fell first to enslavement by their fellow Name-givers in Barsaive as well as by the Therans. Although the orks became a free people centuries ago, their ancestors' slavery left its mark on the race. In general, orks are extremely sensitive to any suggestion that other Name-givers regard them as less than equals. Though most Name-givers no longer regard orks as lesser beings, the few who still do justify (at least in an orks mind) the race's view of itself as the perennial subject of racist bigotry.

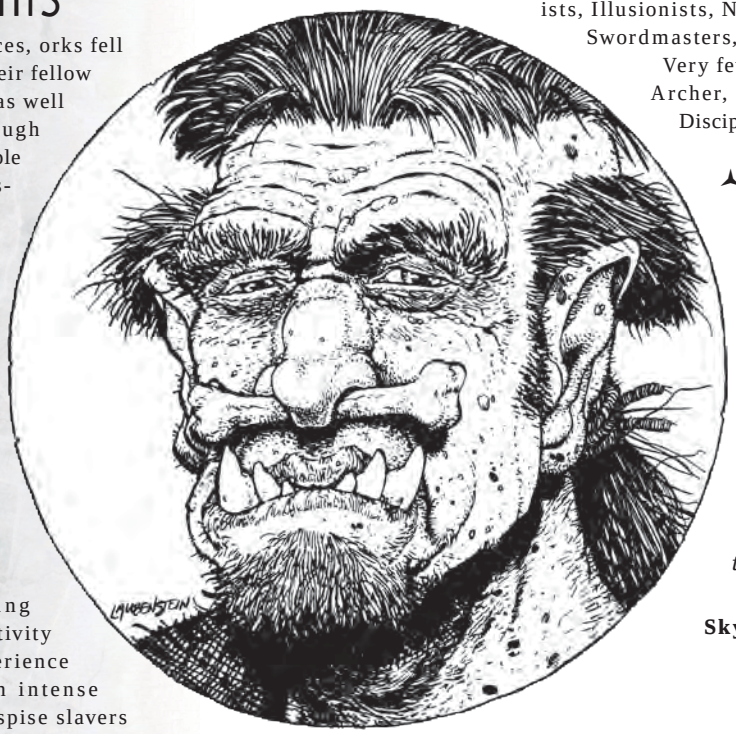
In addition to giving them a hair-trigger sensitivity to slights, the orks' experience of slavery gave them an intense love of freedom. They despise slavers as they despise few things, and many orks spit by reflex at any mention, however oblique, of the Theran Empire. The orks' history of enslavement combined with their relatively short lifespan prompts this race to value and embrace what they call "seizing life and shaking it" in an effort to experience fully every possibility allotted to a single lifetime. An ork who attempts a new experience or skill and fails dusts himself off and tries again. And again. And again, until he either succeeds or dies. For an ork, to die with some task left undone or some potential left unfulfilled is the only real failure.

A player creating an ork character must account for the racial peculiarity known as *gahad*. A physical sensation similar to intense heartburn, *gahad* is a feeling all orks experience in response to certain, specific stimuli. When *gahad* occurs, the ork must act on his immediate impulse or else face the misery of a *gahad* hangover. Each ork has different specific impulses that trigger *gahad*, but all orks suffer at least two stimuli that trigger *gahad* and two that never trigger any response. For example, an ork may suffer *gahad* whenever he hears any negative comment about himself or his family, but easily shrug off even the vilest insult to the ork race.

Common Disciplines

Orks tend to follow Disciplines that allow them to seize life and live each moment to the fullest. Most ork adepts follow the Beastmaster, Cavalryman, Scout, Thief, and Warrior Disciplines. Somewhat fewer orks become Elementalists, Illusionists, Nethermancers, Sky Raiders, Swordmasters, and Troubadours.

Very few orks follow the Air Sailor, Archer, Weaponsmith, and Wizard Disciplines.



Take no back talk from anyone, not even an obsidiman. Stand for your word and make them stand for theirs. I generally make an exception for windlings. They fly like blazes, and their tongues move just as fast. Open confrontation just encourages them. It is best to wait until they sleep, then pop their puny heads off.

—Larus Baldurion, Sky Raider Captain, making his traditional speech to a new crew

Trolls

The average troll height is 8 feet 6 inches, and average weight is 500 pounds or more. Skin colors range from olive to mahogany-brown. Troll skin has a rough texture, increased by the ridges, spines, or plating resulting from deposits of *trolthelia*, a substance similar to the material that forms rhinoceros horn. Body hair is sparse except on the chest, and head hair grows considerably thicker and longer than human hair. Lower canines protrude from the mouths of a slight majority of trolls. The nose is broader than the human nose.

Trolls exhibit fierce, aggressive personalities. The average natural life span is 50 years, though some trolls have lived into their seventies. Trolls reach physical maturity in their early teens.

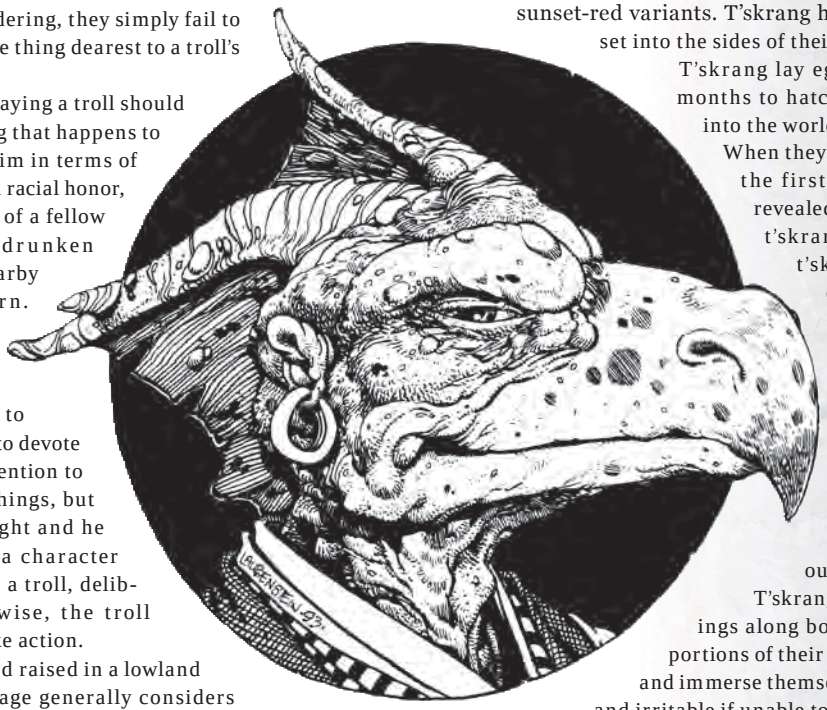
Trolls are fiercely loyal to their family or clan. Multiple clans can organize through the ritual of the trollmoot, gatherings of several clans whose leaders swear the loyalty of their clans to one another, but such unified action remains rare. Troll clans often war among themselves when other enemies are lacking. Trolls prefer to live in caves, ice caverns, or other natural geographic features. They find dwarf or elven settlements more comfortable

than human or ork communities, and have been known to camp around obsidimen connected to a Liferock. Trolls find the serenity of the obsidimen calming and deeply moving. Their regard for the obsidimen often prompts trolls to choose sites near Liferocks for trollmoots.

Troll culture places great value on honor, dividing it into three concepts: *katorr*, *kat'ral*, and *katera*. These terms can be roughly translated as personal, clan, and racial honor. Each troll defines and values these concepts in different ways, but nearly all trolls place some value on honor, and will fiercely defend it if they believe it has been slighted.

Roleplaying Hints

To characters of other races, trolls seem contradictory, contrary, confusing, and unpredictable-sometimes even psychotic. From his own point of view, however, a troll's every action and attitude results from a perfectly logical, understandable, and correct mindset. If others find his behavior volatile and bewildering, they simply fail to understand the one thing dearest to a troll's heart: honor.



A player roleplaying a troll should analyze everything that happens to him and around him in terms of personal, clan, and racial honor, from the greeting of a fellow traveler to the drunken muttering of a nearby dwarf in a tavern. Such a character may choose to not violently avenge every slur to his honor in order to devote his efforts and attention to more important things, but he hears every slight and he never forgets. If a character repeatedly insults a troll, deliberately or otherwise, the troll eventually will take action.

A troll born and raised in a lowland city, town, or village generally considers clan and racial honor less important than personal honor. A lowland troll understands and feels some sense of clan and racial honor, but only personal honor retains its highest value. For highland trolls, particularly Sky Raiders, all three aspects of honor carry equal and overwhelming importance. These characters may even take offence on the grounds of all three at the same time.

Players with troll characters should also take into account that almost everything in the world outside of a lowlander's own home or a highlander's own clan is built for smaller and lighter people. On his home ground or in combat, a troll can be graceful and lithe despite his height and bulk; in the average lowland tavern or shop, he seems to be the clumsiest oaf in Barsaive. The difficulties of coping with size offer endless possibilities for players interested in roleplaying a little slapstick to lighten things up.

Common Disciplines

Most troll adepts choose to follow the most active, aggressive Disciplines, namely, the Sky Raider and the Warrior. Some trolls also follow such specialized Disciplines as Beastmaster, Cavalryman, Troubadour, and Weaponsmith.

Few trolls become Air Sailors, Archers, Elementalists, Illusionists, Nethermancers, or Wizards.

The name of our people? Well, my Theran friend, there are many stories that tell that tale. For the true one, you must listen very carefully to the sound inside your helmet. What? Oh, that's just my tail. Listen carefully, for the truth will soon be revealed.

—From the transcript of the trial of the t'skrang pirate Theormaz

T'skrang

T'skrang are reptilian beings with a flair for the dramatic. They average 5 feet 9 inches tall, and their tails add another 6 feet of length. T'skrang weigh an average of 200 pounds, of which nearly 40 pounds is tail. T'skrang skin color ranges from verdant green to green-yellow or green-blue, with aqua-blue and even sunset-red variants. T'skrang have cauliflower-shaped ears set into the sides of their heads.

T'skrang lay eggs, which take eight to ten months to hatch. The young t'skrang come into the world with their gender unknown. When they reach physical maturity after the first decade of life, their sex is revealed during puberty. The average t'skrang lifespan is 80 years. The t'skrang talent for tale-telling casts doubt on their claims of a 181-year-old t'skrang, particularly because careful dwarf observations place the oldest known t'skrang at a mere 115 years. T'skrang scholars blame this variance on faulty dwarf calculations, which of course the dwarfs vigorously deny.

T'skrang prefer to live in roofed dwellings along bodies of water, and submerge portions of their homes. T'skrang love to swim and immerse themselves in water, becoming sulky and irritable if unable to do so at least once a week.

T'skrang give primary loyalty to their families, called *nialls*, or foundations. The *niall* is matriarchal, led by the eldest female in the foundation, called a *lahala*. A t'skrang village usually consists of between four and twenty *nialls*, who share responsibility for the focus of village life, the riverboat. Villages will occasionally band together to form trading companies, with the largest being called *aropagoi*, or Great Houses, led by a *shivalahala*. The *aropagoi* are the closest thing to a nation the t'skrang have built for themselves.

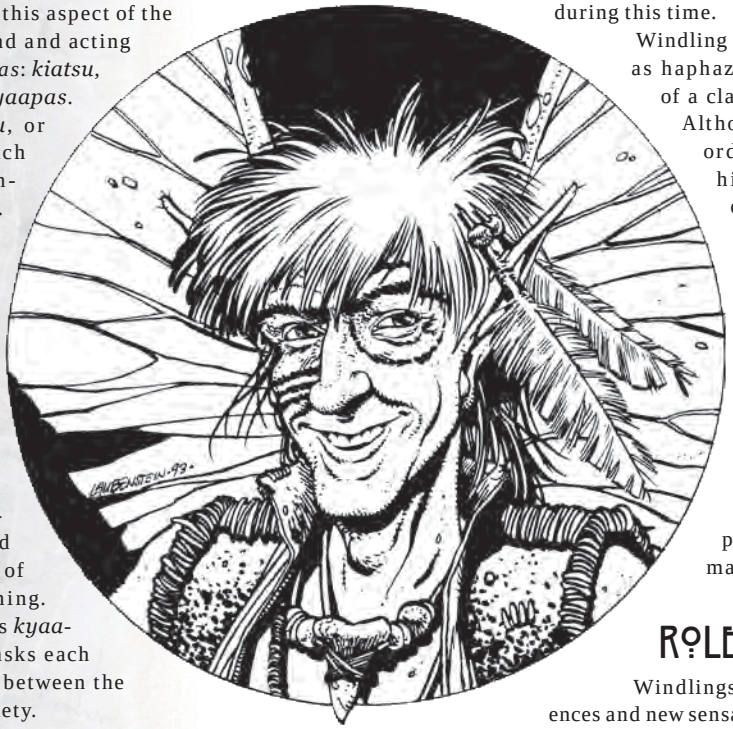
T'skrang consider members of the other Name-giver races rather dull and boring. In turn, most other Name-giver races consider t'skrang overly flamboyant and somewhat frivolous. All races agree that each holds a unique and necessary place in the society of Barsaive, and so agree to disagree.

Roleplaying Hints

Two words from their own language best describe the primary characteristics of the t'skrang: *jik'harra* and *haropas*. *Jik'harra*, or "fearlessness," is the attitude most t'skrang embrace as part of their struggle to reach the state represented by *haropas*, or "brave passion." Roleplaying *jik'harra* requires the character to face danger and peril head on, only boasting of their success afterward. Unfortunately, those who find t'skrang lifestyles and

attitudes hard to understand usually hear only the tale of the deed and never witness the t'skrang's bravery. Thus, their very real and constant search for *jik'harra* comes across as mere bravado. It is true, however, that the seriousness of the danger is less important than the act of confronting the danger.

Haropas is a state of communion with the Passions. Players can roleplay this aspect of the t'skrang by keeping in mind and acting on the four pillars of *haropas*: *kiatsu*, *jik'harra*, *p'skarrot* and *kyaapas*. The first pillar is *kiatsu*, or "ritual preparation," which requires t'skrang to confront their fears head-on. Each player may choose the fear their individual character must face. The second pillar is *jik'harra*, described above. The third pillar is *p'skarrot*, which means "measure" and "destiny." To fulfill this aspect of *haropas*, characters must take stock of themselves in comparison to the world around them, and live a life full of rich experience and learning. The last pillar of *haropas* is *kyaapas*, or "balance," which asks each t'skrang to balance his life between the demands of self and of society.



The path to fulfilling this guiding principle of the t'skrang can lead in many, unique directions, providing the opportunity for each player character t'skrang to express his racial background differently. Remember also that there is nothing wrong with creating and roleplaying a t'skrang who chooses not to strive to achieve the ideals of *haropas*.

Common Disciplines

Most t'skrang characters favor the more flamboyant or active Disciplines, often ignoring the ones they consider dull or passive. They most often follow the Disciplines of Elementalist, Illusionist, Swordmaster, and Troubadour, less frequently choosing the Disciplines of Archer, Cavalryman, Nethermancer, Warrior, and Wizard. The least popular Disciplines for t'skrang are Air Sailor, Sky Raider, Thief and Weaponsmith.

"Wheeeeeeeeeee!"

—Poorht, windling Thief, as he fled for his life after stealing the dagger of Captain Larus Baldurion, troll Sky Raider

Windlings

Windlings are small, winged creatures. They average 18 inches in height and weigh an average of 13 pounds. They fly using two double-wings, similar to a dragonfly's, made of a tough, iridescent membrane. A windling's skin color matches the brightest-colored elements of the environment in which it lives: icy white in a snow cap, the yellow and orange of meadow flowers, the glazed blue of the ceramic roof-tiles of the city of Travar. Skin coloration only changes after a windling has lived in the same place for two or three months. Then, in the space of three nights, the windling's skin changes to match its current surroundings. Windlings grow very little body hair, though their head hair can be luxurious. Their ears come to a sharper point even than elven ears. Windlings mature physically over 30 years, reaching a natural life span of 170 years. Their appearance does not age during this time.

Windling society can best be described as haphazard. Windlings often speak of a class of nobles who rule them. Although they will obey a direct order from a noble, the social hierarchy stops there. Windlings acting on orders from their queen cannot wield authority over other windlings by virtue of these orders, but may persuade other windlings to seek out the queen to determine for themselves that the orders are legitimate. Windlings are happiest when living outdoors, taking shelter under or inside whatever nature can provide and windling magic makes comfortable.

Roleplaying Hints

Windlings typically desire new experiences and new sensations above all else. They seek and gain these new experiences and sensations by living passionately and maintaining their freedom. Windlings throw their entire being into the moment. They rarely feel merely "fine," they feel "excellent!" They do not feel "refreshed," they feel "exuberant!" In all things, windlings seek to experience the extreme. Windlings embrace each day for the opportunity to expand their experience and to change and fiercely protect the freedom that allows them to do so.

Windlings are often accused of being flighty and impractical. Other Name-givers are often driven to distraction by the windling's exuberance and their seeming inability to stay focused on a single thought or course of action. What the larger races don't understand is that windlings do pay attention—it's just that they pay attention to everything at once, rather than one thing to the exclusion of others (unless that thing is trying to kill them, of course!). In part, this is due to the windling's ability to fly. A windling in flight not only has to worry about what is in front of him, but everything around him as well—above him, below him, behind him, ahead of him, and to both sides. While walking into a wall might be painful and humiliating for a dwarf, flying into a branch can be deadly for a windling. This distracted state is furthered by the windling ability to sense astral space. Their ability to discern magical patterns gives them yet another thing to pay attention to, dividing again their already thinly-stretched attention. On the other hand, this ability often allows windlings to notice things that their bigger friends miss.

Common Disciplines

Windlings prefer to follow the most active and exciting Disciplines. While any Discipline can be made to be exciting, as a rule, windlings find certain Disciplines generally dull. Windlings most commonly follow the Disciplines of Beastmaster, Elementalist, Illusionist, Scout, Swordmaster, Thief, Troubadour, and Warrior, with fewer of that race attracted toward the Disciplines of Archer, Cavalryman, and Wizard. Few windlings become Air Sailors or Weaponsmiths.

CREATING CHARACTERS

Our streets are filled with ruffians of every description. Some are worse than others, and grow to truly fearsome power. To those we give medals, in the hope that calling them heroes will make it so.

• King Varulus III of Throal •

A player character in **Earthdawn** is similar to a character in a novel or a movie. The character is part of a story, interacts with other characters, villains, and monsters, and makes decisions that affect how the story turns out. The important difference between a character in a novel and your **Earthdawn** character is that you, the player, decide how your character views life, how he conducts himself around other people, what he is particularly good at; and you control his actions.

Every **Earthdawn** character has certain basic attributes, talents, and skills, but you give that character personality, flair, and realism. Without a unique personality, your character remains a mere collection of game statistics. The personality you choose can make your character a hero of the legends of **Earthdawn**.

Every player character possesses a specific outlook, set of skills, and a connection to the magic of the world that makes him an above-average, often outstanding, member of his race and of the people who live in the world of **Earthdawn**. Player characters have an instinct for adventure, and the courage and personal integrity to follow that instinct. By behaving in an extraordinary fashion, player characters become the heroes others admire, trust, and depend on. They become the legends that will head the renaissance of their world.

BUILDING A HERO

You should now know what roleplaying in **Earthdawn** involves. You have a feel for the history of the world and its races. You've read about another group of adventurers' travels and encounters in the province of Barsaive.

Now it is time to create your own hero and find your character's place in this world. By defining the limits and potentials of a character, players can become a part of the legends of **Earthdawn**.

Creating a character follows a series of ten steps:

❶ Choose a Discipline
❷ Choose a Race
❸ Generate Attributes
❹ Determine Characteristics
❺ Record Racial Abilities
❻ Assign Talent Ranks and Spells
❼ Assign Skill Ranks
❽ Equip the Character
❾ Flesh out the Character
❿ Play the Game!

Each step is described in detail below, demonstrating the process at each stage by creating a sample character.

Once you have reached Step 10, finish filling out your Character Record Sheet. Your character now stands ready to become a hero of the world of **Earthdawn**.

GETTING STARTED

In addition to a blank Character Record Sheet and a pen or pencil, you will need another sheet of paper (useful for making notes to enter on your Character Record Sheet later) and four six-sided dice—though dice are only required for characters created using the optional Random Roll Method, detailed later in the chapter. For the most satisfactory results when creating a character, players and gamemasters should familiarize themselves with all the rules in this chapter and in the **Disciplines** (p. 57), **Talents** (p. 166), and **Skills** (p. 230) chapters.

Many decisions made when creating a character are affected by other decisions; your choice of race affects your choice of Discipline, your choice of Discipline affects the talents available to your character, and so on. It's better to have all the facts before you start, rather than be disappointed later on as the result of making uninformed choices.

CHARACTER RECORD SHEET

As you create your character, fill in the appropriate spaces on a Character Record Sheet. A reproducible copy is provided with this book, or one can be downloaded from our web site at:

http://www.earthdawn.com

You have permission to make as many personal copies of the Character Record Sheet as you need for your games. Bear in mind that the set of sheets provided is fairly flexible—you won't need all pages for a beginning character, but you might want to add additional pages as your character advances or learns additional Disciplines. For example, the Grimoire page is only used by spellcasters and the Discipline page isn't needed until your character reaches Fourth or Fifth Circle.

CHOOSE A DISCIPLINE

The first step in creating an **Earthdawn** character is to choose that character's Discipline. **This is the most important decision you will make about your character, for a Discipline is much more than a character's profession; it is a way of life.** A character's Discipline determines how he interacts with magic and how he can use magical energies to empower his talents. A Discipline colors the character's view of the world, gives him special abilities and restrictions, and defines much of what he is, in some cases even defining his race.

COMMON DISCIPLINES

The **Player's Compendium** contains complete information on the fifteen most common Disciplines found in Barsaive. These are summarized below. Choose a Discipline, and write it on the Discipline line near the top of your Character Record Sheet.

Certain races cannot follow some Disciplines, as shown in the "Racial Restrictions" notation for each Discipline, below. If you want to play a character of a particular race, you should choose a Discipline with that race in mind.

Air Sailor

Racial Restrictions: Obsidiman

Air Sailors are the swashbuckling brotherhood of the sky. Air Sailors never leave their fellows behind and embrace the idea of togetherness, working to protect and spread civilization rather than preying upon it.

Refer to **The Noble Way of the Air Sailor** (p. 65) for more information on this Discipline.

Archer

Racial Restrictions: Obsidiman

The Archer learns the art of the bow and crossbow, and by extension, all types of ranged attacks. This Discipline stresses accuracy and, to a lesser extent, speed. Most Archers show greatly enhanced perceptive powers, often noticing things that others miss.

Refer to **On The Path of the Archer** (p. 72) for more information on this Discipline.

Beastmaster

Racial Restrictions: Obsidiman, T'skrang

Beastmasters have an innate affinity for working with animals. Many Beastmasters feel uncomfortable in large cities or towns, and prefer to live in the wild, away from other people.

Refer to **Keeper of the Beasts** (p. 78) for more information on this Discipline.

Cavalryman

Racial Restrictions: Obsidiman

Members of the Cavalryman Discipline are fierce, mounted warriors. They train with their mounts and form a close empathic bond with them. In fact, a Cavalryman respects his mount more than any Name-giver, with the possible exception of other Cavalrymen. This Discipline emphasizes motion and empathy for one's mount.

Refer to **The Daring and Dauntless Cavalryman** (p. 85) for more information on this Discipline.

Elementalist

Racial Restrictions: None

An Elementalist is a spellcaster who focuses on learning about, and gaining power over, the five magical elements: air, earth, fire, water, and wood.

Refer to **The Importance of the Elementalist** (p. 92) for more information on this Discipline.

Illusionist

Racial Restrictions: None

Illusionists cast spells that work through deception. However, some Illusionist spells do have real effects; Illusionists learned long ago that if everything they did was an illusion, people quickly caught on and their magic became less effective. Now they balance real magic, illusions, trickery, and sleight of hand.

Refer to **An Illusionist Reveals the Truth** (p. 100) for more information on this Discipline.

Nethermancer

Racial Restrictions: Windling

Nethermancers are spellcasters who specialize in the magic of the netherworlds. Their interests focus on other planes, and the spirits and creatures that inhabit those planes. Most people consider Nethermancers to be a little "off" in an eerie sort of way, and consequently most followers of this Discipline are unlikely to win many popularity contests.

Refer to **Walkers in Shadow** (p. 106) for more information on this Discipline.

Scout

Racial Restrictions: Obsidiman, Troll

Scouts are the vanguard, the tracker, and the brave rangers who go where others cannot. Scouts are masters of becoming one with their environment—be that the wildest primeval forest or the heart of the largest city.

Refer to **On the Way of the Scout** (p. 113) for more information on this Discipline.

Sky Raider

Racial Restrictions: Elf, Obsidiman, Windling

Sky Raiders are ruthless pirates forming a potent force in Barsaive. Their drakkars raid all over the province, most frequently targeting Therans or their vassals. Sky Raiders are proud, and show great loyalty to other Sky Raiders—unless that raider belongs to an enemy clan or moot.

Refer to **The Fierce and Honorable Way of the Sky Raider** (p. 119) for more information on this Discipline.

Swordmaster

Racial Restrictions: Obsidiman

Swordmasters are fighters who learn the value of a well-handled weapon, training to demonstrate quickness, flash and panache in a fight. Swordmasters often swagger when they walk.

Refer to **The Dance of the Swordmaster** (p. 125) for more information on this Discipline.

Thief

Racial Restrictions: Obsidiman, Troll

Thieves learn early to be self-reliant and how to steal. They draw power from their self-confidence and the knowledge that they depend only on themselves. The abundance of rumors governing Thief guilds means such groups may, in fact, exist, but the proof or disproof of their reality remains a secret.

Refer to **The Gift of Theft** (p. 132) for more information on this Discipline.

Troubadour

Racial Restrictions: None

Troubadours serve as entertainers, storytellers, actors, and songsmiths. As such, they represent the closest thing to a historian or scholar that common people usually see.

Refer to **Why the Troubadour Sings** (p. 138) for more information on this Discipline.

Warrior

Racial Restrictions: None

Warriors are fighters and soldiers trained to use magic to enhance their combat techniques. They often join other Warriors in groups called orders, living in seclusion in self-sufficient settlements similar to monastic orders.

Refer to **The Battlefield Path** (p. 145) for more information on this Discipline.

Weaponsmith

Racial Restrictions: None

A Weaponsmith trains to gain an iron will and a highly critical eye. Weaponsmiths help identify and create legendary weapons. To this end, the Discipline borrows abilities from both Elementalism and Wizardry. Nearly every community places great value on their Weaponsmiths.

Refer to **The Value of Strong Arms and Stronger Minds** (p. 152) for more information on this Discipline.

Wizard

Racial Restrictions: None

Wizards are spellcasters well-trained in the theoretical aspects of magic. Those who follow other spellcasting Disciplines sometimes disparage Wizards as being simple "book magicians," but it is interesting to note that few have the guts to call a Wizard that to his face.

Refer to **The Way of Mind and Symbol** (p. 159) for more information on this Discipline.

Circle

Next to the Discipline line on the Character Record Sheet is a notation for "Circle." **Earthdawn** measures proficiency and expertise in a given Discipline in Circles: the higher the Circle a character reaches, the more proficient (and more powerful) that character becomes. Every player character begins at First Circle—write a "1" on the Circle line of your Character Record Sheet. Some day, assuming things go the character's way, he could even reach Fifteenth Circle!

*Sebastian is ready to create his first **Earthdawn** character. While flipping through the pages of the **Player's Compendium**, he is thrilled when he sees the Elementalist Discipline description. Being fascinated by what he reads about Elementalists and Elementalism magic, Sebastian decides his first **Earthdawn** character will be a follower of this Discipline.*

Choose a Race

Once you select a Discipline, the next step is to choose your character's race. The different races populating the world of **Earthdawn** are described in the **Name-giver Races** chapter (p. 33). Keep in mind that racial restrictions prevent certain races from choosing some Disciplines. For example, if you chose the Sky Raider Discipline, your character cannot be an obsidiman. Write your racial choice on your Character Record Sheet.

A few races also have Attribute requirements (see **Record Racial Abilities**, p. 48). These requirements are most often unmodified minimum or maximum values that certain Attributes must meet in order for a character to be of that race. For example, in order for a character to be a troll, he must have Strength and Toughness values of 11 or more. Note these minimums or maximums on a sheet of paper, because this becomes important in the **Generate Attributes** step.

Playing a character with wings opens up a lot of possibilities—especially for a magician—so Sebastian chooses the windling Name-giver race for his character. The Elementalist Discipline does not have any racial restrictions against windlings to contradict this decision, so Sebastian can play a windling Elementalist.

Generate Attributes

Each character in **Earthdawn** possesses six Attributes that define the character's natural, unlearned physical and mental abilities. These Attributes—Dexterity, Strength, Toughness, Perception, Willpower, and Charisma—are of greater or lesser importance to different Disciplines. For example, a Thief needs a high Dexterity value, which makes him faster, more coordinated, and better at performing sleight-of-hand tricks and other tasks requiring fine-motor control, in order to follow his Discipline faithfully. A Nethermancer needs a high Willpower value, not only to make the effectiveness of his spells more powerful, but also to keep the spirits he summons in check.

Players can generate Attributes for their character using one of two methods. The Purchase Point Method is the recommended method and uses a purchasing system to "buy" Attribute values from a pool of points. The optional Random Roll Method creates Attribute values randomly.

Attribute Descriptions

The following descriptions also list the various Disciplines for which that Attribute is considered important. When assigning values to Attributes, you will want to favor those Attributes especially related to your character's Discipline.

Dexterity (DEX)

Dexterity measures your character's agility, speed, and hand-to-eye coordination. Dexterity affects the character's speed on foot, and determines his basic ability to engage in and avoid physical attacks.

Important For: Warrior, Air Sailor, Archer, Scout, Sky Raider, Swordmaster, Thief, Troubadour, Weaponsmith

Strength (STR)

Strength measures a character's muscle power. It determines the base damage inflicted by physical attacks and how much a character can lift and carry.

Important For: Air Sailor, Cavalryman, Sky Raider, Warrior

Toughness (TOU)

Toughness measures a character's endurance and general health. It gauges a character's ability to absorb damage and still keep going, as well as his natural ability to heal himself.

Important For: Beastmaster, Cavalryman, Sky Raider

Perception (PER)

Perception measures a character's mental quickness, alertness, and ability to notice things. Perception is important to the casting of magical spells, as well as avoiding the effects of spells.

Important For: Archer, Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, Scout, Thief, Troubadour, Weaponsmith, Wizard

Willpower (WIL)

Willpower measures a character's concentration, sense of self, and force of will. It helps characters resist illusion magic and potentially damaging spells. Willpower also increases the effectiveness of spellcasting.

Important For: Warrior, Beastmaster, Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, Weaponsmith, Wizard

Charisma (CHA)

Charisma measures a character's persuasiveness, social savvy, and ability to create a positive impression on others. Charisma determines a character's success or failure at using charm, persuasion, or other social skills.

Important For: Troubadour, Cavalryman, Swordmaster, Beastmaster

Purchase Point Method

The **Purchase Point Method** is the default Attribute generation system for **Earthdawn**. We recommend that players use this system to create their characters. Because each player has the same number of Purchase Points available to buy their character's Attributes, this system creates more balanced characters across Disciplines and races. Each player chooses how he will take advantage of identical opportunities to shape his character.

The Purchase Point Method also gives players more control

over their chosen character by allowing them to guarantee that their character has the required minimum or maximum Attribute value for a particular race. Using this system, each player receives 66 Purchase Points with which to purchase his character's Attributes. The Purchase Point cost for each Attribute value appears in the Attribute Cost Table.

ATTRIBUTE COST TABLE

Attribute Value	Purchase Point Cost
2	+3
3	+2
4	+1
5	0
6	1
7	2
8	3
9	4
10	5
11	6
12	8
13	10
14	13
15	16
16	19
17	21
18	23

You cannot purchase Attribute values lower than 2 or higher than 18 using the Purchase Point Method. Certain races have minimum or maximum Attribute value requirements that must be adhered to (see **Racial Modifiers**, below). Modifications to Attribute values for race may take them higher than 18 or lower than 2. **Regardless of modifiers, no Attribute value starts play lower than 1.**

Consult the Racial Attribute Modifiers Table for this information (see **Modify Attribute Values for Race**, below), or refer to your notes from the **Choose a Race** step earlier.

Generating Attributes using the Purchase Point Method requires a certain degree of strategy. For example, by choosing a very low value for one Attribute, you gain additional Purchase Points that can be applied to other Attributes. As the Attribute Cost Table shows, assigning a value of 2 to an Attribute gives you 3 extra Purchase Points to assign to other Attributes. Attribute values higher than 5 must be paid for at the Purchase Point Cost given in the Attribute Cost Table.

Racial Modifiers

Racial modifiers may also affect the value you assign to your character's Attributes. Note the racial modifiers for your character's race as you assign Attribute values. For example, a troll character adds +4 to his Strength value, allowing a player to assign a lower value to Strength and still end up with a satisfactory character, while freeing up Purchase Points for other Attributes. Note that trolls have to abide by their racial abilities, two of which require them to have minimum Strength and Toughness values of 11. This means that a player will always be required to spend at least 12 Purchase Points on these two Attributes (although, with racial modifiers they will always end up being higher than 11). Trolls also subtract –1 from their Charisma value. A player might decide to use the extra points to purchase an extra Attribute value or two to offset this modifier.

Write the unmodified Attribute values lightly in pencil on your Character Record Sheet, or record them on a separate sheet of paper. Consult the Racial Attribute Modifiers Table to determine the modifiers applied to each Attribute value for race (see **Modify Attribute Values for Race**, p. 45).

Unused Purchase Points

Sometimes, no matter how you try to work the numbers, you will have Purchase Points left over after purchasing your character's Attribute values. Any unused Purchase Points convert into additional Starting Karma Points at a one-to-one ratio. See **Karma**, p. 47, for more information.

Sebastian's gamemaster has asked his players to generate their characters' Attributes using the standard Purchase Point Method. Sebastian has already noted that

Random Roll Method

Optional Rule: This second (and optional) method of generating Attributes uses a random system that often creates more unpredictable characters with less evenly balanced Attributes (from a group standpoint), but that can result in more powerful characters. The **Random Roll Method** has two main advantages: it is quicker, and the character can end up with higher total Attribute values than are possible using the Purchase Point Method. For example, by using random dice rolls, a character could conceivably have a value of 15 or higher for all six Attributes.

The Attribute Cost Table shows that a character could not purchase Attribute values at that same level with the number of Purchase Points normally allowed. The Random Roll Method's biggest disadvantage is that a player creating a character this way has far less control over what values he can assign to Attributes, and the character may emerge somewhat unbalanced.

Players randomly generate Attribute values by rolling six-sided dice. These dice rolls are not Action dice, so you do not gain Bonus die rolls on a result of 6. Roll 4D6, discarding the lowest die roll result, and add the three remaining dice rolls to get a result from 3 to 18. Repeat this process a total of six times and note the results on a separate sheet of paper.

Once you have generated six Attribute values, assign them in any order to the Attributes: Dexterity, Strength, Toughness, Perception, Willpower, and Charisma. Check the racial minimums or maximums for your character's race (see **Modify Attribute Values for Race**, p. 45). If one of your character's Attributes requires a racial minimum, you *must* assign it a randomly generated Attribute value at least equal to the required racial minimum. If you did not generate a number high enough to meet the racial minimum, use the value closest to the racial minimum and adjust it to equal the minimum. For example, if you wanted to play a troll character and generated no numbers equal to or exceeding 11 (the troll racial minimum for Strength and Toughness), you would assign the two highest numbers rolled to the character's Strength and Toughness as a value of 11.

The decision to use the Random Roll Method should be one that the gamemaster applies to every player in the group. It is not recommended that some players use the Random Roll Method, while others the Purchase Point Method.

Sebastian asks his gamemaster if he can use the Random Roll Method. He is curious to see how his character's Attributes would have come out using this method. Rolling 4D6 six times, dropping the lowest die roll for each, then totaling the results, Sebastian rolls: 17, 15, 14, 13, 11, and 6. Sebastian assigns the high values of 15 and 17 to his windling's Perception and Willpower, giving him a modified value of 16 for Perception and 17 for Willpower. Sebastian assigns a 14 to Dexterity and an 11 to Toughness, for a modified Dexterity of 16 and a modified Toughness of 8. So far, so good, but there are still two values left to assign, one of them where his luck appears to have left him—a 13 and a 6. Sebastian decides that his windling's Charisma is more important to him than Strength—as an Elementalist, he will need to deal with elemental spirits sooner or later. Assigning the 13 to his Charisma gives him a modified value of 15. Assigning the 6 that is left to Strength gives him a modified value of 2—next to nothing! When compared to the Purchase Point Method, his character would have come out a bit better on most Attributes, except for Strength. Calculating his rolls with the equivalent number of Purchase Points works out to be 67 points.

a windling has a maximum unmodified Strength value of 11, and that Perception and Willpower are the important Attributes for an Elementalist. He decides to provide his windling with high Perception and Willpower values, and checks the Racial Attribute Modifiers Table to see how those modifiers will affect these Attribute values. A windling adds +1 to Perception while Willpower remains unmodified. He assigns 15 to his Perception and 16 to Willpower, so that both Attributes will have modified values of 16. Sebastian has spent 35 of his 66 Purchase Points.

Now Sebastian wants his windling to have average values on the remaining Attributes. He calculates that he cannot afford that with his remaining 31 Purchase Points and chooses to have a low Strength value. His character is a flying magician—hopefully he won't need to make regular use of that Attribute. For 3 Purchase Points, he assigns Strength a value of 8—subtracting the –4 windling racial modifier—for a final value of 4. Sebastian assigns a value of 13 to Dexterity and 10 to Toughness at a cost of 15 Purchase Points. Both of these will be modified, for final values of 14 for Dexterity and 7 for Toughness. He has spent 53 Purchase Points so far, so he purchases a Charisma of 14 with the remaining 13 points. As a windling, he adds +2 to Charisma, ending up with an above-average Charisma of 16.

The windling Elementalist is a good magician with a thick hide. Even for a windling, he is weak, which suggests he might perhaps be a little overweight. Sebastian decides that his windling is somewhat sluggish when it comes to physical work, making others do it for him when he can.

Modify Attribute Values for Race

After you have generated your character's Attributes, apply the modifiers shown in the Racial Attribute Modifiers Table to your character's Attribute values. **Regardless of modifiers, no**

RACIAL ATTRIBUTE MODIFIERS TABLE

Race	DEX	STR	TOU	PER	WIL	CHA
Dwarf	+0	+2	+3	+0	+0	–2
Elf	+2	+0	–2	+1	+1	+1
Human	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0
Obsidiman	–2	+6*	+4*	–1	+0	–1
Ork	+0	+3	+1	+0	–2	–1
Troll	+0	+4*	+2*	–1	+1	+0
T'skrang	+1	+0	+1	+0	+0	+1
Windling	+1	–4*	–3	+1	+0	+2

* Attribute has minimum/maximum value (see **Racial Abilities**, p. 48)

Attribute value starts play lower than 1. The resulting modified values represent your character's starting Attribute values. Record them on your Character Record Sheet.

Note that some races have **Racial Abilities** (see p. 48) require them to have a Minimum or Maximum Attribute value (see **Maximum Strength**, **Minimum Strength**, and **Minimum Toughness**, p. 50). These values should be considered when allocating values to the Attributes affected.

Since Sebastian is using the Purchase Point Method, he records the following Attribute values on a piece of paper: Dexterity 13, Strength 8, Toughness 10, Perception 15, Willpower 16, and Charisma 14. Checking the Racial Modifiers Table for windlings, he makes the necessary adjustments and writes the final modified Attribute values in the appropriate spaces on his Character Record Sheet: Dexterity 14, Strength 4, Toughness 7, Perception 16, Willpower 16, and Charisma 16.

Record Step Numbers and Action Dice

After modifying your character's Attributes for race, use the Step Number/Action Dice Table (see the **Game Concepts** chapter, p. 17) to determine your character's Attribute steps and Action dice. Record the step number and Action dice beside each Attribute on your Character Record Sheet.

Sebastian notes the following Attribute steps and Action dice on his windling's Character Record Sheet, after first consulting the Characteristics Table (the value in parentheses is the character's Attribute value):

Dexterity (14): 6/D10
Strength (4): 3/D4
Toughness (7): 4/D6
Perception (16): 7/D12
Willpower (16): 7/D12
Charisma (16): 7/D12

Determine Characteristics

A character's Attribute values determine his **characteristics**, the abilities that allow him to accomplish things in the game. These values determine how well the character defends against various kinds of attacks, how much damage he can take before falling unconscious or dying, how far he can move each round, how much he can carry, and so on.

Consult the Characteristics Table to find the value for each characteristic.

Armor Ratings

Physical Armor represents the value of the physical protection the character wears or carries. Physical Armor is not listed on the Characteristics Table because it is not based on an Attribute.

CHARACTERISTICS TABLE

	Initiative DEX	*Defense Ratings* DEX/PER/CHA	*Movement Rates* DEX	*Encumbrance* STR	*Health Ratings* TOU				*Armor* WIL
Attribute Value	**Step Number**	**Physical / Spell / Social Defense**	**Movement Combat / Full (yds / round)**	**Carrying / Lifting Capacity (lbs)**	**Death Rating**	**Uncon. Rating**	**Wound Threshold**	**Recovery Tests (per day)**	**Mystic Armor**
1	2	2	6 / 12	5 / 10	19	10	3	1 / 2 days	0
2	2	3	7 / 14	10 / 20	20	11	4	1 / 2 days	0
3	2	3	8 / 16	15 / 30	22	13	4	1	0
4	3	4	9 / 18	20 / 40	23	14	5	1	0
5	3	4	10 / 20	25 / 50	24	15	5	1	0
6	3	4	12 / 24	30 / 60	26	17	6	1	0
7	4	5	14 / 28	40 / 80	27	18	6	1	0
8	4	5	16 / 32	50 / 100	28	19	7	2	0
9	4	6	18 / 36	60 / 120	30	21	7	2	0
10	5	6	20 / 40	70 / 140	31	22	8	2	0
11	5	7	22 / 44	80 / 160	32	24	8	2	1
12	5	7	24 / 48	95 / 190	34	26	9	2	1
13	6	7	26 / 52	110 / 220	35	27	9	2	1
14	6	8	28 / 56	125 / 250	36	28	10	3	2
15	6	8	30 / 60	140 / 280	38	30	10	3	2
16	7	9	32 / 64	160 / 320	39	31	11	3	2
17	7	9	34 / 68	180 / 360	40	32	11	3	3
18	7	10	36 / 72	200 / 400	42	34	12	3	3
19	8	10	38 / 76	230 / 460	43	35	12	3	3
20	8	10	40 / 80	260 / 520	44	36	13	4	4
21	8	11	43 / 86	290 / 580	46	39	13	4	4
22	9	11	46 / 92	330 / 660	47	40	13	4	4
23	9	12	49 / 98	370 / 740	48	41	14	4	5
24	9	12	52 / 104	410 / 820	50	43	14	4	5
25	10	13	55 / 110	460 / 920	51	44	15	4	5
26	10	13	58 / 116	510 / 1,020	52	45	15	5	6
27	10	13	61 / 122	560 / 1,120	54	47	15	5	6
28	11	14	64 / 128	620 / 1,240	55	48	16	5	6
29	11	14	67 / 134	680 / 1,360	56	49	16	5	7
30	11	15	70 / 140	740 / 1,480	58	51	17	5	7

It helps defend against physical attacks by modifying the amount of physical damage the character takes from attacks. The Physical Armor rating combines the protection provided by purchased and worn armor and shields. With the exception of the obsidiman Natural Armor racial ability (see **Record Racial Abilities**, p. 50), a character's Physical Armor rating is based solely on the armor he wears and the shield he carries.

Mystic Armor helps protect the character from some magical attacks, such as spells, by immediately reducing the spell's damage. For example, 4 points of Mystic Armor reduces the damage from many spells by –4 Damage Points per attack. The character's Willpower value determines his innate, or base, Mystic Armor rating. Certain equipment, such as crystal armor or shields, will modify the character's Mystic Armor rating.

Record the character's Mystic Armor rating on his Character Record Sheet. You may decide instead to simply note this rating on a separate sheet of paper until after you purchase equipment for your character, because the equipment bought may modify the Mystic Armor rating. Record the character's Physical Armor rating after you purchase armor and equipment for your character.

Sebastian figures his windling Elementalist is likely to need only light armor for protection, but he decides to skip filling in his character's Physical Armor rating until he has chosen what armor he will purchase. Based on his Willpower value of 16, the Elementalist's base Mystic Armor rating is 2.

Defense Ratings

The **Physical Defense** rating represents a character's ability to dodge a physical blow. Based on the character's Dexterity value, Physical Defense serves as the Difficulty Number an attacker must overcome when making a physical Attack Test against the character. For example, an attack made against a character with a Physical Defense of 6 is successful if the Attack Test result is 6 or more.

A character's **Spell Defense** rating represents his innate ability to avoid a spell. Based on the character's Perception value, his Spell Defense rating is the Difficulty Number a magician must overcome when making a magical Attack Test against the character.

Based on his Charisma value, the **Social Defense** rating represents a character's chance to know when he is being lied to or manipulated by others. In this sense, a lie is an intentional deception, as opposed to a falsehood told through ignorance, and is therefore tested against the character's ability to believe it. The dwarf to whom your character is talking may genuinely believe that he is the best *hach'var* player in Throal, even if he's not; Social Defense would not help a character detect that the dwarf's statement is false. However, if the dwarf was intentionally trying

to deceive someone into believing his sporting prowess when the same dwarf didn't believe it himself, then the character's Social Defense would be the Difficulty Number for the dwarf's Action Test to make the character believe him.

Some races receive special modifiers to their Defense ratings (see **Record Racial Abilities**, p. 49). Record the character's modified Physical Defense, Spell Defense, and Social Defense ratings on his Character Record Sheet.

Based on his Dexterity value of 14, Sebastian's character has a Physical Defense of 10, taking into account his windling Increased Physical Defense racial ability, which adds +2 to his base Physical Defense. Spell Defense is based on his Perception value of 16, so the Elementalist has a Spell Defense of 9. His Charisma value of 16 gives him a Social Defense of 9.

Health Ratings

Based on his Toughness value, a character's Health Ratings determine how much damage he can take before being knocked unconscious, taking a serious wound, or dying. Health Ratings also determine how quickly a character heals.

The **Death Rating** represents the number of Damage Points required to kill a character. When the character's Current Damage equals or exceeds his Death Rating, the character dies.

The **Unconsciousness Rating** represents the amount of cumulative damage it takes to knock a character unconscious. When the character's Current Damage equals or exceeds his Unconsciousness Rating, he falls unconscious. Because this number is lower than his Death Rating, a character will usually fall unconscious before dying.

Any single attack that inflicts a number of Damage Points at least equal to a character's **Wound Threshold** also gives the character a Wound. Wounds heal more slowly than normal damage, and can reduce a character's ability to perform actions and otherwise interact with his surroundings.

Recovery Tests refers to the number of Recovery Tests a character may make each day. When characters use their Recovery Tests, they roll a number of Action dice based on their Toughness step. The result of the Recovery Test is the number of Damage Points regained—the amount of damage healed.

Some races receive special modifiers for damage and recovery (see **Record Racial Abilities**, p. 49). Record the character's Health Ratings on his Character Record Sheet.

Overall, the different Health Ratings tell Sebastian how much trauma his character can take before dying. He checks the Characteristics Table, looking up his Elementalist's Toughness value of 7. The windling has a Death Rating of 27, a Wound Threshold of 6, an Unconsciousness Rating of 18, and he can make 1 Recovery Test each day at Step 4, his Toughness step.

See **Resolving Attacks** (p. 398) and **Effects of Injury** (p. 402) in the **Combat** chapter for more information on how to inflict (and recover from) damage.

Initiative

A character's **Initiative step** determines when the character can act during a combat round. The Initiative step is equal to the character's Dexterity step, minus any modifiers for excessive weight carried (see **Encumbrance**, p. 48) or armor (see **Armor and Shields** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 439).

Record the character's Initiative step on his Character Record Sheet, noting any modifiers on the Armor Modifiers line. Then record the character's modified Initiative step and Action dice.

With a Dexterity value of 14, Sebastian's character has an Initiative step of 6. He certainly won't act first during combat, but he won't be the last to act either—as long as his luck holds. He has not purchased any armor at this stage, so his Initiative step remains unmodified for the time being.

KARMA TABLE

Race	Karma Step/Die	Starting Karma Points	Maximum Karma Points
Dwarf	4/D6	6	25
Elf	4/D6	6	25
Human	5/D8	10	40
Obsidiman	3/D4	5	20
Ork	5/D8	10	40
Troll	3/D4	5	20
T'skrang	4/D6	6	25
Windling	6/D10	15	60

Karma

Each of the races acquires and uses Karma differently. The Karma Table lists all the relevant information regarding Karma for each race (see **Karma** in the **Game Concepts** chapter, p. 18, for more information on Karma and how it is used in **Earthdawn**).

The **Karma Step/Die** indicates the step number and type of Action die characters of each race use for Karma.

Starting Karma Points provides the number of Karma Points characters of each race receive when created. If you generated your character's Attributes using the Purchase Point Method, any unused Purchase Points convert into additional Starting Karma Points at a one-to-one ratio.

Maximum Karma Points refers to the maximum number of Karma Points characters of each race can have at any one time. Karma Points may be purchased when using the Karma Ritual talent (see the **Talents** chapter, p. 190, for details).

*Sebastian's windling uses a Step 6/D10 Karma die and starts the game with 15 Karma Points. Because he checked the **Talents** chapter before creating his character, Sebastian knows this gives his character an advantage, especially when powering his talents and spells.*

Movement Rates

During each combat round, a character can move a number of yards equal to his Full or Combat Movement rate (see **Movement** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 396). These Movement rates are based on the character's Dexterity value.

The **Full Movement** rate indicates the number of yards a character can run in a round if not attempting to take any other actions. The character's **Combat Movement** rate is the number of yards he can move in a round while attacking, casting a spell, or performing other actions.

RACIAL MOVEMENT TABLE

Race	Movement Modifier
Dwarf	Movement as Dexterity value – 2
Elf	Movement as Dexterity value + 1
Human	Movement as Dexterity value
Obsidiman	Movement as Dexterity value – 3
Ork	Movement as Dexterity value + 1
Troll	Movement as Dexterity value
T'skrang	Movement as Dexterity value
Windling	Ground Movement as Dexterity value – 8 Flying Movement as Dexterity value + 2

Some races receive special movement adjustments to their Dexterity value for the purpose of determining the character's Movement rates, as shown in the Racial Movement Table. **No modifier reduces a character's Dexterity value below 1.**

Once determined, record both the character's Full and Combat Movement rates on his Character Record Sheet.

*To determine his character's Movement rates, Sebastian checks the Characteristics Table. Using the windling's Dexterity value of 14, he subtracts –8 for race, as shown on the Racial Movement Table, for a modified Dexterity of 6. This gives the windling a Combat Movement rate of 12 yards and a Full Movement rate of 24 yards per round on the ground. As a windling, his character will use his wings (see **Flight**, p. 49) when it is important: he adds +2 to his Dexterity value when flying, for a modified Dexterity value of 16. When flying, the windling is much faster, moving 64 yards per round when "running" and 32 yards per round in combat.*

Encumbrance

A character's Strength value limits his ability to carry or lift weight and ultimately shows how weak or strong he really is.

Carrying Capacity is the number of pounds a character may carry without suffering a penalty for carrying too much weight.

A character's **Lifting Capacity** is the maximum number of pounds he can lift from the ground. He cannot lift this weight and move at the same time.

Once determined, record the character's Carrying and Lifting Capacity limits on his Character Record Sheet.

Sebastian references the Characteristics Table and sees that a Strength value of 4 allows his character to carry only 20 pounds (Carrying Capacity) and lift up to 40 pounds (Lifting Capacity). Worse, because he is a windling, his Carrying Capacity is effectively halved while he is flying! He will definitely have to find someone else to help carry his stuff when he is adventuring.

Especially in the first flush of adventuring, an **Earthdawn** character may be tempted to carry excess equipment and more treasure than he can hold. As noted, your character's Strength value determines how much weight your character can carry without overburdening himself, but what happens when your character wants (or needs) to carry more weight than his Carrying Capacity allows?

A character carrying weight that exceeds his Carrying Capacity is considered **Encumbered**. The excess weight he is carrying will tire him out and slow him down, and could get him into serious trouble during an adventure. To determine the effect of encumbrance, calculate how much weight the character is carrying, then consult the Characteristics Table to determine the lowest Strength value that allows a Carrying Capacity at least equal to the amount of weight the character is carrying. Determine the difference between the required Strength value and the character's Strength value, and reduce the character's Dexterity value by the result. This is his **Encumbered Dexterity** value.

By lowering a character's Dexterity value, his Dexterity step and all of his Dexterity-related characteristics—including Movement rates, Physical Defense rating, Initiative step, and Dexterity-based talents and skills—are also reduced.

Jerreck, an elven Wizard, has a Strength value of 11, and so may carry up to 80 pounds without trouble. Unfortunately, Jerreck couldn't bear to leave behind the ancient tomes he found at the last kaer, and so he is now lugging around 135 pounds. This is in excess of his Carrying Capacity, so Jerreck is Encumbered. The gamemaster references the Characteristics Table and notes the minimum Strength value needed to carry 135 pounds is 15. This value exceeds Jerreck's Strength value of 11 by 4 points; therefore, so long as he carries this much weight, Jerreck subtracts –4 from his Dexterity value. A lower Dexterity value also reduces the wizard's Dexterity step, Physical Defense, Initiative step, and his Movement rates. Jerreck vows not to make any sudden moves and to stay out of combat until he can get his treasure safely home.

Record Racial Abilities

Your character has abilities specific to his race, such as a special type of vision or a unique attack capability. These abilities appear in the Racial Abilities Table, followed by detailed explanations of each ability. Record these racial abilities and any other modifications for race on your Character Record Sheet.

Sebastian checks the Racial Abilities Table and sees that he does not have to worry about the windling's Maximum Strength limitation—he allowed for this earlier, when generating his character's Attributes. Likewise, he has already allowed for his windling's Increased Physical Defense when determining his Physical Defense rating. Sebastian writes the remaining two abilities—Astral-Sensitive Sight and Flight—on his Character Record Sheet. He is glad that his character possesses the Astral-Sensitive Sight ability. This is very useful for a magician.

Astral-Sensitive Sight

The character can sense astral imprints and patterns. Astral-Sensitive Sight is magical perception, translating sensory information into visual cues. The character does not actually use his eyes for Astral-Sensitive Sight; a physically blind character could still "see" astrally. Astral-Sensitive Sight has a range of 10 yards.

To perceive astral imprints, the character makes a Perception (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the character senses the imprints of every object within his field of vision. The imprint of an object provides only the most basic information—an object's size, shape, and location, and whether or not the item is magically active (all living things and magic items are magically active).

In order to learn more information, the character must focus on a specific imprint and make another Perception Test. If the result of this test exceeds the target's Spell Defense, the character senses the target's pattern.

A character using Astral-Sensitive Sight can learn if a given item is magical, but a character using this ability cannot gain any information about the item's history or learn any of the item's Key Knowledges (see the **Thread Magic** chapter, p. 265, for more information on Key Knowledges and magic items).

RACIAL ABILITIES TABLE

Race	Abilities
Dwarf	Heat Sight
Elf	Low-Light Vision
Human	Versatility
Obsidiman	Increased Wound Threshold, Minimum Strength Value (15), Natural Armor (Phys 3)
Ork	*Gahad*, Low-Light Vision
Troll	Heat Sight, Minimum Strength Value (11), Minimum Toughness Value (11)
T'skrang	Tail Attack
Windling	Astral-Sensitive Sight, Flight, Increased Physical Defense (+2), Maximum Strength Value (11)

See **Astral Space** (p. 254) and **Astral Sensing** (p. 257) in the **Workings of Magic** chapter for more information on astral space and astral sensing methods.

Flight

As noted in the Racial Movement Table, windlings fly at a Movement rate based on their Dexterity value + 2. For example, a windling with a Dexterity value of 13 has a flying Movement rate based on a Dexterity value of 15, for a Combat Movement of 35 yards and a Full Movement of 70 yards.

While windlings can fly, it is not their primary method of movement. Windlings tire quickly when flying and so usually limit their flight to short periods of around 20 minutes duration. After 20 minutes, a windling may suffer Strain damage from flying. For each additional minute spent in flight, he must make a Toughness (7) Test. If the test fails, the character takes 1 Strain Point of damage. Each 5 minute period spent flying beyond the initial 20 minutes, adds +2 to the Difficulty Number of the Toughness Test.

Regardless of how long the windling spends in flight, he must rest for at least the same amount of time as he spent flying in order to resume flight again without incurring Strain. For example, if a windling character flies for 15 minutes, he must rest for 15 minutes before flying again to avoid Strain damage.

Though windling wings are very durable, they become heavy and fragile when wet, severely impairing the windling's ability to fly. The windling subtracts –2 from his Physical Defense, effectively negating his racial advantage (see **Increased Physical Defense**, below), and the character must make a Strength (7) Test to determine if he can fly at all. If the test succeeds, the windling is able to fly, but for every 5 minutes of flight he must make a successful Toughness (9) Test or he takes 2 Strain Points of damage.

Generally, these rules only apply if the windling's wings become soaked with water, as would happen if he fell into a river or stream, or was caught in torrential rain. Fortunately, windling wings dry very quickly, usually within ten minutes of being in a dry place. In warmer weather, or in front of a fire, they dry in half that time. There is also a Wizardry spell—Water Wings—that helps to make a windling's wings "water resistant."

A windling's Carrying Capacity is halved while flying. For example, a windling with a Strength value of 6 can carry 15 pounds of equipment while flying. If he chooses to fly with everything he can normally carry (30 pounds), he subtracts –3 from his Dexterity value (because he would need a Strength value of 9 to do this), with a reduction to his Attribute step and characteristics.

Encumbrance penalties are also applied to any Action Tests the windling makes while flying. For example, a windling subtracts –3 from his Dexterity value for encumbrance; this results in his Dexterity step being reduced by –1 step. The windling also suffers a –1 penalty to his Toughness Tests when flying.

Gahad

Gahad is a sensation similar to intense heartburn, triggered in orks by certain circumstances or situations. Each ork experiences *gahad* in response to unique circumstances or stimuli.

The player should specify two impulses that always trigger *gahad* and two impulses that will not trigger *gahad* under any circumstances. These impulses should each be summed up in a single sentence. For example, "Grisalk's *gahad* is triggered when his mother is insulted" or "Grisalk's *gahad* is never triggered when a family member insults his mother."

An ork may suffer *gahad* when placed in any situation that makes him subject to acting on impulse, unless the player specifically declares a certain impulse as being the condition which does not trigger his *gahad*. When *gahad* is triggered, the character makes a Willpower Test against a Difficulty Number based on the nature of the temptation, determined by the gamemaster (see the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 86 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for information on how to determine Difficulty Numbers and Difficulty Levels). For example, an ambiguous comment that may or may not be construed as a slight against the ork's mother is an Easy action for Grisalk to resist. Resisting an obviously blasphemous obscenity becomes a Heroic action.

If the ork fails the Willpower Test he must act on the impulse that triggered *gahad* or face the consequences. If the character chooses to resist *gahad*, he suffers a *gahad* "hangover," which appears within the hour. The distracting physical sensations of the hangover may manifest itself as feeling cotton-headed, localized aches and pains or even hallucinations about the object of desire or hatred. The gamemaster chooses the exact symptom of the *gahad*, based on the impulse being resisted.

An ork suffering from a *gahad* hangover is considered Harried for all actions he carries out while in this condition (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408). The effect of the hangover lasts for one hour per Difficulty Level of the Willpower Test.

If the character fails his Willpower Test and chooses not to resist his *gahad* he acts on the impulses stirred by his *gahad*. The character gains a +1 bonus to any Action Tests related to the nature of the *gahad* aroused in him. This continues until the cause of the *gahad* is removed or otherwise ceases to affect him, or reaches an appropriate conclusion. Regardless, the effect of the *gahad* lasts for a maximum of one hour per Difficulty Level of the Willpower Test.

***Gahad* is not intended as a game mechanic giving orks a bonus to their Action Tests on any flimsy excuse.** The use and application of *gahad*, and the bonuses or penalties it confers, are always at the discretion of the gamemaster.

Heat Sight

A character with Heat Sight can see heat sources, allowing him a degree of vision where normal sight would not permit it. Heat Sight is effective to a maximum distance of 250 yards. Temperature differences translate into colors. Slight differences in temperature register as a dull red. As the temperature difference between an object or person and the background increases, the temperature differences register in spectrum order: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet. Extreme temperature differences register as white.

The same object reflects a different color/heat intensity against different background temperatures. A human lying in a summer meadow might appear as a slightly brighter spot of red in a crimson field. If standing in a snowdrift, the same person would appear as a brighter, more visible yellow-orange.

A character's Heat Sight is not normally used unless it is required. This is a Simple action on the part of the character and can be switched on or off as desired by the character. While activated, the character's ability to see normally is constrained to how he perceives heat differences, as noted above; the character cannot use a combination of normal and Heat Sight to see things.

Increased Physical Defense

The natural mobility of windlings, combined with their small size, adds +2 to their Physical Defense.

Increased Wound Threshold

Add +3 to the Wound Threshold of obsidimen to represent this race's inherent resistance to damage from their stone-like skin.

Low-Light Vision

Low-Light Vision allows a character to see at much lower light levels than humans. For a character with Low-Light Vision,

a single torch easily illuminates a 30 yard by 30 yard meeting hall. Starlight provides plenty of light on a clear night, and even on a night shrouded by thick cloud cover the character can see as well as a human sees at dusk.

Characters with Low-Light Vision are no more susceptible to flash-blindness than humans. Complete darkness—the complete absence of light—will render a character with Low-Light Vision unable to see, like other characters requiring normal vision.

A character's Low-Light Vision is not activated at will; this racial ability automatically comes into effect when illumination is reduced below the level of normal daylight.

Maximum Strength

Their small size limits windling characters to a maximum unmodified Strength value of 11. This means all windlings have a maximum Strength value of 7, with their –4 racial modifier.

Minimum Strength

To be an obsidiman, a character must have a minimum unmodified Strength value of 15. This means all obsidimen have a minimum Strength value of 21, with their +6 racial modifier.

To be a troll, a character must have a minimum unmodified Strength value of 11. This means all trolls have a minimum Strength value of 15, with their +4 racial modifier.

Minimum Toughness

To be a troll, a character must have a minimum unmodified Toughness value of 11. This means all trolls have a minimum Toughness value of 13, with their +2 racial modifier.

Natural Armor

Obsidimen have very tough skin which serves them as armor. Obsidiman skin has a Physical Armor rating of 3.

Obsidimen can also wear other types of living armor that add to the character's Natural Armor. (See **Armor and Shields** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 439. Information on which types of armor are "living" is included in the armor's description.)

Tail Attack

T'skrang often make use of their tails when engaged in combat. Both tail attack and tail parry must be declared before the character makes an Initiative Test (see **Declare Actions** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 395) and are considered to be combat options (see **Combat Options** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 403). Tail attacks or parries can be used with other combat options, where applicable. Tail attack and tail parry cannot be used in the same combat round, however.

T'skrang characters may make tail attacks in one of two ways. During a combat round, a t'skrang can make a tail attack in addition to his other actions, but suffers a –2 penalty to all Action Tests that round, including the tail Attack and Damage Test. A t'skrang character may instead choose to make only a tail attack that round, thus avoiding this penalty. T'skrang characters use their Unarmed Combat talent or skill to make tail attacks. They use their Strength step as the Damage step for a successful attack. For example, a t'skrang with a Strength step of 5 inflicts Step 5 damage with his tail attack. Some t'skrang lash small weapons to the end of their tails to enhance the effectiveness of their tail attacks (see **T'skrang Tail Weapons** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 435).

Instead of attacking with his tail, a t'skrang character can use a tail weapon or an armored tail to increase his Physical Defense in combat by deflecting blows. This option adds up to +2 to the character's Physical Defense, but for each +1 added, he suffers a –1 penalty to his Action Tests that round. For example, a t'skrang who increases his Physical Defense by +2 suffers a –2 penalty to his Action Tests.

Versatility

Human adepts have a special racial talent available to them, called Versatility. This talent allows them to learn talents from Disciplines other than their own. Only humans may have the Versatility talent. (See the **Talents** chapter, p. 209, for a full description.)

Human adept characters have the Versatility talent available to them from First Circle. Human adepts starting play with no ranks assigned to their Versatility talent know it at Rank 0. They may purchase ranks for it later on during the game using Legend Points, just like any other talent.

Assign Talent Ranks and Spells

Characters in the world of **Earthdawn** possess a number of magical abilities called **talents**. The talents available to your character are listed with the Discipline you chose for him. Talents are rated by rank. The higher the rank, the more proficient your character is in that talent. Talents add a step bonus equal to the talent rank to one of your character's Attribute steps to generate the talent step. The **Talents** chapter (p. 166) describes all the talents and which Attribute relates to each. For example, a character with a Dexterity value of 13 has a Dexterity step of 6. If that character also knows the Melee Weapons talent at Rank 2, he uses Step 8 when making a Melee Weapons Test (6 + 2 = 8).

Four of the Disciplines allow characters to be magicians, characters capable of casting **spells**. Magicians need to know

the Spellcasting, Thread Weaving, and Spell Matrix talents to cast spells.

Note that the Spell Matrix talent appears multiple times in the list of available talents in the Discipline description: magicians can have more than one spell matrix active at a time. Each matrix requires a separate Spell Matrix talent that must be acquired and assigned Rank Points individually. The Spell Matrix rank equals the maximum-Circle spell that the matrix can hold.

For more information on spell matrices, spellcasting, and spells, see the **Workings of Magic** (p. 251) and **Spell Magic** (p. 282) chapters.

Starting Talent Ranks

Players have a total of 8 Rank Points to assign to the talents their characters start the game with. Each point assigned to a talent improves the talent by +1 rank. You may assign 0, 1, 2, or 3 Rank Points to a talent, for a maximum starting Rank of 3. You may only choose talents listed as available to the First Circle of your character's Discipline. Record the talents you choose on the Character Record Sheet, adding the specific information for each talent provided in the **Talents** chapter (p. 166).

Do not record a Rank 0 talent on your character sheet. If your character has no ranks in a talent, he does not yet have access to that talent and cannot use it, although he can improve it normally using Legend Points later on in the game.

As mentioned previously, human adepts automatically possess the Versatility talent at Rank 0. If you assign additional ranks to your human character's Versatility talent, you may acquire talents for your character from other Disciplines (First Circle talents only at this stage, however). You may choose a number of talents from Disciplines other than your own equal to your character's Versatility Rank and assign them Rank Points. Talents gained through Versatility at character creation have a maximum Rank of 3. These talents must be gained using the initial 8 Rank Points each player has available to assign talents to his character.

Only human characters may choose talents from Disciplines other than their own through use of the Versatility talent See **Versatility**, p. 50, and the description in the **Talents** chapter (p. 209) for more information on how this talent works.

As you will discover by reading the **Building Your Legend** chapter (p. 419), a character using Versatility to learn many talents from other Disciplines will advance Circles in his Discipline more slowly. Players with human characters should take this into consideration when choosing their character's talents.

Sebastian feels his windling Elementalist is finally beginning to take shape. He looks at the Elementalist Discipline description and sees that he can have up to seven talents at First Circle. Because he wants his character to be well-rounded, Sebastian decides to give his windling access to all seven talents at game start, albeit at a lower rank than he could achieve if he focused on only a few of them. He assigns 1 Rank Point each to Karma Ritual, Read and Write Language, Read and Write Magic, Spellcasting, both Spell Matrices and Thread Weaving (Elementalism), for a total of 7 Rank Points. He assigns his last Rank Point to Spellcasting—by giving his character Rank 2 in this talent, Sebastian ensures that his Elementalist has a better chance to succeed in what he is supposed to do from a group standpoint: cast spells. Rank 1 in the Karma Ritual talent allows him to make his Karma ritual every day, replenishing useful Karma Points. In order to fill in the information for using the talents on the Character Record Sheet, Sebastian reviews the Master Talent Table in the ***Appendices*** *chapter and the descriptions for each of the talents he chose for his character in the* ***Talents*** *chapter.*

Starting Spells

Characters capable of casting spells must also choose their starting spells at this time. Spellcasting characters (also referred to as magicians) may acquire spells using a number of Spell Points equal to their Perception step. For example, a magician with a Perception step of 7 has 7 Spell Points to acquire spells.

You may only choose from those spells available to your character's Discipline. When selecting your character's starting spells, you choose from First and Second Circle spells. First Circle spells cost 1 Spell Point to acquire; Second Circle spells cost 2 Spell Points to acquire.

Note that because the character is only First Circle, he can only place First Circle spells into a spell matrix to cast them safely. The character may know Second Circle spells, having written them in his grimoire, but he cannot cast them from a spell matrix until he attains the Second Circle in his Discipline—casting them from his grimoire would be the only option available to him at the moment (see the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 290, for details on **Casting From a Grimoire**).

Based on his Perception step of 7, Sebastian has 7 Spell Points for choosing his Elementalist character's starting spells. Reviewing the ***Elementalism Spells*** *chapter, he selects the following First Circle spells: Air Armor for protection, Earth Blend for stealth, Earth Darts for combat, Flameweapon to help his more combative companions, and Plant Talk for gathering information. He also chooses a Second Circle spell: Path Home, which he will only use in case he gets lost.*

Assign Skill Ranks

Players have a total of 8 Rank Points to distribute among **Knowledge**, **Artisan**, **Language** and **General skills**. Each point assigned to a skill gives a character +1 rank in that skill. You may assign 1, 2, or 3 Rank Points to a skill for a maximum starting Rank of 3.

The 8 Rank Points for skills given here are equivalent to those given for starting talent ranks. Some gamemasters may allow more Rank Points for skills, however—10, 12, or even more points.

Knowledge Skills

Your character has lived in the world of **Earthdawn** all his life. He should know more about the world than you do as a player, and so starting characters spend at least 2 Rank Points on Knowledge skills. These represent areas of study with which your character is familiar.

Ranks in Knowledge skills add to your character's Perception step to determine the Skill step. Refer to the **Skills** chapter (p. 242) for a list of typical Knowledge skills.

Sebastian wants his character to have two Rank 1 Knowledge skills. He chooses Alchemy and Potions, and Botany—the windling might be able to use this knowledge to identify unmarked bottles and recognize useful herbs and plants when out in the wilderness.

Artisan Skills

As the influence of the Horrors grew, people learned that those corrupted by the Horrors could not maintain the level of discipline needed to perform precise, detailed work. Because artisans and craftsmen were among those capable of such a level of discipline, some people began to learn and practice art and craft skills in order to demonstrate that they had not been corrupted by the Horrors. Though performing these Artisan skills did not

actually protect against the Horrors, it did provide clear, visible proof of those who were corrupted and those who were not. Most people pursued fine arts, but many began to practice performing arts as well, including acting, singing, dancing, and storytelling.

This practice spread until, by the time the Horrors reached their full influence and the kaers and citadels began to close, nearly everyone had learned an art or craft. Adepts, whose extensive use of magic made them extremely powerful (and therefore more threatening), took special care to become proficient with and to constantly practice an art.

Characters in **Earthdawn** begin the game with an Artisan skill of their choice. Each of the Disciplines lists a number of Artisan skills common to adepts of that Discipline. For example, many magicians learn the art of Robe Embroidery as part of their adept training. They decorate their robes by embroidering intricate sigils and designs, finishing one pattern, carefully picking out the stitches of an existing design, and beginning a new pattern in its place, in a cycle that continues throughout the magician's life.

Choose one of the Artisan skills from the list provided in your character's Discipline or work with your gamemaster to create one of your own, and assign it at least a Rank of 1. See the **Skills** chapter, p. 231, for more information.

As an Elementalist, Sebastian gives his windling the Artisan skill of Robe Embroidery at Rank 1. He decides that the windling will have his history stitched onto his clothing and he will embroider his robe with symbols related to his Discipline. This way, his character's robe will serve to prove that the windling remains untouched by the Horrors.

Language Skills

Characters begin the game with speaking knowledge of two languages. Every character speaks the language of his race, and some may also speak one of several dialects branching from the main language. Because the language of the dwarfs is the universal language of Barsaive, all characters speak that tongue in addition to that of their native race. Dwarf characters speak Dwarf naturally, and may choose to speak the language of another race of your choice. For game purposes, assume that characters speak the "root language" of their race, rather than one of the dialects.

The racial languages of Barsaive are: Dwarf, *Sperethiel* (the elven tongue), Human, Obsidiman, *Or'zet* (the orkish tongue), Troll, T'skrang, and Windling.

Most characters assign a Rank of 2 to the Speak Language skill; one rank for each language they know. Dwarf characters have the option, however, of knowing Speak Language at Rank 1, speaking only Dwarf as a result. The Skill Point they save may be used to learn another language of their choice (by increasing Speak Language to Rank 2) or to improve a General skill (see **General Skills**, below).

Characters also begin the game with the ability to read and write Dwarf; they assign Rank 1 to the Read and Write Language skill. Character who wish to also read and write their racial tongue will need to assign an additional Skill Point to the Read and Write Language, increasing it to Rank 2 to do so.

All Barsaivian characters know the Throalic dialect of the Dwarf tongue. This applies to both their Read and Write Language and Speak Language skills.

As a windling, Sebastian's character speaks both Dwarf and Windling, assigning Rank 2 to the Speak Language skill. He decides to leave the character's Read and Write Language skill at Rank 1, learning Dwarf by default, because he also has the talent of the same name to pick up other languages. Lastly, Sebastian notes in parentheses that his character knows the Throalic dialect of the Dwarf tongue. He can pick up other dialects during game play.

General Skills

Distribute remaining Rank Points as you wish to represent what your character has learned outside of his Discipline. These points may be spent on any skill, including General skills. Refer to the **Skills** chapter, p. 234, for a full list of skills.

Sebastian must now decide his windling's interests. His character is naturally curious, so he will definitely need to talk his way out of difficult situations. He decides to learn the Slough Blame skill at Rank 2.

Equip Your Character

Your character needs equipment to adventure: food, clothing, armor, weapons, all this is necessary for the character's day-to-day survival. As adventurers, all characters begin play with the items and equipment shown in the Starting Equipment Table. Each character also receives 120 silver pieces before start of play to purchase additional equipment from the lists in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 432.

Only two restrictions apply to purchasing equipment. First, your character must be able to pay the entire cost of the items with his starting money; you cannot purchase equipment on credit, nor can you borrow money from other characters to make your purchases. Second, the gamemaster must approve the items chosen. Otherwise, you can buy any equipment you like!

If you purchase armor and a shield for your character, fill in the Physical Armor rating on his Character Record Sheet. Some types of armor and shields will modify your character's base Mystic Armor rating; be sure to check the equipment description and adjust the character's Mystic Armor rating if necessary.

*Sebastian browses through the **Goods and Services** chapter to see what type of equipment and supplies are available to him for 120 silver pieces. The windling Elementalist already wears traveler's garb, to which he adds another linen robe and padded cloth armor. So far he has spent 3 silver and 5 copper pieces. The windling also carries one week's worth of trail rations with his adventurer's kit of traveling necessities (backpack, bedroll, flint and steel, torch, waterskin and a large sack). The adventurer's kit and rations are both part of his starting equipment. His Artisan skill of Robe Embroidery requires embroidering tools, which are also free of charge. With his character's Discipline in mind, Sebastian also buys a scroll case. Sebastian has now spent 4 silver and 3 copper pieces. He decides not to buy any weapons—his character can't use them very effectively anyway. He is unable to create fire magically, so Sebastian decides to purchase a fire starter for 100 silver pieces. This leaves him with 15 silver and 7 copper pieces, which he decides to keep. Before moving on to the next step, Sebastian records a Physical Armor rating of 2 on the Character Record Sheet to reflect the cloth armor's protection. There is no Initiative Penalty for wearing cloth armor, so his Initiative step is unaffected.*

STARTING EQUIPMENT TABLE
Adventurer's Kit (backpack, bedroll, flint & steel, torch, waterskin, large sack)
Artisan Tools (relevant to character's Artisan skill; needs gamemaster approval)
Dagger or knife (or a similar Size 1 or 2 weapon)
Grimoire (magicians only)
Traveler's Garb (soft boots, shirt, belt, robe or breeches, traveler's cloak)
Trail Rations (1 week)

Flesh Out Your Character

Now you know how your character fits into the game, but what kind of person is he? The following suggestions will help you flesh out your character and create a unique individual.

Personality

An individual's personality defines how that person interacts with the world. Is he stubborn? Cynical? Cunning? Spiteful? Trustworthy? Larcenous? Altruistic? Characters run by both players and gamemasters can be defined the same way. The easiest way to define your character's personality is to assign him a number of personality traits. Personality traits are simply labels for the way a character acts and interacts with the world.

Personality Traits

The traits given in the Personality Traits Table—positive, neutral, and negative—should help players and gamemasters to begin forming their characters' personalities.

Choose one or two traits from the Personality Traits Table, or make up one or two of your own. Make sure your gamemaster approves them. If you find, later on, that you want to round your character out even further by adding another or several more traits, work with your gamemaster to determine what caused your character to change.

Sebastian's windling will be gullible and lazy, two personality traits that best fit the character he has

PERSONALITY TRAITS TABLE

Aggressive	Cynical	Intense	Passionate
Aloof	Depraved	Intimidating	Patient
Altruistic	Dignified	Intolerant	Persuasive
Ambitious	Disciplined	Introverted	Pragmatic
Amoral	Dishonest	Intuitive	Protective
Apprehensive	Drunkard	Irrational	Proud
Argumentative	Easy-going	Jealous	Rational
Astute	Eloquent	Judgmental	Reactionary
Attentive	Energetic	Kind	Realistic
Bloodthirsty	Extroverted	Lazy	Reasonable
Bold	Fanatical	Liar	Rebellious
Charismatic	Follower	Logical	Reserved
Chivalrous	Forgiving	Loner	Resourceful
Cold	Friendly	Loyal	Rude
Compassionate	Generous	Lustful	Sadistic
Compassionless	Good-humored	Malcontent	Sarcastic
Condescending	Gracious	Manipulative	Selfish
Confident	Greedy	Militant	Sensitive
Conniving	Gullible	Miserly	Sentimental
Conservative	Honorable	Mocking	Shrewd
Courageous	Humorless	Moral	Spontaneous
Courteous	Idealistic	Naïve	Superstitious
Cowardly	Immature	Obsessive	Suspicious
Creative	Immoral	Opinionated	Sympathetic
Cruel	Insightful	Optimistic	Treacherous
Cunning	Insulting	Overbearing	Vengeful
Curious	Intellectual	Paranoid	Witty

Hidden and Surface Traits

Optional Rule: Most characters act in a manner that fits with their chosen personality traits. That is, their personality traits really describe how they act; they have few or no secrets to hide. For those players and gamemasters who want to add a little more depth to their characters, we provide the following option.

Characters in **Earthdawn** can have two types of personality traits: *surface* and *hidden*. The surface traits are a character's public face, what everyone but his most intimate companions sees him to be. For some characters, the surface trait is a vital part of their personality. They act and think in that manner most of the time. For other characters, however, the surface trait serves as a façade, a mask worn to conceal their real nature or their hidden traits. The character's hidden traits should only rarely come to the surface. These secret traits provide the character's true motivation, define the character's view of the world, and determine how the character goes about achieving his long-term goals. Hidden traits will also color a character's interaction with others.

Gamemasters who decide to use this option should allow their players to give their characters at least one surface trait and one hidden trait. While multiple traits certainly create more believable characters, they create greater roleplaying challenges. The demands of certain traits may begin to conflict with other traits. It's hard enough being a real human being and trying to work through these conflicts without worrying about acting them out for the character, too.

Sebastian decides to give his windling the hidden trait of sensitive, which will be a nice addition to his gullible surface trait. Everyone who meets this character will see that it is easy to lie to him. Sebastian chooses to make his windling secretly sensitive, so he will be hurt by such lies, seeing them as acts of deliberate cruelty and malevolent ill-will. He rarely gives away what he feels inside, revealing this trait only to his closest friends. As he is a typical windling, his surface trait is being openly curious.

Balancing Hidden and Surface Traits

Though the hidden trait may technically be the dominant trait, subtly guiding your character through life, it must remain hidden. Gamemasters who notice a character frequently performing overt actions based on his hidden trait should warn the player that the hidden traits are threatening to become the surface traits. If the character continues to express the "hidden" traits openly, the gamemaster can rule that the character's original surface traits no longer exist, and that the hidden traits are now the surface traits. The character loses a number of surface traits equal to the number of hidden traits that have come to the surface.

At this point, the player must decide whether to choose new hidden traits for the character or to simply accept the new surface traits as the whole of the character's personality.

The Reward (and Price) of Roleplaying

Roleplaying your character according to his surface and hidden personality traits will gain him additional Legend Points at the end of a story. How many your character earns depends on the story told, the circumstances, and how well he acted and reacted. If you ignore or play fast and loose with your character's traits as the story unfolds, the gamemaster may remind you to remain true to your character's traits. If you continue to act out of character, or expose his hidden traits, the gamemaster may award fewer Legend Points at the end of the story.

in mind. The windling will believe almost anything a friendly person tells him, and he is lazy because of his low Strength.

Personality and Discipline

Your character's Discipline can be an important element in determining his personality. As mentioned earlier, choosing a character's Discipline is one of the most important decisions that a player makes. A character's Discipline provides a framework through which the character sees the world. For example, an Archer might interpret a particular event in a completely different way than a Nethermancer or a Swordmaster. The individual Discipline descriptions provide guidelines for how characters of each Discipline interact with the world. One way to further strengthen the effect of your Discipline on your character is to select personality traits that fit with his Discipline. That is, the traits are more a representation of the character's Discipline than of his personality.

Many of the Discipline descriptions use personality traits to create the "feel" of the Discipline. For example, Cavalrymen are described as "fierce mounted warriors," many people consider Nethermancers "eerie," and Sky Raiders are known to be "proud." These simple examples demonstrate how personality traits can help define characters of a given Discipline. Select one or two traits that define your character's behavior as an adept of his Discipline, using these examples as a guide.

*Elementalists are eager to learn about the complex nature of the elements, something which blends well with the natural curiosity of the windling race. Sebastian decides to add "*curious*" to his character's list of personality traits.*

Character History

Once you establish your character's personality, decide what made him that way. An easy way to do that is by answering the sorts of questions authors and readers might ask about a character in a story.

You may decide this information is not all that important. That is certainly acceptable. However, the more of these questions you answer, the better handle you will have on your character. Besides, this gives you a chance to answer these questions in ways you never would, or could, in real life.

What is your characters gender? Whether your character is male or female can make a difference. T'skrang females hold most of the political power in their communities. In dwarf, human, ork, and elven lands, power is usually distributed fairly evenly between men and women. Trolls perpetuate a male-dominated society. Obsidimen and windlings tend to think most gender roles are pretty silly.

How large (or small) is your character? Are you of average size for your race? Stout? Tall? Skinny? Could anybody but another obsidiman tell a skinny obsidiman when he saw one?

What color is your characters hair, eyes, and skin? The "norms" appear in the **Name-giver Races** chapter, p. 33, but the standard should not limit your choices. Personal appearance and style is finally beginning to be accepted again. During the Scourge, conformity was important. If everyone acted and dressed in a similar way, then people could be reasonably sure that the guy with the flame-red eyes wasn't just making a fashion statement. Life is better now; personal freedom and freedom of expression are on the rise. Of course, some guys with flame-red eyes are not doing it just to match the rubies on their dagger handles.

What is your character's general appearance? What would be someone's first impression of your character? Does the character dress stylishly or conservatively? Does he have any markings or decorative tattoos? Does the character follow the dwarf modes of fashion now popular in Barsaive or reject them for something different? Is your character attractive? Intimidating? Approachable? Does your character slouch, walk gracefully, or march as if always on patrol?

Where was your character born? Your character's race can be the determining factor for where he was born. Troll clans tend to live in mountain ranges, while elves come from forests and jungles. T'skrang are native to the Serpent River area. Most dwarfs come from the Kingdom of Throal. Humans and orks grow up nearly everywhere, as do obsidimen. Is your elf from a village or town near Blood Wood, or from a forest in the southern part of Barsaive? Is your troll a Sky Raider from the Crystal Peaks or from one of the other mountain ranges? Does your character even remember where he was born? Some ork scorcher tribes roam all over the land, never staying in one place for more than two or three months. Which area of forest does your windling come from?

How old is your character? The Scourge ended about a hundred years ago, though somewhat sooner in a few areas. Are you young enough that the Scourge seems like ancient history? Are you old enough to remember living in a sealed kaer or citadel?

Does your character have a family? What is your character's family like? Does he have any siblings? Are his mother and father still alive? What do they think of their child's lifestyle? What about the rest of the family? Are they poor, middle-income, wealthy? Are they pillars of the community, or are they working to knock those pillars down?

Has your character begun his own family? If not, does he want to start one? Does the rest of your character's family want him to settle down and start one?

What are your character's spiritual beliefs? Take a look at the **Passions and Questors** chapter, p. 460. It describes the Passions that most citizens of Barsaive worship. Your character could be an atheist, but in the world of Barsaive, where the Passions walk the earth, such an attitude would seem mighty weird. Does your character worship any of the Passions? Does your character lean more toward one Passion than the others? Are there one or more Passions your character wants nothing to do with?

What is your character's moral code? Under what conditions will your character kill? Steal? Lie? Does he adhere to a personal code of ethics about violence? What about sex? Or the Horrors? Would your character ever make a deal with a Horror? Even if he was certain he could get away with it?

What special qualities does your character possess? Can your character put a deal together that even dwarfs would envy? Does he have a knack for spotting unusual jewelry? Does your character see the quest through, no matter what it takes? Does he get along with members of other races?

What is it your character simply cannot do? Does gold run through your character's fingers? Does your character find it impossible to pass up a chance to get that really interesting magic item? Does your character freeze during the first moments of a romantic encounter? Does your character panic under stress? Does your character speak his mind at all the wrong times?

What does your character love? Throal? Living in the Caucavic Mountains? The smell of ginger tea? Ale and good tavern talk? The bustle of a busy market? Finding just the right way to finish off a spell? A clever comment? Another person?

What does your character hate? The Therans? Those stuck-up dwarfs? Nethermancers who do icky things to animals? Gate guards who ask personal questions? Kings who think they can order you around? Slow service? Assassins who just haven't got the sense to leave you alone?

What is your character's Name? Your character's Name is very important. In the world of **Earthdawn**, the Names of people, places, and things have meaning and power. If your character

often stares at others with a stern, cold look, he might be Named Ice-stare or Shiver-eyes. Was your character born with the same Name he uses now? Is his current Name a nickname? If so, who gave it to him?

Play the Game

Congratulations! You have completed your character. Finish filling out your Character Record Sheet. Your character now stands ready to become a hero of the world of **Earthdawn**.

Creating Experienced Characters

It is inevitable that characters in a long-running **Earthdawn** campaign will change over time. New characters will come along and older characters may leave or even die (the latter often being a frustrating experience for a player). As the heroes rise through the ranks of their Disciplines, they become more powerful—sometimes to a level where it makes no sense to have inexperienced characters join them. Sooner or later, a more experienced character will need to be created. Unfortunately, this is usually a time-consuming process, and gets only more complex the higher the desired Circle of the new character.

The following rules offer a guideline for creating experienced single Discipline characters. We strongly recommend that they only be used for this purpose. If the player decides to have his character later pursue additional Disciplines, then great, but this is something that should normally be reserved only for game play.

Always ask your gamemaster for permission first before creating an experienced character! The gamemaster determines the target Circle for the new character, and therefore how many total Legend Points will be available to the player to spend, using the Experienced Characters Table as a guide.

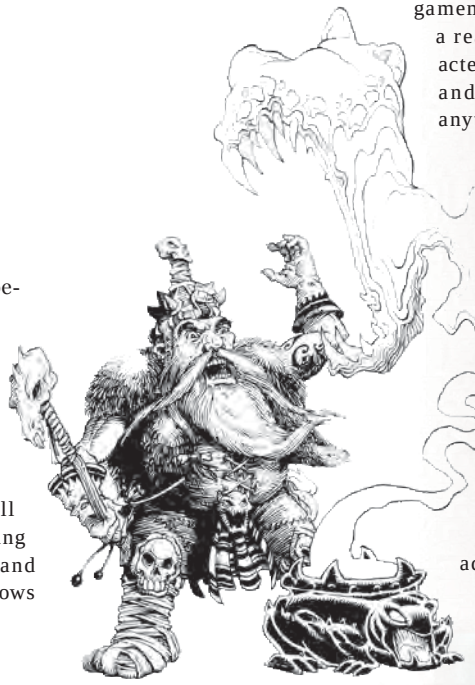
The process for creating experienced characters, similar to that for creating new characters, follows a series of four steps:

1. Create a Beginning Character
2. Spend Legend Points
3. Advance to the Next Circle
4. Equipment and History

Create a Beginning Character

The first step toward creating an experienced character is to create a beginning character. This is done as normal, using the rules provided in this chapter (see **Building a Hero**, p. 41, as a starting point for this).

Don't worry about fleshing out your character at this stage (see **Flesh Out Your Character**, p. 53), but you will need to complete the other areas, including choosing starting talent and skill ranks, and determining what spells the character knows if he is a magician.



Spend Legend Points

The Legend Points available to you will need to be spent, but not all at once. Spend them incrementally to increase your character's talents to meet the requirements for Circle advancement (see the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 419, for more information). While you are doing this, don't forget to also spend Legend Points on learning talent knacks, skills, and improving Attribute values.

If the character is a magician, he can also spend Legend Points on learning spells, using the optional rules for doing so (see **Learning Spells** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 283).

If your gamemaster approves, you can also spend Legend Points on thread magic (see the **Thread Magic** chapter, p. 264 for details).

EXPERIENCED CHARACTERS TABLE

Target Circle	Total Legend Points
2	1,400
3	4,900
4	11,400
5	23,400
6	47,700
7	89,200
8	162,000
9	294,000
10	561,000
11	1,050,000
12	1,890,000
13	3,390,000
14	6,430,000
15	11,900,000

Advance to the Next Circle

Record any new talents and abilities on your Character Record Sheet. Don't worry about finding and paying for tuition; it is assumed that your character has sufficient time and funds available to him.

If the character is a magician, the gamemaster is encouraged to review any spells that the player selects to ensure that there is a reasonable mix of spells chosen.

Return to the previous step (**Spend Legend Points**) if you have any Legend Points left to spend.

Equipment and History

The gamemaster decides how wealthy your character is and if he possesses any legendary magical items. The player then equips his character accordingly.

There are no hard and fast guidelines for this: the gamemaster is encouraged to let the player select a reasonable range of equipment for his character—including magical items, armor, shields, and weapons—then to review it and remove anything he feels will be inappropriate or unbalancing. The type of items available to the other players will prove to be a useful guide here.

Work with your gamemaster and the other players to integrate your character into the current **Earthdawn** game. Where has he learned his Discipline? Who were his masters? What places has he visited? What foes has he defeated? How does he know the other characters?

These are just a few of the questions that the player will need to answer, in addition to those asked in **Flesh Out Your Character**, p. 53, before he introduces his character into the game.

Sample Character

The character Sebastian created in the previous examples is detailed below.

Broomé, First Circle Windling Elementalist

Broomé is often called *Broom* by his friends—a play on his real Name, and the nickname given to him by his friends because of his wild, all-over haircut, reminiscent of the business end of a broomstick. He was born in a kaer only recently emerged to the new world. Spending most of his youth underground, and continually harassed by his master for his sluggishness, he finally became initiated into the Elementalist Discipline. Ever since he first saw the sun, he became eager to explore the world. Being lazy and somewhat overweight, Broomé only takes to the air when he has to, preferring instead to sit on the shoulders of his companions when traveling. Because of his increased body weight, his wings make a deeper humming noise than those of other windlings.

Most people encountering Broomé for the first time consider him slightly annoying, as he asks questions faster than they can be answered. He is interested in everything others do. It is an easy task to use his curiosity against him—Broomé believes almost anything and is sometimes *too* trusting towards strangers. Only his closest companions realize Broomé is actually a very sensitive person. He believes that everyone is good and genuinely believes there is no reason to be bad or cruel to others. He is deeply hurt when people harm others or betray his open nature.

Attributes

Dexterity (14): 6/D10
Strength (4): 3/D4
Toughness (7): 4/D6
Perception (16): 7/D12
Willpower (16): 7/D12
Charisma (16): 7/D12

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 10
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 9
Initiative: 6/D10
Physical Armor: 2
Mystic Armor: 2

Death Rating: 27
Wound Threshold: 6
Unconsciousness Rating: 18
Recovery Tests: 1
Knockdown: 3/D4

Combat Movement: 12/32+
Full Movement: 24/64+

+ The second value is the character's flying Movement rate.

Karma Points: 15
Karma Step: 6/D10

Talents

Karma Ritual (1): 1
Read and Write Language (1): 8/2D6
—Windling
Read and Write Magic[D] (1): 8/2D6
Spellcasting[D] (2): 9/D8+D6
Spell Matrix (1): 1
Spell Matrix (1): 1
Thread Weaving (Elementalism)[D] (1): 8/2D6

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills

Artisan:
Robe Embroidery (1): 8/2D6
Knowledge:
Alchemy and Potions (1): 8/2D6
Botany (1): 8/2D6
General:
Read and Write Language (1): 8/2D6
—Dwarf (Throalic)
Slough Blame (2): 9/D8+D6
Speak Language (2): 9/D8+D6
—Dwarf (Throalic), Windling

Money

Copper Pieces: 7
Silver Pieces: 5
Gold Pieces: 1

Elementalism Spells

First Circle: Air Armor, Earth Blend, Earth Darts, Flameweapon, Plant Talk

Second Circle: Path Home

Equipment

Padded Cloth Armor (Phys 2)
Windling Dagger (Damage 4/D6; Range 6–10–12)
Adventurer's Kit
Trail Rations (1 week)
Traveler's Garb
Linen Robe
Scroll Case
Grimoire
Embroidery Tools
Fire Starter

Racial Abilities

The adept possesses the windling Astral-Sensitive Sight, Flight, and Increased Physical Defense racial abilities.

Personality Traits

Curious (surface), Gullible, Lazy, Sensitive (hidden)

DISCIPLINES

My Discipline is more than simply my vocation, it is what I am. All that I am is because of my chosen Discipline. It guides me through my life in this world.

• Jerreck, Elven Wizard of Lowilla •

Player characters in **Earthdawn** are **adepts**, people able to use magic to power special abilities called **talents**. In order to become an adept, a character must choose a **Discipline**. In one sense, your character's Discipline is his profession, but a Discipline involves much more than that. Your character's Discipline provides a metaphor for how he sees the world. For example, a Troubadour may see the world as a grand stage on which he can perform, while a Warrior may see the world as a vast battlefield on which he can fight for the causes he supports.

The following chapters describe the fifteen "core" Disciplines. Future supplements will describe other new Disciplines, plus rules and guidelines for customizing existing Disciplines, but those presented in this book are the most common Disciplines found in the **Earthdawn** game.

Each Discipline is divided into **Circles**, which indicate the character's experience. Your character begins the game at First Circle, advancing to each consecutive Circle as he gains experience, measured in Legend Points. Each Circle description includes a list of the talents a character may learn at that level of experience. Each Circle also lists any other abilities or options the character gains at that Circle.

A sample **archetype** character—one that players can use as a character in the game instead of creating their own—follows the description of each Discipline. These archetypes were created using the Purchase Point Method of generating Attributes and follow the rules for creating characters presented in the **Creating Characters** chapter, p. 41. The races shown for each archetype are only suggestions. When creating your own character, you can choose from any of the races allowed to your character's Discipline, although this may require some alterations to the character's Attributes and abilities. Archetype characters may also be used by the gamemaster as opponents and villains in his games.

The following introductory essay by Ilkith Fandor, human Troubadour and Weaponsmith, speaks of matters pertaining to all Disciplines. As an adept of multiple Disciplines, and having used his Versatility to learn talents of still other Disciplines, Fandor (in the Library's judgment) possesses unique qualifications to address the common elements of all adepts' lives. At my request, his essay also includes a brief discussion of multiple and minor Disciplines, which seemed logically to belong in this opening document.

—Presented for the edification of the reader by Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH

To Live Life as an Adept

I embark upon the writing of this manuscript with a heart full of awe, at the honor of my commission from the Great Library of Throal and the grave responsibility that honor places squarely on my shoulders. To increase the store of knowledge available to us all is an act of virtue, particularly now that we must struggle to piece together knowledge lost during the Scourge. And yet, if my part in this endeavor is to be worth the ink and parchment spent on it, I must address fully and accurately a truth that for centuries has resisted being defined in general terms. A common perspective and philosophy does exist for all adepts in Barsaive, and yet the key to understanding our common experience is the intimate, individual bond between each Name-giver and the magical fabric of the world. Each adept's experience is unique; there is no single way of practicing any Discipline. The adept becomes inextricably interwoven with his Discipline, so that no clear boundary remains between his inner nature and the outer world. To be an adept is the profoundest possible expression of identity, yet it also demands submission to tradition and the most basic patterns of our existence. Like anything truly magical, the heart of the Adept's Way is paradox.

My qualifications for this task are as follows. Though my home now lies in Throal, I have lived in many places. I am an adept, and that identity is as much a part of me as my heart or my lungs. I practice two Disciplines, the Troubadour and the Weaponsmith, and so know first-hand the peculiar challenges of fully embracing seemingly disparate ways of magical thought. I have also used my race's unique ability to learn the talents of other Disciplines, and so understand at least the rudiments of many other adepts' ways. In all these many ways, I know the shared experiences of all adepts as well as I know my own mind and soul. I believe I can say some truth of what makes an adept, how we balance our separate selves with the established traditions of our Disciplines, and what happens when we bend those traditions too far.

On Discipline and Identity

When a Name-giver becomes an adept, he steps onto a path that will change him forever. The adept acquires new and wondrous abilities that make ordinary folk gasp with amazement or quail in fear, but this external change is the least part of the adept's transformation. Many young adepts embark upon a Discipline thinking simply to learn these abilities, but they soon find they cannot wield these talents without first changing their hearts and minds. The Adept's Way is much more than a collection of mysterious powers. It is a way of thinking, of seeing, of connecting to others and to the world. The powers that the uninitiated so admire and envy are a mere incidental benefit of the Disciplines we follow. Using our talents connects us in the deepest way with our inner patterns-and it is the connection, not the talent, that is the heart of life as an adept. To a practitioner of the Warrior Discipline, striking an opponent with a weapon is more than a way to bring that opponent to heel. It is the ultimate declaration of his deepest magical self. In successfully using a talent of his Discipline, he briefly becomes one with the eternal truths of creation.

An outside observer may see followers of different Disciplines using what appears to be the same talent; rest assured that each adept experiences those talents in utterly different ways. When a Warrior strikes an opponent with a weapon, he is infused with a primal understanding of force as a means of triumph over others. If I strike an opponent through my Weaponsmith Discipline, I expe-

rience a revelation about the nature of the sword I am wielding and all swords in general. My opponent may see no meaningful distinction between my hitting him and a Warrior hitting him, but the Warrior and the Weaponsmith experience the act in vastly different ways.

On Individuality and the Adept's Way

Being an adept involves more than simply adhering to a clear and obvious list of rules. There is no one way to be a Weaponsmith, Troubadour, or any other kind of adept. Instead, the adept must be true to a personal vision of his Discipline. The legends of the great Weaponsmiths and Troubadours inspire me, but I am not bound to mimic their behavior. I must forge my own path, or I am no true adept. I must find my path within myself, remaking my chosen Discipline to fit my own heart and soul.

Of course, this vision of one's Discipline does not come from nothing, nor is it infinitely mutable. No sane person can believe it is possible to be a pacifist Warrior, or a Beastmaster who loathes animals. Indeed, no pacifist or animal-hater would ever seek out those Disciplines. Nor can the adept change his vision of his Discipline on a whim, or for expediency. How we see our Disciplines shapes who we are, and determines how we act. If a Cavalryman has always thought of his Discipline as a union between himself and his mount, he cannot easily abandon his horse in the heat of combat. But a Cavalryman who understands his Discipline by dominating his mount and forcing it to do his will might treat any mount as expendable and suffer no penalty. Of course, such a Cavalryman will not easily inspire extraordinary loyalty from any mount. One's self-chosen definition of the Adept's Way always has costs as well as benefits.

Training a Name-giver to tread the adept's path means teaching the student to think like an adept, and so an adept's teacher has an incalculable influence on the student's vision of his Discipline, especially when the student first begins learning the way. Many of my own deepest beliefs about my place in this world and in my Discipline were given to me by the teachers who initiated me.

Like students of any Discipline, I took all of my master's pronouncements as distilled and unquestionable truth for a time; and though I have found my own truths beyond those first lessons, the early principles taught to me form the foundation upon which all my later understanding of both my Disciplines rests to this day. Other pieces of our individual lives are vital as well. Childhood stories about the great adepts of Barsaive's past, seeing or hearing of the deeds performed by an adept in a neighboring village, proverbs and parables about the workings of our magical world all help to form one's ideas of how the followers of a particular Discipline should act. Without those early thoughts and yearnings, I would not have followed the path that brought me to where I am.

And as it has been with me, so it is with all the other adepts of Barsaive. We all understand our Disciplines through the frame of what we bring to them, as well as through what they are.

On Becoming an Initiate

To become a successful initiate requires two qualities that rarely appear together in Name-giver souls: openness to new experience, and the ability to dedicate oneself to a specific way of living. I have tried and failed to teach more than one prospective initiate who simply could not grasp the combination of questioning and acceptance necessary to embark upon the adept's path. A certain degree of physical soundness also seems necessary, possibly because one needs strength to deal with the magical energies of talents. Whatever the reason, those whose True patterns are marred by serious illness or infirmity cannot become adepts. Taking the physical and mental requirements together, I estimate that only one of every twenty Name-givers has the wherewithal to step onto the path of the Adept's Way. Even fewer actually succeed in following their chosen Discipline.

Teaching can take time, but initiation is swift. Whether learning a whole new Discipline or learning a new talent within a Discipline, adepts learn through sudden, dazzling flashes of insight as magic floods into their True patterns. This relative ease of learning is one of the prime advantages adepts enjoy over those who do not walk the Adept's Way. Many of the abilities an adept displays can be learned through mundane means, but such lessons are learned slowly and painstakingly by comparison. The path of the adept blends practical and magical insight, hastening the learning process by teaching the spirit as well as the mind and body.

In many cases, initiation rituals subject the would-be adept to sudden shocks-physical, mental, or both-in order to stimulate profound insight. I have known adepts who have used such varied ritual devices as intoxicating or noxious substances, dream exploration, the playing of ecstatic music, fasting, meditation, mind-bending riddles and even physical torture. All of these new experiences are intended to open the initiate to new ways of perceiving the world. Through his new perception, the initiate's mind and spirit can connect to the heart of his Discipline, and this connection becomes a permanent part of the new adept's True pattern.

On Initiating Other Adepts

Each of us leaves his own mark on the Disciplines we practice by initiating other would-be adepts. Though the practitioners of some Disciplines jealously guard their secrets, most adepts see teaching others as a way of perpetuating their own spirits beyond death. I am forever marked by the teachings of my masters, to which I have added the accumulated wisdom of my own experience. When I pass my knowledge on to prospective Weaponsmiths and Troubadours, I give them a part of myself and a part of my master as well-and also a part of my master's master, my master's master's master, and so on. In this way, the True pattern of each adept is bound to the True pattern of the original practitioner of his Discipline, though the name of that ancient worthy may now be lost in the fog of time.

One must choose carefully whom to teach, and whom to initiate. No adept wishes to stain his inner vision by initiating an unsuitable candidate. In these days of adventure and exploration, one rarely ventures into a new place without drawing a crowd of eager young bravos wishing to be taught the Adept's Way. Most of these I reject after a few moments of conversation because they do not truly wish to learn my Disciplines, but rather any Discipline. I wish to teach those who are born to be Troubadours or Weaponsmiths, who truly love the song or the anvil. Those whose heads are filled with dreams of gold or other petty goals must find other masters to train them.

Adepts of other Disciplines who wish to learn mine are often no more suitable initiates than raw village youths. Many think only of a particularly useful talent they wish to acquire, and forget that they must first learn a new vision of the world. For others, the vision of their current Discipline is utterly incompatible with any possible vision of the Discipline they wish to learn. In my own case, I spent many months persuading my second master to teach the methodical, demanding Discipline of the Weaponsmith to what she perceived as a callow, carefree Troubadour. Only after I proved my dedication through a prolonged, mundane apprenticeship in my master's shop did she permit me the honor of initiation. For a young adventurer already pursuing an exciting and profitable career, such as I was then, this humbling was a high price to pay. But my knowledge of the way of the Weaponsmith has been well worth that cost in the decades since.

Experience also has taught me that most adepts are as cautious as was my second master when approached by humans who wish to employ their versatility to learn a talent or two of another Discipline. My race is blessed with a natural affinity for flexible thinking, allowing us to learn enough of the bare rudiments of any vision to wield any talent, but many adepts, especially those of other races, view our adaptability as unseemly. To convince an adept to teach him a single talent or two, a human must often pass a moral test or perform some onerous service.

On the Phenomenon of the Talent Crisis

An adept who fails an attempt to use a talent because he has somehow violated his own concept of his Discipline is said to be experiencing a talent crisis. To activate his magical talents under normal circumstances, an adept must concentrate fully on his vision of his Discipline, creating a moment of intense concentration during which he channels magical energy through his True pattern. This energy allows the adept to perform the great feats that distinguish him from ordinary folk. When an adept experiences doubts about his vision of his path, he finds it difficult to achieve the state of mind necessary to successfully connect to his True pattern. I speak not of a momentary failure of confidence such as any Name-giver may feel, but of profound doubts arising through actions that are dearly at odds with an adept's vision of his Discipline. For example, a Warrior who defines her way as courage in the face of adversity may find it impossible to use her talents after fleeing a battlefield. A Thief who holds selfishness as the hallmark of his Discipline may fail at thieving after performing an altruistic deed. A talent crisis may strike even when the adept has rationalized a transgression to fit his view of his Discipline, because the heart and spirit, rather than the mind, truly decide the meaning of such actions.

The severity of a talent crisis depends on the degree to which the adept has parted from his vision. Most often, the crisis is minor and manifests as a lack of edge in a tight spot. In rare and extreme cases, however, an adept may lose all of his talents until he somehow makes amends for breaking with his self-chosen code.

On the Acquisition of Multiple Disciplines

The adept who wishes to follow multiple paths simultaneously undergoes a continual challenge. In order to pursue more than one Discipline, one must not only persuade a master to perform the necessary second initiation, but must also acquire the knack of seeing the world through multiple prisms of thought. The new Discipline chosen cannot be completely at odds with the vision the adept has already developed for his current Discipline. If the visions are too different, the would-be initiate cannot acquire the new Discipline, no matter how much effort he devotes to the task. I once knew a Swordmaster who defined his Discipline as the art of poking holes in high-flown ideals with his wit and the point of his blade. He sought to become a Beastmaster, and tried to learn the Discipline from an adept who taught his students to show the deepest respect for all living things. My sardonic friend found himself incapable of this degree of seriousness, and so failed to learn the Beastmaster Discipline. Yet I have known other adepts who practiced both those Disciplines simultaneously, succeeding where my friend could not because they learned different visions of these paths. The compatibility of Disciplines has no hard and fast rules; it depends upon the individual.

Nor may the vision of a new Discipline merely imitate one's existing code of conduct. To learn a new Discipline, one must radically readjust one's way of viewing the world. I once tried and failed to learn the Discipline of the Elementalist, thinking I could simply adapt my knowledge of metalworking to the crafting of all of the basic elements through magic. This method did not aid me; I was trying to shape the vision for my convenience rather than allowing the vision to change me. One must prepare to be altered by the process of initiation; otherwise, the necessary insight will not come.

On the Practice of Multiple Disciplines

An adept who walks multiple paths does not meld his different visions into one. Rather, he switches back and forth between ways of thinking, as one might don and doff a cloak. Often when I find myself facing a decision, I step back and look at the situation from two points of view. The Troubadour side of me may wish to do one thing, while the mind of the Weaponsmith reaches a completely different conclusion. These divisions of viewpoint are difficult to reconcile, to say the least. Adepts of multiple Disciplines often seem peculiar or outright crazy to others, for we seem to speak with different voices. This effect can be quite literal and dramatic; I have known individuals who adopt completely different personalities, ways of speaking, and body language from moment to moment, depending on which Discipline they are currently employing. I suspect, however, that most of these persons are intentionally exaggerating the effects of multiple Disciplines in order to confuse their foes or entertain their friends.

Concerning Other Disciplines

When Barsaivians speak of adepts, they usually mean a person who follows the most common Disciplines: the Air Sailor, Archer, Beastmaster, Cavalryman, and all the others in this book. Other adepts practice other Disciplines in our land with equal devotion, however. One's practice of the Adept's Way is tied tightly to one's view of the world, and so there may be as many Disciplines as there are ways of seeing. Indeed, our assiduous research here

at the library shows that each of the Name-giver races except for humans has developed Disciplines peculiar to adepts of that race: the Traveled Scholar among dwarfs, the Woodsman among elves, the Purifier among obsidimen, the Liberator among orks, the Outcast Warrior among trolls, the Boatman and Tail-dancer among t'skrang, and the Wind-dancer, Windmaster, and Wind-scout among windlings. Many adepts view these racially oriented Disciplines as less significant than others, but no justification for that opinion can be found. All of these—and an infinite number that we have yet to discover—are true Disciplines whose practitioners adhere to the same ideals as do followers of the core Disciplines discussed in this volume. Unfortunately, a discussion of racially specific and less common Disciplines lies beyond the scope of this volume.

On Minor, or Half-Magic, Adepts

Of this topic, I admittedly know little, but I will share what knowledge I possess. The so-called minor, or half-magic adepts are those people who tap into the magic of the world to perform such everyday tasks as bargaining, navigation, farming, healing and others. Minor adepts exist in many of Barsaive's villages and towns and often play important roles in village life.

Though similar to true magical talents, half-magic is a different thing. For reasons no one I know can explain, no minor adept can follow a Discipline, though a full adept may learn those half-magic abilities that fit his Discipline. I believe that the mental and emotional intensity and determination required of a full adept simply lie beyond the abilities of a minor adept. While half-magic is learned slowly over time, increasing as an adept advances in Circle, a full adept relies on the flashes of insight that come with learning a Discipline.

A full adept may learn certain half-magic abilities, but he cannot practice his own Discipline and also learn the full range of abilities available to a minor adept—he cannot be both a full and minor adept.

I know this to be true from discussions with other adepts, and from experience. As a young boy, before I began to follow the path of the Troubadour, I studied farming magic so that I might one day take my father's place in my village. When I began my Troubadour's training in earnest, I found I had lost all skill and facility in farming. That magic had left me. In its place were the roots of my talents in the Adept's Way. I have never looked back with regret.

Ilkith's view of the Adept's Way, though learned from experience, is still only one person's view. The careful reader should think on Ilkith's words, not merely accept them as established fact.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

Personal Visions

As described in the preceding in-character essay, adepts wield power by finding a connection between their own personalities and experiences on one hand, and the great traditions of their Discipline on the other. No two adepts relate to their Discipline in exactly the same way, nor can a character become an adept simply by following someone else's view of the world. The adept must bring something of himself to the Discipline, and build something new instead of simply copying the patterns of the past.

The firsthand accounts of the various Disciplines presented in the following chapters are, in a sense, elaborate personal visions. The narrators of these passages are biased in favor of their own way of doing things, and though they often touch on the more common ways of following a particular Discipline, they are **not** laying down hard and fast rules that player characters of those Disciplines must follow.

When creating a character, you should give some thought to your character's personal vision of his Discipline. You should think about the character's general creed, and perhaps a few examples of actions the character regards as taboo. A personal vision can lend depth and focus to characters, providing a foundation for future roleplaying. This statement of the character's viewpoint may be anything from a few brief sentences to a detailed essay.

> *Somok Nightsails believes that the way of the Sky Raider is to take without apology and to avoid backing down at all costs. He never shows regret for his actions, and hates to retreat from even the direst peril. He does not plunder by stealth because he considers sneaking to be the coward's way; he believes the brute frontal attack serves as the hallmark of a true Sky Raider.*

The gamemaster should work with his players to develop this important aspect of their characters. As long as the personal vision makes some kind of sense, the gamemaster should allow it. A Beastmaster who hates animals or a Swordmaster who hates drawing attention to himself is almost certainly unsuitable, but Barsaive is home to many strange things. Somewhere there may be Warriors without a sense of honor or Nethermancers who are afraid of the dark.

If you don't like the vision presented in this book, the essays often provide other examples of suitable paths, and the sample dialogue that appears with the archetype character in each Discipline offers another choice on which to base a character's personal vision. If a gamemaster and players wish to use the optional Talent Crises rule, described on p. 62, each character must have some kind of personal vision for his Discipline.

Initiation into a Discipline

The time it takes for potential adepts to undergo initiation in their first Disciplines varies widely from Discipline to Discipline and master to master. Becoming a Wizard can take years; becoming a Thief can take as little as a few days. The amount of time needed to learn additional Disciplines is more standard.

The difference in initiation time between acquiring a first Discipline and additional ones stems from the initial difficulty of learning to see the world magically. Once a character achieves this breakthrough moment, the acquisition of additional Disciplines becomes a matter of unlearning some old habits and picking up a few new ones. Acquiring a second, third, or even fourth, Discipline is more akin to Circle advancement than initiation into a first Discipline, unless the gamemaster adopts the guidelines given for **Learning New Disciplines** in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 425.

Initiation into a Discipline creates a mystical link between the initiate's True pattern and the path of that Discipline. Each Discipline employs varying methods of initiation, often (though not always) linked to particular ways of looking at that Discipline. The initiation of a selfish Thief is much more brutal than that of a trickster Thief, for example. After initiation, an adept has reached the First Circle of his Discipline and is referred to as an **Initiate**.

Teachers do not usually charge for initiating students into their first Disciplines. Initiating a student often requires a substantial investment of time, however, and so few masters undertake it lightly. All adepts screen potential adepts carefully to make sure they will perform admirably in the Discipline. Only an adept who has attained at least Journeyman status in a Discipline may initiate others into it.

Training for Circle Advancement

Upon reaching Second Circle, adepts lose their Initiate status and become **Novices**, as they have proven themselves worthy for further training. At Fifth Circle, they have usually earned the respect of other adepts and attain **Journeyman** status. Adepts who advance to Ninth Circle have learned most of the secrets of their Discipline, and are called **Wardens**. True mastery is only reached at Thirteenth Circle and above, when the adept is referred to as a **Master**.

As with initiation, the amount of time needed to train for Circle advancement varies between Disciplines. Most training consists of practice in the talents available at the new Circle, balanced with some degree of theoretical discussion. The weight given to each, however, may be very different. For example, the fighting Disciplines tend to downplay theory, while the spellcasting Disciplines concentrate on theory far more than practice. Specific training times for advancing to new Circles are given in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 424.

Adepts advancing to a new Circle learn the rudiments of all talents available at that Circle, whether or not they immediately learn how to use the talents. With meditation, adepts can recall their training sessions and pick up talents they may have originally skipped. At higher Circles, adepts gain new abilities such as increased Defense Ratings and more flexible Karma use, through particular rituals taught to the advancing character. The character may later perform these rituals with others when acting as an instructor.

Adepts advancing in spellcasting Disciplines usually learn one new spell from the Circle in question as part of the overall training procedure. This spell is considered to be learned automatically and the magician need not make any tests to acquire it. Generous gamemasters may allow players to choose the spell they wish to learn, otherwise determine the spell learned randomly.

Any adept may train a character of his Discipline for Circle advancement, provided the adept is of a higher Circle than the student. Many instructors are retired adventurers who earn their

Talent Crises

Optional Rule: Because an adept's power depends upon him acting in accordance with his mystical world view, mentally straying too far from that world view causes the adept to lose his usual complete control of his talents. This phenomenon, known as a **talent crisis**, usually occurs when an adept knowingly and freely behaves in a manner contrary to his personal vision of his Discipline. In the wake of such actions, adepts often feel that their talents are slipping away. Sometimes they simply feel as if they have lost their edge; on occasion, any attempt to use their talents fails outright. Gamemasters using the talent crisis rule should make sure that characters' personal visions include prohibitions that will make a difference in play. Keep in mind that a personal vision is an adept's core belief, not just a list of minor habits. A Warrior who vows never to harm a helpless foe is taking on a real restriction; a Wizard who has sworn never to eat carrots is obviously the creation of a player seeking to avoid any serious limitations.

TALENT CRISIS TABLE

Severity	Talent Penalty	Crisis Duration
Trivial	None	NA
Mild	–1	10 rounds
Serious	–2	1 hour
Severe	–3	1 day
Heinous	–4	Until the adept accomplishes a Deed of Atonement

When the gamemaster feels that a player character has violated his personal vision or the basic tenets of his Discipline, the gamemaster may apply a penalty to all Talent Tests associated with the Discipline in question. The gamemaster must determine the severity of the violation, and should tell the player that the penalty is in force. Adepts always recognize a talent crisis. A talent crisis does not begin immediately after the violation, but manifests the next time the character tries to use a talent of the violated Discipline. However, because adepts instinctively know when they have violated their personal visions, they immediately become anxious, feel guilty, suffer slight nausea, and so on. If players do not acknowledge that their characters have violated their personal visions, the gamemaster should take the initiative and state that the characters are experiencing feelings of this kind.

The duration and penalty of the talent crisis is dependent upon the severity of the violation. If the gamemaster wishes, he may randomly add or subtract time from the duration of a talent crisis to keep such an event unpredictable. Use the Talent Crisis Table as a guideline.

The intent of the Talent Crises optional rule is to add depth to the world of Earthdawn, not to serve as a mechanism for gamemasters to impose their own idea of how to roleplay on players.

In keeping with the spirit of the rule, gamemasters should not penalize player characters for Trivial violations such as making a statement contrary to the character's personal vision. Also, if a character has little or no choice but to violate his or her vision, the gamemaster should reduce the penalty accordingly.

Somok Nightsails mumbles an apology to someone he bumps into on the street, thus committing a Trivial violation of his personal vision. Later, he bumps into a known enemy while wearing a disguise; he again mutters an apology, committing a Mild violation. The memory of the incident rankles for a while, dulling his overall performance. Some days later, he steals something by stealth, seriously violating his personal vision of his Discipline. Nightsails now begins to feel a gnawing sensation of guilt, dulling his performance further.

Months afterward, Nightsails backs down in the face of a challenge from a known enemy. This act is a Severe violation; he has betrayed his beliefs, and finds it hard to concentrate. For a full day, he can hardly function as a Sky Raider. The next day he refuses a challenge from his most despised foe, committing a Heinous violation. This incident comes to dominate his every thought and keeps him from sleeping at night.

Deeds of Atonement

If a character commits a Heinous violation of a personal vision, the resulting talent crisis remains in effect until the adept makes a successful attempt to redeem his or her mistake through a Deed of Atonement. The Deed should involve inconvenience, embarrassment, and risk appropriate to the violation. The player should create an appropriate Deed of Atonement for his character's violation, and the gamemaster must decide if the chosen Deed is sufficient to end the talent crisis.

To make up for backing down from his sworn foe, Somok Nightsails' Deed of Atonement requires him to seek out his enemy and confront him in a fight to the death.

living by passing on the benefits of their experience. Also, adepts frequently earn money by training lower-Circle colleagues and then pay their earnings to an instructor for training in their own advancement. Customary fees for training appear in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 424.

Half-Magic

Though the **Earthdawn** skill system accounts for knowledge a character might possess that would not require the full power of an adept's magic, that system does not accommodate the different levels of knowledge two characters of the same Discipline, but different Circles, might possess (see the **Skills** chapter, p. 230, for more information on skills and how they work).

The half-magic rule covers areas of knowledge such as the principles of weapon making, wilderness survival, and the legends and lore of a Discipline. For example, adepts of all Disciplines learn of the lives and deeds of other adepts who have followed their Disciplines, such as the heroes Nioku the Archer, Venna the Warrior, and any other heroes the gamemaster may add to his **Earthdawn** world.

For example, an Elementalist character may possess the Knowledge skills of Horror Lore and Pre-Scourge History, but a follower of that Discipline would also know a great deal about plants, weather, rock formations, tides, and other subjects related to the five elements. Further, his knowledge of these topics would increase with time and experience. Because this knowledge is closely related to the character's Discipline but not specifically covered by any talents, it falls into the realm of half-magic.

The half-magic system also offers a way to determine the adept's success or failure in performing more practical tasks related to his Discipline. A Beastmaster, for example, could perform basic veterinary techniques, while an Air Sailor would be proficient at tying knots and navigating an airship. These skills would be possessed by any member of the Discipline, and may also fall under the realm of half-magic.

Each of the Discipline descriptions provides suggestions on possible uses for half-magic. Players and gamemasters are encouraged to work together to develop and describe what areas their character's half-magic covers, but the gamemaster is the final arbiter of whether a Half-Magic Test may be used in a given situation.

Making Half-Magic Tests

When you make a Half-Magic Test, first determine the Half-Magic step. The Half-Magic step is equal to the character's Circle divided by 2 (rounded up). For example, First and Second Circle characters have a Half-Magic step of 1, Third and Fourth Circle characters have a Half-Magic step of 2, and so on.

Then the gamemaster determines the Attribute most appropriate for the action the character wishes to accomplish. You may suggest what you consider to be an appropriate Attribute, but the gamemaster has final say. The sum of the character's Half-Magic and Attribute steps is the step number used for the Half-Magic Test. Adepts may spend 1 Karma Point on a Half-Magic Test.

Half-Magic and Skills

Many half-magic abilities are similar to those imparted through Knowledge or General skills. For example, Scout adepts can use half-magic to help them in situations where the Wilderness Survival skill would apply, and Weaponsmiths can use half-magic to craft weapons and armor. This is intentional; the focus of **Earthdawn** is primarily on adepts and their magical talents. Keeping track of the many mundane skills an adept might have adds another layer of record keeping that detracts from that focus. If the gamemaster wishes to downplay the role of half-magic, and add more detail on the skill side of character development, he may do so, but should compensate by awarding more Legend Points and time to advance the character's skill ranks.

When an adept possesses knowledge of a skill that matches a half-magic ability for his Discipline, he may choose to make either a Half-Magic Test or a Skill Test. If he chooses to make a Skill Test, he cannot spend Karma on the test.

Half-Magic Tests that replace a Knowledge or General skill use the rules for Default Skill Use, even if the skill does not normally allow it to be used this way (see **Default Skill Use** in the **Skills** chapter, p. 230). This means that adepts using half-magic instead of a skill will generally require one result level greater than normal for success. This is mitigated against to a degree by their Half-Magic step bonus and the ability to use Karma.

A Fourth Circle Scout (Half-Magic step of 2) with the Wilderness Survival skill at Rank 3 and a Perception step of 6 is searching for water. Finding water is a half-magic ability for Scouts, but can also be achieved by a successful Wilderness Survival Test.

The adept can make a Perception-based Half-Magic Test at Step 8 (2+6), requiring a Good result, but with the option of spending a Karma Point on the test. Or the adept could instead make a Wilderness Survival Test at Step 9 (3+6), but loses the option of rolling a Karma die with the test and does not add his Half-Magic step.

Discipline Descriptions

Each Discipline is detailed in its own chapter, and begins with a fictional essay describing one example of how to portray that Discipline. **It is important to note that this is not the only way to portray members of each Discipline.**

Players (and gamemasters) are encouraged to use the Discipline essays and information in these chapters as guidelines. How you, as a player, choose to portray your character is entirely your own choice! That is what roleplaying is about, after all.

The second part of each chapter contains game information, detailing the abilities provided to members of the Discipline in question. Information in the following categories describes how to use it in the **Earthdawn** game.

Important Attributes

Players with characters of this Discipline should emphasize these Attributes when creating their characters. Important Attributes include those on which many of a Discipline's key talents are based.

Racial Restrictions

Certain Name-giver races cannot choose to be members of some Disciplines. The "Racial Restrictions:" notation indicates those limitations. For example, the "Racial Restrictions:" notation for the Archer Discipline shows "Obsidiman"—obsidiman characters can't choose to be Archers.

The gamemaster may choose to ignore these racial limitations. In published **Earthdawn** books, however, these limitations will be in effect, and the gamemaster should be prepared to make changes to accommodate any issues or inconsistencies that arise. At the very least, player characters of a Name-giver race and Dis-

Rituals of Advancement

Optional Rule: The **Earthdawn** game allows adepts to advance to higher Discipline Circles by spending Legend Points (see **Building Your Legend**, p. 419). These improved game statistics can also be reflected in the players' **Earthdawn** campaign and their characters' lives. Remember that advancement rituals are an optional rule designed to add more depth and complexity to the game. If this rule does not suit your group's style of play, simply ignore it.

Increases in Legend Points over time represent an adept's slow (or meteoric) rise to prominence, and a corresponding increase in respect from others of the same Discipline. As an adept advances from one Circle to the next, an elder, one of a higher Circle in that same Discipline, reviews the character's accomplishments in a brief advancement ritual. The elder accepts the adept's performance in that ritual as proof that the adept has achieved a new, higher Circle.

The advancement ritual changes as the adept rises through the Novice (2–4), Journeyman (5–8), and Warden (9–12) Circles. Adepts who advance to the Circles of Mastery (13+) create their own advancement rituals as part of the way they demonstrate, if only to themselves, their growing expertise, skill, and magical abilities.

The Rituals of Advancement section suggests typical ceremonies for advancing through the Novice, Journeyman, and Warden Circles, and each Discipline's unique way of summoning a ghost master (see **Ghost Masters** in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 425). Players are encouraged to work with the gamemaster to develop new advancement rituals for their characters. The description of the advancement ritual for each Discipline begins with the usual way that adepts recruit new members into that Discipline. Use this to flesh out an adept's history or to introduce new characters into the campaign. The final entry for each Discipline describes a unique ghost master ritual for that Discipline.

Use these rituals sparingly! It is recommended that you roleplay a ritual for a different adept each time the whole group gains a Circle. If they take place only rarely, advancement rituals remain extraordinary and interesting, and the players will understand that the rituals represent landmark events in the process of building their characters' legends.

cipline combination not normally allowed will be rare even among their peers, which may present its own set of challenges.

Karma Ritual

Each Discipline includes a ritual that allows characters of that Discipline to gain Karma Points. A character must spend a certain number of Legend Points to gain the Karma Points, then perform the ritual to receive the points. The player need not make any tests to perform the Karma ritual; it is always successful. Each ritual takes a half hour to perform. Your character may perform his Karma ritual only once each day.

Each Discipline's Karma ritual is a unique talent that allows a character to purchase additional Karma Points, which he can spend to increase the chance of success for specific actions. The character's Karma Ritual rank equals the maximum number of Karma Points he can purchase per ritual. For example, an adept who knows the Karma Ritual talent at Rank 3 can purchase up to 3 Karma Points each day by performing the half-hour long ritual.

A sample Karma Ritual is included with the Game Information for each Discipline. Players are encouraged to create unique Karma Rituals for their characters.

Artisan Skills

Each Discipline lists a number of Artisan skills common to that Discipline. Some Disciplines encourage a variety of Artisan skills, while others recommend only one. For example, it is traditional for magicians to learn Robe Embroidery as an Artisan skill. With the gamemaster's approval, characters can choose an Artisan skill not listed for their Discipline.

Talents

Each Discipline also lists the talents available to your character as he advances from one Circle to the next. You must buy ranks for each talent. See the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 424, for information on advancing Discipline Circles and purchasing talent ranks. The **Building Your Legend** chapter also describes the Ritual of the Ghost Master (p. 425), a unique option for Circle advancement available to all Disciplines at Fifth Circle.

Characteristics Bonuses

As your character advances in Circles, he automatically gains bonuses to some of his characteristics. Descriptions of these bonuses appear under each Circle.

Defense bonuses permanently increase your character's Physical, Spell or Social Defense by the number listed.

Initiative bonuses permanently increase your character's Initiative step by the step number listed.

Recovery bonuses permanently increase the number of Recovery Tests per day your character can make.

Characteristics bonuses are cumulative within the same Discipline (see **Learning New Disciplines** in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 425, for details on how to handle characteristics bonuses for multi-Discipline characters).

Spell Bonuses

Spell bonuses give the character a new spell when he attains that Circle. This is assumed to be taught to the character for free by his mentor. At the gamemaster's discretion, this spell may be chosen by the character's player, otherwise it is determined randomly. Bonus spells are taught only to Novice magicians, adepts of Second to Fourth Circle. Once the character has attained Journeyman status, at the Fifth Circle of his Discipline, he is taught one final bonus spell, however. Spells above Fifth Circle must be learned independently by the character; there are no bonus spells taught at Circles higher than this.

Discipline Abilities

Discipline abilities give characters the option to use blood magic to gain abilities based on their Discipline. Available at the various Circles listed in the following Discipline descriptions, Discipline abilities cost the character a number of permanent Damage Points. If a player decides to give his character a Discipline ability, permanently lower the character's Death and Unconsciousness Ratings by the stated number of Damage Points. This damage can never be recovered. In most cases, as soon as the character takes the damage, he can use the ability at any time.

Some Discipline abilities provide permanent increases to certain talent or other step numbers.

Karma Bonuses

Karma bonuses allow your character to spend Karma Points on the types of actions listed for the ability.

At higher Circles, characters gain another type of Karma bonus. When characters reach Master status, they add +25 to their Maximum Karma Points. This increase is permanent. For example, a human Archer reaches Thirteenth Circle, his Maximum Karma Point total increases from 40 points (the maximum for human characters) to 65 points.

Attribute-only Tests

Attribute-only Tests are Action Tests made using the character's Attribute step only. For example, a Strength Test to move a rock aside, or a Dexterity Test to grab hold of a branch to avoid falling out of a tree. If the Discipline description lists a specific Attribute, the adept may spend a Karma Point on Action Tests using that Attribute *only*; this includes Skill Tests using that Attribute with the rules for Default Skill Use (see the **Skills** chapter, p. 230).

Some Action Tests require the character to make an Attribute Test. For example, Recovery Tests use a Toughness Test, Initiative Tests use a Dexterity Test, Damage Tests use a Strength Test, and so on. These tests are *not* Attribute-only Tests, and the adept may *not* spend Karma on them unless his Discipline specifically allows him to. For example, some Disciplines allow the adept to spend Karma on Damage Tests, while all Disciplines allow Karma to be spent on Recovery Tests, and so on.

Additional Information

Some additional information is provided after the list of talents, abilities, and bonuses the Discipline gets at each circle. First is a list of suggested **Half-Magic** abilities, including specific rules for uses of half-magic common to the Discipline (for more information, see **Half-Magic**, above).

For some Disciplines, rules for playing variations or "**specialists**" of the Discipline are also provided. With gamemaster approval, players may use these variations for their characters.

A list of possible **Discipline Violations** is provided for gamemasters who are using the optional **Talent Crisis** rule. These suggestions are based on the most common viewpoints of the Discipline, and may not apply to characters with personal visions that differ from the one presented in this book. Also provided are examples of **Rituals of Advancement**. Like the example Karma Ritual provided, the players and gamemaster are encouraged to develop different rituals for their game.

Finally, a list of possible **Multi-Discipline Combinations** addresses the common complements and conflicts between different Disciplines. Like the possible violations listed, these suggestions are based on the typical mindset of the Disciplines in question, and may not apply to characters with less common viewpoints.

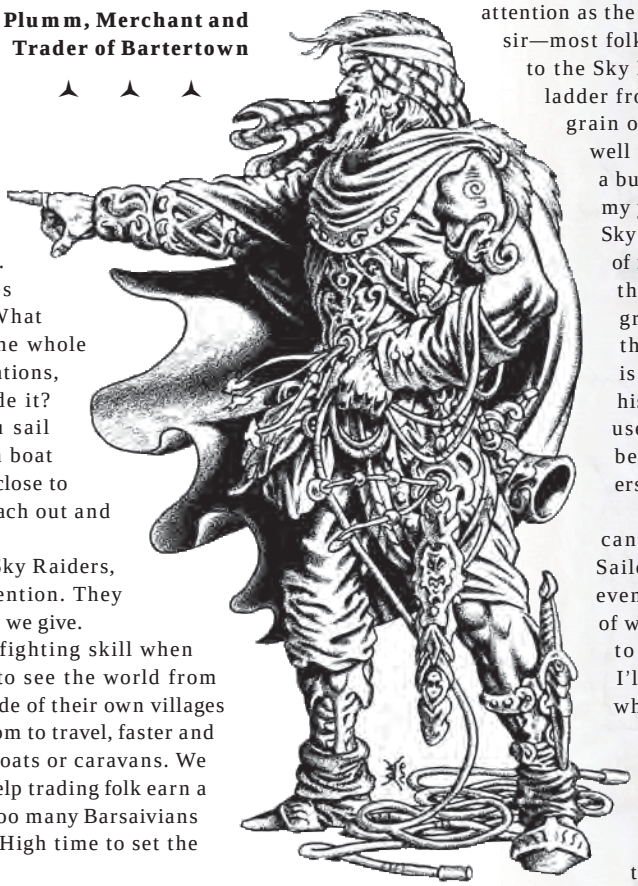
THE NOBLE WAY OF THE AIR SAILOR

The following essay comes from Adelo Nock, a human Air Sailor of the city of Travar. Though born in a town some two days ride from Jerris, he has lived in Travar most of his life (when not hurtling through the air on an airship). Retired from active service for some years, Adelo is best known for his brilliant performance as a Novice Air Sailor during the Theran War.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

Some Air Sailors only ply the skies over one region, or between major trading cities. It's a rare Air Sailor who doesn't work for another to earn his place among the clouds—who owns his own ships and sails freely where he wishes.

—Shaguiss Plumm, Merchant and Trader of Bartertown



The Name's Adelo Nock, sir. Been an Air Sailor ever since I first climbed down from my mother's lap. Air sailin's the best Discipline there is, bar none.

What other Discipline gives you the freedom of the skies? What other Discipline lets you see the whole world without borders or separations, the way the Universe first made it? What other Discipline lets you sail through the stars at night like a boat through water, or brings you so close to a sunset you'd swear you can reach out and touch it?

And don't talk to me about Sky Raiders, sir. They don't even deserve mention. They take from people. We Air Sailors, we give.

We give our expertise, our fighting skill when needed. We give people a way to see the world from above, to see the parts of it outside of their own villages and towns. We give people freedom to travel, faster and farther than they'd ever get in boats or caravans. We help bring people together and help trading folk earn a livelihood. And yet, for all that, too many Barsaivians know nothing of the Air Sailor. High time to set the record straight!

On Being an Air Sailor

This world of ours is a glorious place, and we Air Sailors get the best view of it. Have you ever stood on the decks of a galley watching the storm clouds gather on the horizon, or seen the sun set beneath your feet as the stars spark to life around your ears? Have you ever looked across the land and seen the whole long length of the Serpent River winding through the plains and lush jungle? I've even stared out into the Wastes once, for as long as I could bear it. An eerie land, the Wastes; compelling somehow, in a way that gets under your skin. You couldn't pay me to set a foot upon that wretched bit of earth, but I'd not trade the sight of it for any amount of gold. I'd never have seen the Wastes if I hadn't become an Air Sailor.

Of all the adepts in Barsaive, none gets as little attention as the Air Sailor. I'll tell you the reason, sir—most folk think the Air Sailor's close kin to the Sky Raider, one rung up on the rope ladder from thieving ork scorchers. Not a grain of truth to that, sir! You might as well tell a man he's no different from a burden beast. Let me tell you, in all my years of sailing I've yet to meet a Sky Raider that I'd trust as I trust any of my mates. Both the Air Sailor and the Sky Raider have a freedom not granted to those who can't take to the air; the difference between us is how we use it. A Sky Raider uses his freedom to plunder; an Air Sailor uses it to help the earthbound folk below. We share nothing with raiders save the sky itself.

A Sky Raider, you understand, can sometimes be as clever as an Air Sailor in planning his raids. He can even be courageous, in a brutal sort of way. But he feels no sense of duty to anything save his own wants. I'll tell you a story, and you'll see what I mean.

Me and a mate of mine sailed with a party of seventeen merchants—years ago, this was—and had the misfortune to meet a terrible, cloud-like Horror that Air Sailors call Windrider. (Other folk may know this Horror by another name, but that's not my lookout. My concern was only to defeat it.) Me and my mate were the only Air Sailors aboard, and the few survivors besides ourselves owe us their skins. Windrider appeared sudden-like, out of airy nothing like the poet says, and engulfed our poor ship in its foul smoky self. Any who stayed too long in its billows had the skin stripped from his bones. The rest of the sailors—not followers of the Discipline, mind you, but those we call airmen—started to panic. They saw the blood of their mates flowin' over the decks, heard the screaming, and started screaming themselves as they stabbed at the Horror with swords and belt knives. As if stabbin' a cloud would do any good!

Well, me and my fellow Air Sailor, Nestran Fryee, soon saw it was up to us to save the ship. Tying a rope around his waist, Nestran Fryee leaped from the deck, using his Wind Catcher talent to guide his fall away from Windrider. Over and over he did this, taunting the Horror until it came after him. While he jumped and swung, I held the wheel, piloting the ship high into the frigid air around the peaks of the Delaris Mountains. When I got close enough, I rammed the airship into the ice-covered stone, trapping the Horror. Then Nestran—who almost didn't survive his final leap—helped me to herd the livin' off the ship and onto the snow.

From previous journeys along this route, we knew where a cave was, deep enough to shelter us but too shallow to hold Horrors or fierce beasts. Once there, I lit a signal fire and the next passing airship picked us up. Cunning, courageous, and looking out for others; that's the nature of the Air Sailor.

I reckon that someday soon, the Name-givers will take back all of our skies from the winged Horrors that still plague us, and I'll be doing my part to help reach that goal. Catch any Sky Raider doing that, except to save his own miserable hide!

Any one of us who forgets his duty pays a price. An Air Sailor can't simply ride the currents of the world, taking in whatever happens to pass by. Each of us has a higher duty to his fellow sailors, to his ship, to the grounders who look up toward him. That last—our duty to the people below—is the most important of all.

Every Air Sailor in Barsaive has a wider and truer view of the world than folks with their feet planted on the ground, and with the gift of that view comes a responsibility. We're the first to see the Theran armada on its way to crush free Barsaivians, or the slave caravans swooping down on unsuspecting villages and snatching their unsavory cargo, or the flood or fire heading for the luckless town in its path. An Air Sailor who wants to use this view of the world to reach down and scoop up profits for himself belongs with the Sky Raiders, not with us!

Learning the Ways of the Sky

An Air Sailor is first shaped in childhood, by learning obedience to his wiser elders and the true value of honor. Cleverness and courage are needed as well, but without honor and obedience they're nothing much. Some learn responsibility later in life and make fine Air Sailors when they do, but for most, as we Air Sailors say, the keel shapes as it was drawn.

Likewise, an Air Sailor must learn early on that he owes the world compensation for giving him life's necessities. A child who learns only to take most likely won't grow up to be a giver. Nor will he grow up curious, wanting to know the world for the sake of knowing. Such a one might as well be a Sky Raider, or else stay out of the skies entirely.

My sailing career is as long and successful as Adelo's and I was not groomed to be anything more than a khamorro, *a deck scrubber. Nobody taught me a sense of adventure and wonder—I learned it on my own!* Jik'harra *and flair made me an Air Sailor, not blind obedience. Had I obeyed my "wiser" elders, I'd never have learned to fly at all!*

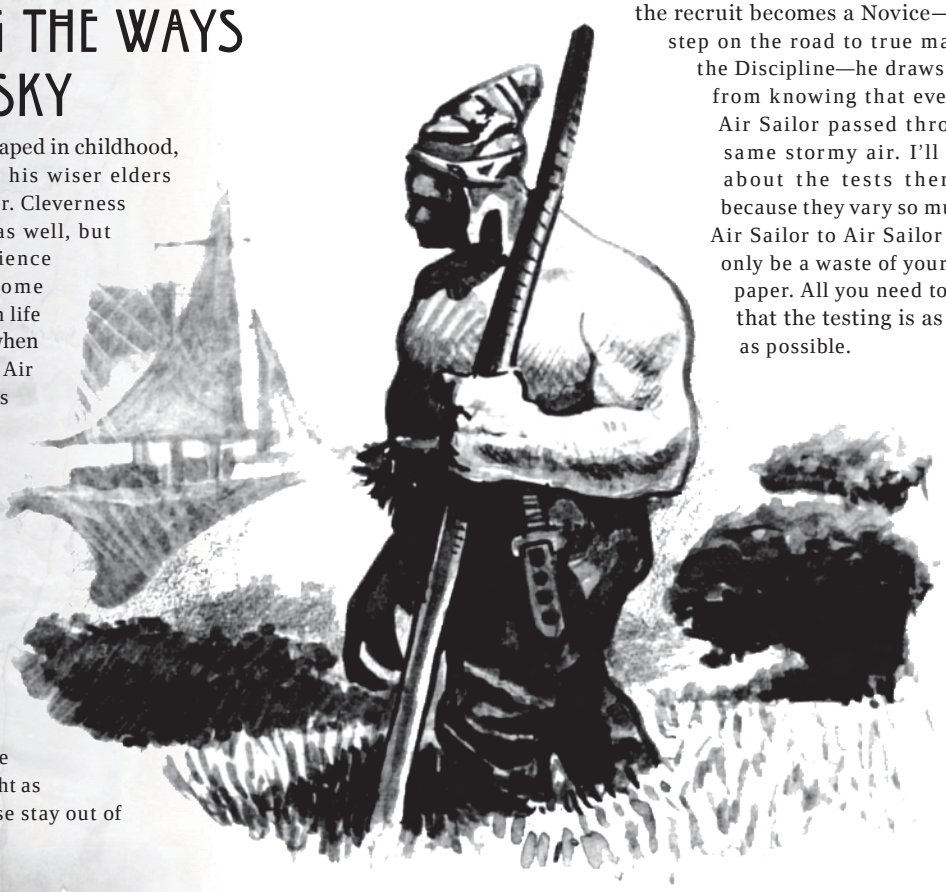
—K'tslade, *k'stulaami* Air Sailor of the House of the Spirit Wind

Proving Your Worth

Once grown to the age of independence, the Air Sailor-to-be must find himself an established crew to learn from. We Air Sailors aren't so clannish as Sky Raiders, and so grounders with dreams of flying often come to us. Some Air Sailors I know take most of their recruits from among their own kin, reckoning them more likely to make good, but most of us have open minds about who has what it takes to serve the Discipline. I remember one youngling I took on—her mam was a famous Thief adept, her dad she couldn't name—who made a top-rigging Air Sailor. An unlikely background for a Discipline of such responsibility, but she had the stuff and she wanted to fly. Just goes to show, eh?

As soon as an adept takes a pledge from a recruit, the real testing begins. Recruits live among the airmen, doing all the scutwork and whatever else they're told to prove their desire is true and their will is strong. Plenty of the best recruits have done a stint in a militia or town watch and so they take orders pretty well.

The point of the testing is to drive the new recruit relentlessly for weeks, months, or however long it takes, until he reaches a breaking point. That's where he makes his choice; to uphold the pledge of loyalty he made as a fresh, new recruit, even though it burns in his throat, or to spit it back out laced with venom. The recruit who keeps his pledge for duty's sake alone is the one who'll make a master Air Sailor. And once the recruit becomes a Novice—the first step on the road to true mastery of the Discipline—he draws comfort from knowing that every other Air Sailor passed through the same stormy air. I'll not talk about the tests themselves, because they vary so much from Air Sailor to Air Sailor that it'd only be a waste of your ink and paper. All you need to know is that the testing is as difficult as possible.



In my own town, we can tell a young recruit by the glazed look in her eyes as she carries bundles, runs errands, makes ship repairs, cleans and performs a dozen other tasks at all hours of the day and night. No one speaks to her except to bark orders, which she must follow without so much as a pause to catch her breath. I have heard that harsh punishment rewards the slightest deviation, though I have never seen it myself. I am glad to know that the test period is brief; my conscience rests more easily.

—Jorge Werwisle, Merchant of Urupa

Once the recruit becomes a Novice, life gets a bit easier—though it's never soft, not by a long stretch! The Novice trains every day in the art of handling an airship, defensive fighting, and using weapons designed for the attack, all according to a schedule set by the master sailor. At least, that's how the best Air Sailors do it. A regular pattern to one's days teaches the importance of order and gives the Novice a little much-needed time to himself to absorb what's been thrown at him. I know of some Air Sailors who train their Novices at all hours of the day and night, thinking to teach them to be always ready for dangers that may approach from any side. These Air Sailors are the mad folk who actually enjoyed their time as a recruit. They believe that living in a constant frenzy is the best way to handle the sudden storms and squalls of the sailor's life. Truly, though, that brand of Air Sailor burns twice as brightly for only half as long. Foolish, if you ask me.

After a Novice reaches a certain level of competence at the basic skills, he becomes a Journeyman. Just as the Novice learned quickness, dexterity, and steadiness of body, so the Journeyman hones those skills of the wit. As a Journeyman, I held responsibility for whole groups of other sailors; I had to see what needed doing and tell them to do it, and I also planned strategies for any necessary attacks and the ship's defense. Among my other duties, it was also my task to see that those in my charge followed the wind of their strengths and to keep them from the tempests of their weaknesses. Young, inexperienced Air Sailors began seeking me out and asking to train with me. I took them on, and judged where fair weather and foul lay for each of them. All these things taught me to use the talents of my Discipline that rely more on wit than raw power. A mind as quick and graceful as a changeable spring gale is a Journeyman's best tool—and weapon, if need be.

It was also as a Journeyman that I truly learned to appreciate my mates. A Journeyman looks out over the deck of the ship and sees what needs doing, but he knows he can't meet all the needs of the ship himself. Instead, he does his own bit and makes sure others do theirs. An Air Sailor that reaches the Journeyman Circles of his Discipline finally sees past his own immediate tasks. The look on the face of a fellow who sees himself as part of a larger whole for the first time is the same expression he had the first time he saw his hometown from the air. Instead of feeling small and insignificant like some folk might think, he feels more important and more useful than he ever has in his life because he can see the rigging ropes tying himself to his mates. You see a little bit of yourself in those who train with you, and a bit of your own teachers in yourself. And once you see that, you truly understand that to leave your mates means abandoning a piece of your own spirit.

An Air Sailor joins the ranks of the Wardens when he successfully defeats a superior enemy using both agile wit and physical skill. Let me tell you, a Warden is one of the slyest opponents you'll ever face. He'll use your own wits against you, tie you up in the ropes of your own cleverness. I once faced a ship whose crew served a Theran Warden! The scoundrel used my own plan against me, and I didn't know a thing was amiss until he sprung my own trap around my ears. Lucky to get out alive, I was—but that's a tale for another time. Most Wardens work with trading companies, and if you ask me, the best of them come out of Travar.

A true master Air Sailor like myself deserves the deepest respect. There are only a few of us still around, what with time and age taking their toll, and so many dying in the Theran War. There's a few Wardens I know who'd make fit masters, though good candidates seem fewer these days than when I was young. A master has a different life than any other Air Sailor; he serves only during the greatest of conflicts, and spends most of his time training young upstarts who pass the recruit's tests. Many master Air Sailors own ships or even shipbuilding companies like my own Dawn Flier shipyards. To keep my mind sharp and my body swift, I still accompany my share of airships on journeys across Barsaive. With my experience, there's many a hazard I can help the young ones avoid. As my age grants me a bit more time to do with as I like, like many a master I embroider airship sails. The handiwork of master Air Sailors adorns many of the greatest ships in the skies.

I have had the good fortune to acquire embroidered sails from Adelo Nock. The patterns and styles that spring from the mind and fingers of a traveled Air Sailor far surpass any other beauties I have seen.

—Jorge Werwisle, Merchant of Urupa

Non-Adepts as Air Sailors

Now of course, there's sailors and sailors. A true Air Sailor is always an adept, but many sailors among an airship's crew learn the craft of sailing without following the Discipline. These, we call just plain sailors, more often airmen. Sailors not of the Discipline rarely serve their ships in the top ranks.

Not that those who learn the craft of air sailing aren't good folk, because they certainly are—some of them are amazingly skilled. Most of them can sail a ship, jump the rigging, and decipher the moldiest, most illegible maps I have ever laid eyes on just as well as their adept fellows. What they can't do is use the Discipline's magical talents. They serve well as far as they can, but they simply can't go far enough.

On the Races the Sky Chooses

The only Name-givers who never become Air Sailors—as far as I know, that is—are obsidimen. The rock-men are too tied to the earth to find sailing amid the clouds comfortable—at least, that's my thinking. Just as well, if you ask me—building a ship sturdy enough to safely carry them might be far easier charted than sailed. One of those fellows falling on the deck would likely break right through to the hull!

Windlings make some of the best Air Sailors around. They fly as easily as other Name-givers breathe and have an affinity for the skies that no other Name-givers share. And in a world full of hulking brutes like myself (at least, we must look that way to our small brothers and sisters) windlings must rely on their wits from the moment of birth. Good training for an Air Sailor, sir! The famous Pihgram Tor is one of the best windling Air Sailors I know, though I've never been fortunate enough to serve with her. That woman can survive any danger, and her ships are second to none in Barsaive.

Elves with a longing to fly often find their calling as Air Sailors. Sky Raiders won't take them—probably think they're too delicate for the life. I think elves just aren't thick-headed enough for sky raiding. They see the grace and beauty of the natural world so clearly that they've got to be Air Sailors if they want to tread the

decks. I don't understand much of what the elves call the Wheel of Life, though my good friend Nestran tried many a time to explain it, but I do know that elves who follow the Path of Warriors are the least likely to take up air sailing. From what Nestran told me, that Path is somehow bound to the element of Earth, so I'd guess none of them want to stray too far from it. Followers of the Path of Scholars, who live to sharpen their wits, far more often find homes among us, as do the followers of the Path of Travelers, whose guiding element is Air.

Just to make sure the record's kept straight about elves being Air Sailors, you must understand that I learned all I know on the subject from Nestran Fryee. But I may have gotten my facts mixed, seeing as I rarely understood even half of what Nestran used to natter on about. If you want to know the absolute truth, you'd best ask one who knows about elves and their Paths firsthand. The important thing to be said is that I'd not hesitate to have Nestran or another elf like him serving beside me this very day. If he hasn't ascended to his folk's Citadel of the Shining Ones, then the place is surely empty, for no more loyal friend than Nestran ever lived!

Dwarfs feel a bit funny about life in the skies. They're as fond of earth and stone as of their own kin, and lots of them don't like losing touch with it. Those dwarfs who take up the Discipline, though, nearly always make a go of it. Not a lot of nonsense to a dwarf. He takes orders well when he has to and can always see what needs to be done. And you couldn't ask for a tougher fighter. Stubborn, that's what they are—too stubborn to give in even when they're bleeding half to death. Sometimes, though, that stubbornness works against them. Once a dwarf's set his mind to a plan of action, it takes a gale-force wind to move him a finger's-width from it. The dexterity of mind an Air Sailor needs isn't always a dwarf's strong suit.

T'skrang Air Sailors take a joy in the Discipline that the rest of us can only envy. Got a bit of a trouble with vertigo, though. If they could fix that small problem, more of them might become Air Sailors. And a good thing too, say I, sir; a skilled boatman would be a rare pleasure to teach. He knows half the skills of air sailing already! The winged t'skrang, the ones who call themselves *k'stulaami*, love to fly more than anything else, but their single-minded devotion to flight gets in the way of their good sense sometimes.

Of Air Sailors and the Passions

Air Sailors are a devout lot. You try hanging high above the ground in a raging storm, bound to your airship only by a safety rope tied beneath your arms while you try to patch a lightning burn in the hull and see if the Passions don't seem like good things to have watching over you! An Air Sailor's life is both beauty and fear, and the Passions do a lot toward giving that life some order.

Most Air Sailors give the largest share of their devotion to Floranuus, Passion of swift ships and good cheer. I know some crews of Air Sailors who all follow Floranuus together; they believe that kind of devotion most appeals to the Passion of good fellowship. Some Air Sailors show their love of Floranuus by throwing wild parties every chance they get, drinking wine and ale, playing knife games, hull jumping and such. I've known many a windling Air Sailor to pull out her bottle of *kees-ris* at any opportunity to "make Floranuus merry." Myself, I'm all for a good time, but some followers of Floranuus take it a bit too far. Bad for discipline, it is. After all, how well can an Air Sailor sail or fight if he's reeling from a pounding head brought on by too much elven brandy?

The Passion Chorrolis has his followers among Air Sailors also, mostly those who work for traders. That Passion will aid any Name-giver looking to make his fortune, though Chorrolis isn't always too choosy about how they do it. Were the Passion more inclined to favor honest work over all else I might have followed him myself—though Chorrolis has watched well over my shipbuilding company, and I thank him for that. Some followers of Chorrolis, sad to say, are a bit too concerned with their own welfare and not enough with the good of those around them. If you ask me, Air Sailors who follow Chorrolis need to guard against greed especially well, lest it tempt them from their duty.

Of Those Who Serve Thera

Much as I regret to say it, some Air Sailors throw in their lot with Theran scum. Most of us have more honor than to serve Theran masters, but a few get sucked in by Theran grandeur and Imperial authority. They forget their duty to others, preferring to trade with Thera and get rich. They want to float to the top any way they can, even on the backs of others.

Then there are the poor fools who fall in love with the Theran airships. I've heard tales of young Air Sailors setting off for Sky Point in hopes of working in the Theran armada just because they want to fly a stone ship. Once they get to Sky Point, the poor idiots mostly find themselves bought or brutalized. Some folk tell me that Theran sympathizers approach young recruits to our Discipline who hail from poor villages and city slums, spinning tales of the Theran riches they'll get in return for good service.

I knew such a poor young fool once. Joeb Geden was his Name—a young, idealistic human from Travar. I took him on with high hopes and he didn't disappoint me. He worked hard, obeyed orders, and took to the Discipline like a bird to the air. Before the year's end, I made him my personal aide and right-hand man.

Then Joeb came to me one night seeming nerved up about something. He offered me a pint of ale and asked, as if he cared

nothing for the answer, what I thought of the Therans. "Not much," I said, and spat.

He turned a bit red but held his ground, telling me he'd heard Theran airships were a wonder to behold.

"Really?" I asked. "Where might you have heard that?"

Well, that question ran all the sails straight up the masts. He started talking a blue streak, telling me all about the amazing Theran airships. Suddenly, as if he knew he'd said too much, he hushed right up and said he was going to bed. He never turned up for work the next morning. Three days later, I heard word he'd been sighted heading for Sky Point on foot. I've heard nothing of him since.

That's why I don't believe all the stories of prosperous Theran Air Sailors. The Therans are known to be a close-fisted lot, and Barsaivian Air Sailors who serve them most likely end up little better than the slaves they help to capture. Not that their wretchedness helps excuse the choice they made. Any Air Sailor who follows Theran ways, whether Theran or Barsaivian-born, is no true Air Sailor. I confess to a grudging admiration for their tenacity and cleverness in a battle, and the Passions know Theran ships are marvels, but none of that makes a difference. Theran Air Sailors are corrupt, and we have nothing to do with them.

Despite Adelo's statements to the contrary, the Theran navy includes many Air Sailors among its members. Theran Air Sailors may not embody all the qualities Adelo ascribes to those of his Discipline, yet one must agree that they are true Air Sailors. This fact should serve as a lesson to those who accept any narrowly-defined vision of the Disciplines practiced in Barsaive. Many variations of each Discipline exist in this world, and no single adept's vision is the only true one.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

Game Information

Air Sailors are the swashbuckling brotherhood of the sky. Air Sailors never leave their fellows behind and embrace the idea of togetherness, working to protect and spread civilization rather than preying upon it.

Important Attributes: Dexterity, Strength

Racial Restrictions: Obsidiman

Karma Ritual: To begin his Karma ritual, the Air Sailor sits alone for several minutes in silent meditation under the open sky, picturing in his mind's eye his ship sailing through the clouds at the start of a long journey. The Air Sailor envisions an aerial journey he hopes to make one day, imagining scenes of this journey, including the risks and perils, and how his training and skills might help make the journey a safe one. The ritual is complete when, a half hour later, the imagined journey ends safely.

Artisan Skills: Sail Embroidery, Runic Carving

Air Sailor Abilities

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

First Circle

Talents: Acrobatic Strike, Air Sailing[D], Avoid Blow[D], Climbing[D], Karma Ritual, Melee Weapons[D]

Second Circle

Talents: Durability (6/5), Great Leap[D], Throwing Weapons

Third Circle

Talents: Wind Catcher[D], Wound Balance[D]

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Dexterity-only Tests.

Talents: Thread Weaving (Sky Weaving)[D], Unarmed Combat

Fifth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Strength-only Tests.

Talents: Air Dance, Haggle[D], Ritual of the Ghost Master[D]

Sixth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.

Talents: Riposte, Taunt

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on melee weapon Damage Tests.

Talents: Second Weapon, Speak Language[D]

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.

Talents: Gliding Stride[D], Missile Weapons, Leadership

Ninth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.

Talents: Lion Heart[D], Resist Taunt[D], Second Attack

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.

Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.

Talents: Endure Cold[D], Swing Attack

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.

Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.

Talents: Defense[D], Shield Beater

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Initiative: The adept adds +1 step to his Initiative step.

Talents: Critical Hit, Life Check[D]

Thirteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.

Karma: The adept adds +25 to his Maximum Karma Points.

Talents: Second Chance[D], Talent Pattern, Weapon Breaker

Fourteenth Circle

Ability: By taking 3 permanent Damage Points, the adept gains the **Safe Passage** ability. This damage can never be healed. For 3 Strain Points of damage, the adept can navigate the safest path through unfamiliar territory by contacting an air elemental. The elemental communicates mentally to the adept, telling him which is the safest route to take and indicating the possible dangers that might lie ahead. When caught in a major storm (such as

that brought on by the Sky Raider's Lightning Song ability), the adept must still make at least one Air Sailing Test. The elemental attempts to guide the airship through the worst of the lightning. The adept makes an Air Sailing Test against the opposing Sky Raider's Howl step. As soon as he makes a successful Air Sailing Test, he finds a clear path and does not need to make any further tests for that storm while it lasts. Failed tests have the same result, however, causing damage to the adept's airship and requiring him to make another Air Sailing Test next hour.

Initiative: The adept adds +1 step to his Initiative step.

Talents: Matrix Strike, Quickblade

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense and +2 to his Social Defense.

Talents: Attribute Pattern, Quick Shot, Vitality[D]

Half-Magic

Potential uses for half-magic include the maintenance, repair, and construction of airships; knowledge of airship designs; and recognition of different types of airships, commonly followed flight paths, and airship crew complements.

Air Sailors may make Perception-based Half-Magic Tests in place of Navigation Tests while aboard an airship (see **Navigation** in the **Skills** chapter, p. 243).

Because working on an airship requires a high degree of athletic ability, while aboard an airship Air Sailors may make Dexterity-based Half-Magic Tests in place of Climbing Tests, or to swing from the rigging while moving around an airship.

Roleplaying Hints

One trait common to nearly all Air Sailors is the difference these adepts see between themselves and Sky Raiders. The Air Sailor usually sees himself as more refined, craftier, smarter, and serving a higher purpose. This higher purpose is often expressed as concern for the greater good of Barsaive, or at least the people around him. The Air Sailor also rarely resorts to brute force when cunning will win the day, and is expected to outthink his opponents, not just overpower them. These attitudes separate the Air Sailor from what he sees as the selfish, barbaric Sky Raider.

Air Sailors usually have a strong sense of obligation to their shipmates, whether current or former. Air Sailors often use the expression "never leave your mates," but few are ever told this outright; rather, they are subtly encouraged to embrace the idea of togetherness. Fellow Air Sailors may remind them to wait for a mate before leaving a bar, or tell them to be aware of where their mates are aboard ship during maneuvers. A natural extension of this camaraderie is a feeling of obligation toward a fellow Air Sailor who needs aid on a mission or personal quest.

Members of this Discipline almost always adhere to some code of conduct. An Air Sailor is expected to behave in a manner beyond reproach in front of outsiders. An Air Sailor who speaks in an unacceptable manner might be drowned out by his peers as they try to hide his indiscretion, or he might hear his own voice ringing uncomfortably loud as his companions fall silent to shame him. The offending party's mates might even loudly defend him in public and then deal out appropriate punishment after the crew returns to the ship.

Another common trait of Air Sailors is a tendency to be "far seeing." Many Air Sailors have elaborate long-term plans of some sort—owning a ship, freeing the lands around Sky Point from Theran domination, and so on. That plan often becomes that character's driving goal; he will never stop planning how to achieve it.

Possible Discipline Violations

Nearly all Air Sailors follow some kind of informal code, the exact details of which depend on the individual character's personal vision. An Air Sailor who fails to follow his personal code risks suffering a talent crisis. In addition, an Air Sailor who chooses to flout the expectations of his fellow Air Sailors is likely to suffer a talent crisis, because a common emphasis of the Discipline is the brotherhood and companionship of a crew. If the adept is in a supervisory or command position, such a crisis could threaten the cohesion of the entire crew.

Rituals of Advancement

Air Sailor ritual and tests for advancement resemble those used by Sky Raiders, except they traditionally focus equally on physical and mental prowess. Often the Air Sailor must bring back a trophy to prove that he successfully completed the ritual.

Recruitment: To be accepted as a recruit, the would-be adept hones his sense of duty and discovers his deepest desires through a grueling test of servitude. Most Air Sailors are recruited through trading companies or local militias. Sometimes a would-be Air Sailor seeks out a crew to join. Air Sailors accept recruits from most Name-giver races, but few units actively recruit outside of the militias in larger cities.

Novice (Circles 2–4): The adept helps to repel an assault by planning a successful defense strategy, or by coming to the aid of a higher-Circle adept and using trickery to gain the upper hand.

Journeyman (Circles 5–8): The adept must somehow rescue his ship from obstacles or danger. For example, he may have to untangle a ship from clinging vines without severing the plants, or single-handedly pilot a small vessel through a raging storm.

Warden (Circles 9–12): The adept must defeat a more powerful opponent in ship-to-ship combat through trickery or superior planning.

Ghost Master Ritual: The Air Sailor draws a circle on the deck of an airship and sits at the center of the circle. The adept then envisions flying the ship through a complex series of maneuvers. After an hour of imaginary flying, the adept visualizes docking the ship and meeting the ghost master at the dock. The ghost master boards the ship and joins the adept. The ritual then proceeds as normal.

Possible Discipline Combinations

The Disciplines generally complementary to the Air Sailor are the Thief, Scout, Swordmaster, and Warrior. Each of these Disciplines traditionally requires a similar focus on wit, cleverness, and skill as opposed to brute force. The Elementalist is also complementary to the Air Sailor, particularly those who specialize in the element of air.

Disciplines traditionally opposed to the way of the Air Sailor include the Nethermancer, Weaponsmith, and Wizard. These Disciplines require so much energy and time spent away from the airship that potential teachers find no practical reason to take on an adept who wishes to follow both paths.

The Sky Raider is particularly inimical to the Air Sailor in principle. Despite the many talents both Disciplines share, the two Disciplines have strongly opposing views, and only in truly exceptional cases will a member of one Discipline even consider training a member of the other.

Human Air Sailor

"Aye! Of course, good lady. It would be my honor to give you passage to Bartertown. My apologies, but I must charge a token fee for your servants. For you, good lady, no fee is required. The honor of your presence is more *than adequate payment. Is air travel safe? I can assure the good lady that my crew is among the finest in Barsaive. My crew is well-honed from our many flights all across Barsaive province. Even the fierce and barbaric Sky Raiders curb their bloodlust when they see the sails of the* Vexator*!*

"If haste is not of importance, can I suggest plotting a course to take us over some of Barsaive's sights for your pleasure? What say you good lady? Shall I have my deckboys take your luggage to your quarters? I assure you there is no finer ship than the Vexator*!"*

Attributes

Dexterity (18): 7/D12
Strength (14): 6/D10
Toughness (12): 5/D8
Perception (13): 6/D10
Willpower (11): 5/D8
Charisma (11): 5/D8

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 10
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 7
Initiative: 6/D10
Physical Armor: 6
Mystic Armor: 1
Death Rating: 34
Wound Threshold: 9
Recovery Tests: 2
Knockdown: 6/D10
Unconsciousness Rating: 26
Combat Movement: 36
Full Movement: 72
Karma Points: 10
Karma Step: 5/D8

Talents

Acrobatic Strike (1): 8/2D6
Air Sailing[D] (2): 7/D12
Avoid Blow[D] (1): 8/2D6
Climbing[D] (1): 8/2D6
Karma Ritual (1): 1
Melee Weapons[D] (2): 9/D8+D6

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills

Artisan:
Sail Embroidery (1): 6/D10
Knowledge:
Barsaive History (1): 7/D12
Airships (1): 7/D12
General:
Navigation (2): 8/2D6
Read and Write Language (1): 7/D12
—Dwarf (Throalic)
Speak Language (2): 8/2D6
—Dwarf (Throalic), Human

Money

Copper Pieces: 2
Silver Pieces: 3
Gold Pieces: 3

Equipment

Hardened Leather Armor (Phys 5; Init 1)
Buckler (Phys 1; Shatter 17)
Broadsword (Damage 11/D10+D8)
Short Sword (Damage 10/D10+D6)
Dagger (Damage 8/2D6; Range 9–15–18)
Adventurer's Kit
Trail Rations (1 week)
Traveler's Garb
Embroidery Kit

Notes

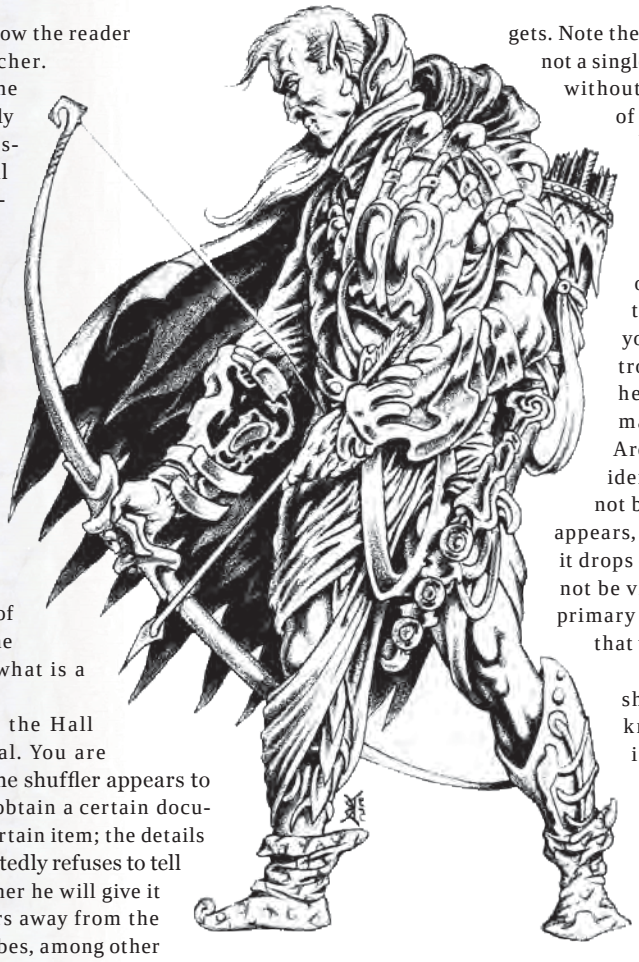
The adept possesses the human Versatility racial ability.

On the Path of the Archer

The Library of Throal commissioned the following document for inclusion in this volume. In his zeal to deal directly with his subject, the author has neglected a salient point—his own identity. The writer of this essay is Oaken Aveldel, an elven Archer of great repute throughout Barsaive. He is best known for hitting the Impossible Rope at the Chasm of Sar-Fane, and for slaying the Horror known as Plan Crumbler with only two shots from his bow. The first shot put an arrow into the bony armor surrounding the creature's skull. The second shot hit the end of the first arrow, driving it home deep into the monster's brain. I know of no one better fitted to discuss the Archer's Discipline than he. I assiduously pursued Aveldel for this project, and am honored to introduce his submission here.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

The aim of this document: to allow the reader to understand the Way of the Archer. The strategy: to hit the heart of the matter. Therefore, I shall immediately aim for the central point. After loosing this first volley of words, I shall determine whether or not secondary targets remain to be hit. If so, I shall strike them in the order of their importance.



On Dividing the World

The world is made up of two things, and two things only: missiles and targets. Most people, objects, and ideas belong in one of these categories. Anything outside of these categories does not matter. The Archer's challenge: to determine what is a missile and what is a target.

Scenario the first: You are in the Hall of Records at the Library of Throal. You are speaking to a shuffler of papers. The shuffler appears to be wasting your time. You wish to obtain a certain document concerning the location of a certain item; the details are unimportant. The shuffler repeatedly refuses to tell you where the document is or whether he will give it to you. Instead, he continually veers away from the direct path to your target. He describes, among other things, a book he is preparing. He asks you to contribute to the book, a point he circles around and then weaves back to again and again.

Question: Can the way of the Archer win you victory in this scenario?

If you say no, you are no Archer. True, the literal drawing of a bow and firing of an arrow would serve no purpose here. Throalic authorities react poorly to one shooting their officials. But the physical motion of firing an arrow is merely one of many actions that defines the Archer's way. All other actions an Archer takes should be inspired by the process of aiming and firing missiles. This way of seeing the world is the key to success in all matters, whether of business, art, love or war.

Let us divide the actors of this scenario into missiles and targets. Note the plural; in most matters there is not a single target, but several. And it goes without saying that no Archer worthy of the name equips himself with less than the sufficient number of missiles.

We shall find the targets first. In identifying targets, one must also determine their order of importance. It does little good to attack a cadaver man when you may shoot at the Horror controlling the thing. In the scenario here-to-fore described, our primary target is the document. An Archer must always remember the identity of the primary target. Do not be distracted when a new target appears, nor forget the primary target if it drops out of sight. Our document may not be visible, but it is nonetheless our primary target because victory demands that we obtain it.

Secondary target: the paper shuffler. Often, an Archer must knock down a secondary target in order to reach the primary target. This condition applies in our scenario: the paper shuffler has access to the document and we do not. Therefore, we must hit the secondary target in order to draw a bead on the primary target.

Now let us consider our missiles. Every possible way in which we may hit the target—getting the desired document from the paper shuffler—is a potential missile. We must determine what missiles are in our quiver and which of them is the ideal one with which to hit the target.

Consider the missile of threat: we might offer to hurt the shuffler should he not swiftly comply with our request. But the shuffler is not stupid, nor as prone to mental wandering as he might seem. He knows we are not prepared to back up our threat and shoot him down. Therefore, if we employ this missile, he will call our bluff. The paper shuffler will then have the upper hand, and our primary target will be further away. Clearly, threat is not the proper missile for this task.

Consider the missile of bribery: we might present the shuffler with silver in exchange for the document. In order to be certain that this missile will strike home, we must use the art of seeing. We must carefully observe the shuffler, to see whether coin has any luster for him. In this case, however, we realize that what he lusts for is not money. Therefore, bribery will not serve.

Consider the missile of acquiescence: the paper shuffler most desires a piece of us. He wants us to write a document for him that he may put in his book. His meandering words contain a hidden determination: he too has a target firmly in mind, and his possession of what we want is his missile. Using the art of seeing, we can determine that cooperation with his aims is the most effective missile for us—the superior means of striking our target. Therefore, we agree to write what the paper shuffler wants in exchange for what we desire. We have perhaps lost some dignity, and definitely some time. But we have hit both our targets, and that is all that matters in the end. Let others seek public honor, glamour, reputation. The Archer does not need such things. His legend rests on hitting the target. Nothing matters save for the bull's-eye.

Note that I have spoken in a single, concrete example rather than describing the way of the Archer in general terms. For the Archer, generalities do not exist. Only specifics matter—singular objects and beings at whom the Archer must fire.

On the Art of Seeing

The way of the Archer is the art of seeing through the fog in order to spot the simple facts hidden within complexity. The Archer sees from a distance. He scans the landscape for hidden details: flashes of light, movement, colors out of place, anything that may signal the presence of an enemy. He is distant, dispassionate, calculating. This state of mind is as true when the missile is actual as when it is metaphorical. The art of seeing is best experienced through the True Shot talent.

Scenario the second: You, the Archer, have selected your target. Said target is charging toward you riding a massive thundra beast and carrying an enormous battle-axe. If the target reaches you, either the beast's trampling feet or the metal blade of the axe will claim your life. The target is charging over a dusty plain, and the hooves of the thundra are raising a cloud of dust that obscures your view. It is also moving in a pattern dictated by slight undulations in the ground. Your task: to swiftly strike a partly obscured, unpredictably moving target.

You attempt to draw a bead, but the shot is too difficult. So you pour Karma into your pattern. It whirls through your pattern from one part of your identity to the other until it hits the place where your innermost self is woven inextricably to the idea of truth. Karma fires through this connection into your eyes, enhancing your vision. Your eyes can now pierce the dust cloud. Even so, you can see that your shot will not hit home before the target reaches you. So you pour more energy through your pattern. Beast and rider seem to slow, though your ears tell you their advance is as rapid as ever. You increase the flow of magical energy into your pattern until your eye freezes the target. Before you can think to issue the command to your arms, they have loosed your shot. Your arrow hits the thundra beast—for hitting the rider would remove but one threat of the two—directly between the eyes. The beast rolls, pitching its rider off. Dismounted and badly jarred by his fall, he is an easy target for your next shot.

At the moment your arrow hits home, you are most fully alive. You feel this way because you are truly seeing. This kind of sight, that reveals life-and-death truth, is a thing most Name-givers never experience. It is sad for them that they cannot share or even understand such stunning moments of insight. The Archer reveres truth, because the Archer has felt truth course through his very being.

Concerning the Enemy

The Archer's foe is whatever obscures sight. Darkness is a foe. Camouflage is a foe. Fog, glaring sunlight, heavy rains: all these are our enemies.

The Archer's greatest enemy is illusions and those who wield them. I have heard tales of adepts who are both Illusionists and Archers, but thankfully, they seem rare. I have never met such a person and would not care to. I cannot imagine what corruption of the way of the Archer is required to allow an Illusionist to follow that way. It is simply wrong to alter the truth of any situation with deceptive magics. Barsaive requires more honesty, more things that truly are as they seem. An illusion is nothing more than a lie writ large, given form by magic. I have never met an Illusionist I liked. Many of them have tried to win my regard, but I cannot stomach what they do. Most other Archers I know share my feelings in this matter.

Ultimately, the art of seeing allows us to tell truth from untruth. I am proud to belong to a tradition of Name-givers who speak plainly and always strike the heart of the matter. I do not dissemble, misdirect or misinform, no matter what price I may pay for my candor.

Understanding the Arc

The arc is woven into the thought of every Archer. The arc is the path the arrow follows on its way to the target. Whenever an Archer looks at a person, thing or place—the target—he measures with his eye, judging the arc. The Archer thinks in straight lines. Because we have little patience for circuitous discussion, courtly manners, or meaningless pleasantries, we have earned a reputation for bluntness and impatience. Some choose to dislike us for this, but that is no matter.

Thinking in arcs is most useful, both in combat and otherwise.

Scenario the third: You are one of a group of adepts hired to find the murderer of a Bartertown merchant. Your fellows are a Wizard, a Thief and a Troubadour. You meet for the first time to plan your attack on the problem you are being paid to solve. The Wizard wishes to expound extensively on the symbolic meaning of murder, then walk randomly through the town sensing the auras of passersby in hopes of spying an aura that he feels might belong to a killer. The Thief wishes to investigate the victim rather than the murderer, in order to discover the killer's reasons for his act. Reasoning—predictably—that profit is the likeliest motive, she wishes to begin with the victim's treasure vault. The Troubadour proposes to wander through the town singing the mournful tale of the dead man in hopes of saddening or shaming the killer into confessing his terrible deed. What do you do?

You point out that each idea proposes a wandering and winding—and therefore foolish—strategy. You attempt to explain the importance of arcs and connections. You propose starting at one end of the line and finding where the line leads. You draw arcs from one thing to another until the killer appears as your target. You begin at the beginning: the body. You see what connections it shows you. You find threads of gold silk clenched in the dead merchant's hand, so you follow the arc of the silk and see where it leads. The directed mind is the Archer's greatest weapon. Finding the path of the Archer means seeing the straight lines hidden in the tangles and following them.

The secrets of the arc lie in the talent of Arrow Weaving. To practice it, you must know how to find the shortest magical connections between you and the thing to which you weave your thread.

Scenario the fourth: You have acquired a magical treasure, a great bow recovered from the Western Catacombs of Parlainth. You have learned its Name: Death Spiral. Now you seek to weave a thread to it—to connect yourself to Death Spiral. To do this you

must find the arc—the straightest line—that ties your own identity to the idea of death and of a spiral.

The first is elementary: your arrows mete out death to the enemy. The second requires more thought. How do you best connect to the idea of a spiral? After some time, you hit upon the connection. You realize that others witless enough to cross you are embarking on a downward spiral to defeat, as surely as you have them in your aim. By finding the arc between yourself and this idea, you have woven the thread to Death Spiral.

The idea of the arc is the center of an Archer's target when he learns new talents. Though learning any new talent or advancing to any new Circle also requires a skillful teacher, the primary burden lies on the student. He must understand the talent as it relates to his own experience. Only that way will he find the arc, the straightest line, connecting his own pattern and the new talent he seeks to add to that pattern.

Scenario the fifth: You seek to learn the Flame Arrow talent. Your teacher lays out its rudiments for you. Then, as is customary, the teacher bids you farewell, collecting her fee for her service. The teacher does not linger to discover whether you pick up the talent. Doing so is your problem now, not hers. You must rely on your eye, your ability to see the arc between you and Flame Arrow. You retreat to a secluded glen to think and to see. You empty yourself of all extraneous thoughts, concentrating only on the matter at hand. Slowly, a vision appears in your mind's eye. Not an illusion, mind you, but an acutely detailed and accurate memory.

In this memory, you are a child back in your home village: a village in the hinterland, a peaceful and quiet place. In this place, elves, humans, orks and dwarfs live together in harmony. You associate this place with your earliest, most golden memories. It also carries a cruel and shadowed memory of the black day when the raiders came. You remember the tears obscuring your vision. You remember the flaming arrows hitting the roofs of the thatched huts. You remember the running, the chaos, the destruction of your home.

You remember the anger that filled your small, childish body. That anger now returns to fill your adult body—the body of an Archer. You shoot the anger through your True pattern like an arrow snapping from your bow. Your anger flies toward its mark, hitting all of what your teacher told you of Flame Arrow.

Your head reels with new knowledge. Flame Arrow is now a part of you, connected to your ancient anger. You will use that anger to direct the talent at your foes. From this day forward, whenever you strike out with Flame Arrow, you fire not only at your foe of the moment, but at the raiders who destroyed your first home and robbed you of your innocence.

This is the way to find the arc between your talent and your essential self. The Archer is often accused of being an unfeeling adept, one who sees things only from a remove and reduces other Name-givers to no more than targets. This belief could not be further from the mark. To find an Archer's deepest emotions, look to his pattern, to the lines between his memories and his talents.

Of the Bow and the Crossbow

Question: Are all Archers alike?

To answer this question, follow the arcs. Does it make sense that all Archers should resemble one another? Have you not met laughing Warriors and mournful Warriors, reckless Sky Raiders and cautious Sky Raiders, thieves who hoard and thieves who spend? So it is with Archers. Though we are all tied to the same pattern, we are as individual as the followers of any other Discipline. Only those blind and ignorant fools who accuse of us being without emotion also believe we are all the same. Just as one who knows how to look can see the differences between every arrow, even those produced by the same fletcher, so every Archer has his own ways of seeing the arc between himself and his Discipline.

Certain common divisions, however, do exist between Archers. The central difference lies between devotees of the bow and adherents of the crossbow. When an Archer fires a missile at a target, the Archer sees the arc between weapon and foe, thus forging a mystical connection between the Archer and his chosen' weapon. In a sense, we see through our weapons as other Name-givers see through their eyes. An Archer's choice of weapon reveals something about him, and throughout his life that choice continues to shape and mold him.

I wield the longbow, and have had the honor of fighting beside many practitioners of the crossbow. This is what I have seen: crossbowmen tend to be earthy and practical. We of the bow possess a mystical bent, a taste for metaphor. The crossbowman works by pragmatic logic, the bowman by intuition.

As a man of the bow, I am tied to the wood of my bow and to the individual craftsmanship needed to make it. Through the eyes of my bow I feel a bond to nature, the world of the forest and jungle. I am connected to the tree from which the wood of my bow was born, and so am at home in the woodlands. Among trees and vines and creepers, I can pick out furtive movements and see hidden dangers. I am connected to the skilled, solitary artisan who carved my bow. Many, like me, carve their bows themselves. Therefore, I am self-reliant, accustomed to solving problems by my own instincts. Within my bow, as within my chest, beats the heart of a loner. We bowmen are serious by nature, and when we act heroically it is often for such abstract motives as a desire for justice or the dictates of personal honor.

The crossbowman is tied to both wood and metal. He is tied to levers and cranks. Because the weapon he sees through is the product of mechanical ingenuity, he sees the world as pieces interlocking to achieve a desired effect. Moreover, the crossbowman's weapon is the result of cooperation between woodworker and metalsmith. Neither the wood nor metal in his weapon is worth anything on its own; they must smoothly combine to form a useful whole. The Archer therefore sees the ideal man as one who works easily with others for the achievement of a mutual goal. His diplomatic instincts are more acute than those of the bowman; he often acts as the steady head in a party of squabbling adventurers. The man of the crossbow is at home in the cities, where his weapon was forged. In the blackness of night in a maze of buildings, he can pick friend from foe. Neither rooftop sniper nor alley brigand can hide from his penetrating sight. A crossbowman is likelier than a bowman to have laugh lines around his eyes, is easier in his demeanor and quicker to tell a joke. Tied to metal, and through it earth, the crossbowman pays more attention to his next meal and the weight of his purse than airy bowmen such as myself. Some say that a crossbowman, when called upon to support a cause, will ask if it is just—but only after asking if it pays well.

Of course, these statements are generalities on which no Archer would wholly base his actions or judgment. One who truly knows how to see always scans the horizon for exceptions.

Regarding the Sniper

Every Archer possesses the capacity for sudden, decisive violence. He always searches for targets for his hungry arrows. In the mind of the Archer, the arrows in his quiver are like peeping baby birds, anxious to be loosed at the foe and drink of his blood.

A true Archer keeps the violence within him in check. He only fires at the right moment for the scenario in which he finds himself. In our True patterns, this savage part of our natures is connected to our eyes, and so they must maintain this restraint. Our eyes, always alert to discern target from missile or foe from friend, serve us as our consciences. Without our capacity to see and judge truly, we become less than beasts.

Sadly, the gift of judgment does not always accompany the art of sight. As with any Discipline, the way of the Archer is cursed with its share of villains. We refuse to honor such scoundrels with the name of our way, and so we call them snipers.

A bowman bad at heart is cutting and cold, driven by lust for reputation or power. Truth compels me to admit that even I feel a

chilling thrill whenever I draw a bead on a living, breathing foe. It is a moment of true power over an unknowing opponent, knowing that with a mere flick of the wrist I can cast him into oblivion. This power offers a mighty temptation. More than one fresh-faced young Name-giver whom I trained in the Archer's way has become intoxicated by this temptation. To these cruel individuals, all others become potential targets and nothing more. Their ability to slay their targets from a distance is all that matters to them.

For any reader of this document who is a sniper or feels the temptation to become one, I have but one message: the sniper can also become a target.

Game Information

The Archer learns the art of the bow and crossbow, and by extension, all types of ranged attacks. This Discipline stresses accuracy and, to a lesser extent, speed. Most Archers show greatly enhanced perceptive powers, often noticing things that others miss.

Important Attributes: Dexterity, Perception

Racial Restrictions: Obsidiman

Karma Ritual: The Archer spends the first several minutes of the Karma ritual oiling and stringing his bow. He then starts meditating, with the bow in front of him and all of his arrows fanned out beside him on the ground. At the end of the half hour long ritual, the Archer fires three arrows at a target, forming a rough triangle no more than a foot wide, then fires a fourth arrow into the center of the triangle. The ritual is complete as soon as the last arrow strikes its target.

Artisan Skills: Arrow Fletching, Runic Carving, Sculpting

Archer Abilities

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

First Circle

Talents: Avoid Blow, Direction Arrow[D], Karma Ritual, Missile Weapons[D], Mystic Aim[D], True Shot

Second Circle

Talents: Durability (6/5), Sprint, Throwing Weapons[D]

Third Circle

Talents: Flame Arrow[D], Wound Balance

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Dexterity-only Tests.

Talents: Melee Weapons, Thread Weaving (Arrow Weaving)[D]

Fifth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Perception-only Tests.

Talents: First Impression, Ritual of the Ghost Master[D], Stopping Aim[D]

Sixth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.

Talents: Bank Shot[D], Speak Language

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on missile weapon Damage Tests.

Talents: Anticipate Blow, Call Arrow[D]

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Talents: Eagle Eye[D], Leadership, Second Attack[D]

Ninth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.

Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.

Talents: Impressive Shot[D], Silent Walk, Trace Missile[D]

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.

Initiative: The adept adds +1 step to his Initiative step.

Talents: Rushing Attack[D], Warning Shot[D]

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.

Initiative: The adept adds +1 step to his Initiative step.

Talents: Blind Fire[D], Dominate Arrow[D]

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and Spell Defense.

Talents: Create Arrow[D], Spot Armor Flaw

Thirteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.

Karma: The adept adds +25 to his Maximum Karma Points.

Talents: Defense, Screaming Arrow[D], Talent Pattern

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical and Spell Defense.

Talents: Multi-Shot[D], Second Chance

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.

Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.

Talents: Attribute Pattern, Ethereal Weapon[D], Wind Bow

Half-Magic

Archers may use half-magic to identify bows, crossbows, arrows and bolts as the work of a specific Archer or craftsman, or to determine the special purpose for which an arrow or bolt was crafted.

Bowyer

Archers can make Perception-based Half-Magic Tests in place of Craft Weapon Tests to craft missile weapons, as well as ammunition for those weapons. This ability does not allow for improving weapons, such as by use of the Forge Blade or Improve Blade talents. The Archer can create missile weapons of a Size no greater than his Discipline Circle. An Archer also often crafts his own arrows and bolts, personalizing them in some manner. **Ammunition** is considered to be equivalent in Size to the missile weapon from which it is loosed or fired.

The Difficulty Number for the Craft Weapon Test is otherwise identical to that given for the Craft Weapon skill (see the **Skills** chapter, p. 238).

Specialists

If the gamemaster wishes to emphasize the differences between adepts who specialize in the bow or crossbow (as

described by Oaken Aveldel), he may give bonuses and penalties for appropriate roleplaying in relevant situations. Note that the character must adhere to the behaviors described to qualify for these benefits; he should not get them solely because of his choice of weapon.

The **bowman** specialist may subtract –1 from most Difficulty Numbers in a forest or jungle environment, and may add +1 to most Difficulty Numbers in an urban setting. In certain situations, the bowman may subtract –1 from the Difficulty Numbers of actions taken alone, and add +1 to Difficulty Numbers for activities that require group cooperation. The **crossbowman** specialist may receive the opposite bonuses and penalties.

For the purposes of all specialist bonuses and penalties, Difficulty Numbers include target Physical Defense ratings. If no common-sense reason exists to explain why a Difficulty Number would be affected by the character's environment, the number should not change. All bonuses and penalties are applied at the gamemaster's discretion.

The Sniper's Way

Some gamemasters and players may want to explore the idea that the Archer is forever tempted to give in to the siren call of his blood-hungry arrows. Every time such a character cold-bloodedly picks off a Name-giver opponent who cannot defend himself, the character accumulates a Temptation Point. After each such incident, these "sniper" characters must make a Willpower Test against their accumulated Temptation Point Total. Once a character fails this test, he has succumbed to the lure of "the Sniper's Way."

Prone to lose control whenever they have a target in their sights, snipers must make a successful Willpower Test against their Temptation Point Total in order to keep to a plan. If this test fails, the sniper begins shooting at will, targeting anyone within range until he runs out of missiles. A sniper can reduce his Temptation Point Total through Deeds of Atonement, or the exercise of other spells and talents at the gamemaster's discretion. For example, the Heal power of questors of Garlen might remove the Temptation Points of a sincerely repentant sniper.

Roleplaying Hints

An adept of the Archer Discipline learns the art of seeing; he is taught to see that target, and forge a mystical connection between it, an arrow or bolt, and the space between them. A character might take this basic outline to extremes, applying the target-and-missile analogy to every situation. He might instead be a no-nonsense type who doesn't let the mystical talk get in the way of picking off enemies.

The character's vision will be influenced by the circumstances of his life before he became an adept. An Archer raised in an ork cavalry, for example, may espouse a fiercer, less refined version of the viewpoint expressed by Oaken Aveldel. A t'skrang Archer trained to protect riverboats from pirates might take the metaphorical aspect of the Discipline less seriously, while to a blood elf the metaphysics of the Discipline might be the most important thing.

Possible Discipline Violations

Archers most often suffer talent crises when they stray from clear thinking and straight lines. An Archer who dithers, goes off on tangents too often, overcomplicates matters, or forgets his overall goal and heads towards a random dead end is ripe for a talent crisis.

Like the followers of many combat-oriented Disciplines, an Archer may place a great deal of metaphorical significance on his weapon, and an Archer who loses his weapon—especially through negligence—might experience a talent crisis the next time he attempts to use the recovered bow or its replacement. Nearly every Archer's training stresses the importance of properly choosing targets. If an Archer accidentally hits an ally or innocent noncombatant in battle, he might suffer a talent crisis for the remainder of the fight. In particularly egregious cases, where it was the Archer's carelessness or thoughtlessness causes the accident, he might need to perform a Deed of Atonement to recover the full use of his talents.

Rituals of Advancement

Like many martial Disciplines, Archer advancement rituals are commonly challenges that serve to demonstrate the adept's increased ability. As the adept advances through the circles of the Discipline, the challenges become more difficult.

Recruitment: Cities and villages occasionally sponsor festivals that feature Archery contests. To find potential Archer adepts, an Archer hides a target in a tree or bush far from the competition targets, then quietly mentions to the more skillful contestants that "a true Archer knows the real target." The adept recruits the first contestant to sense and strike the hidden target.

Novice (2–4): The adept must make trick shots of increasing difficulty: at full gallop (Second Circle), hanging upside-down from a tree branch (Third Circle), or using one hand and his teeth (Fourth Circle). Other adepts or elders may challenge the Novice adept to perform other shots.

Journeyman (5–8): An elder shoots an arrow, and the adept must split it with his own arrow, shot from the same position. Elders pride themselves on challenging Journeyman adepts to match amazing, nearly inaccessible shots.

Warden (9–12): The adept devises a test for himself that requires an astonishing command of a difficult talent, then calls together all other adepts in the area to witness the feat.

Ghost Master Ritual: The Archer crafts an arrow of black wood fletched with black feathers, then shoots it with all his strength into the night. He meditates as he searches for the arrow. Approximately an hour later, when he finds the arrow, he also finds the ghost master waiting beside it. The ghost master ritual continues as normal.

Possible Discipline Combinations

Archers who wish to acquire multiple Disciplines are most likely to adopt other combat-oriented paths because the shared talents allow for rapid advancement in the second Discipline. Additional Disciplines of this type also give the Archer much needed hand-to-hand fighting ability.

The Cavalryman Discipline complements the Archer with the maneuverability granted by a mount, and an Archer who can strike reliably from horseback is extremely effective. Air Sailors and Sky Raiders share an appreciation for the air, and combine well with the Archer; the adept can pepper opponents with ranged attacks before the rest of the crew attempts a boarding action. Warriors also work well, as both ways traditionally mix mysticism with their martial practicality. Scouts typically share an emphasis on perception that blends well with the Archer.

While Thieves share a similar emphasis on perception, many Archers are reluctant to train them out of fear their affinity for stealth will predispose them to become snipers. And while Swordmasters have a complementary blend of talents, their traditional flamboyancy meshes awkwardly with the straightforward outlook of the Archer, and members of either Discipline are wary of teaching would-be initiates of the other.

The Illusionist Discipline is the only one traditionally opposed to the Archer's Way. The average Archer's contempt for the Illusionist is well known, and very few Archers will serve as masters to Illusionists, or choose to pursue the Illusionist Discipline. Archers are often equally unwilling to teach Archer talents to human Illusionists making use of their racial Versatility talent.

Human Archer

"I live my life like I use my bow. I take careful aim, control my thoughts and breathing, and let fly, far and true. I gauge my goals as I would a target, analyzing and understanding. For if I do not know my target, how can I guide my arrow to it?"

"Forgive me if this sounds too mystical for your liking, but for me, life is the Wind. A force of nature, it pushes us forward with purpose or tosses us madly. Like my arrow, I ride the Wind or cut against it. For our flight to be true we must understand the Wind its currents, eddies, and surges. I ride the Wind, but like a sailor upon a sea, not a leaf upon a storm."

Attributes

Dexterity (18): 7/D12
Strength (13): 6/D10
Toughness (12): 5/D8
Perception (14): 6/D10
Willpower (11): 5/D8
Charisma (11): 5/D8

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 10
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 7
Initiative: 7/D12
Physical Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 1

Death Rating: 34
Wound Threshold: 9
Unconsciousness Rating: 26
Recovery Tests: 2
Knockdown: 6/D10

Combat Movement: 36
Full Movement: 72

Karma Points: 10
Karma Step: 5/D8

Talents

Avoid Blow (1): 8/2D6
Direction Arrow[D] (1): 7/D12
Karma Ritual (1): 1
Missile Weapons[D] (2): 9/D8+D6
Mystic Aim[D] (2): 8/2D6
True Shot (1): 8/2D6

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills

Artisan:
Wood Carving (1): 6/D10
Knowledge:
Barsaive History (1): 7/D12
Human Lore (1): 7/D12
General:
Climbing (1): 8/2D6
Read and Write Language (1): 7/D12
—Dwarf (Throalic)
Speak Language (2): 8/2D6
—Dwarf (Throalic), Human
Wilderness Survival (1): 7/D12

Money

Copper Pieces: 2
Silver Pieces: 4
Gold Pieces: 2

Equipment

Leather Armor (Phys 3)
Dagger (Damage 8/2D6; Range 9–15–18)
Longbow (Damage 10/D10+D6; Range 60–120–240)
Quiver (with 20 longbow arrows)
Adventurer's Kit
Rope (6 yards)
Trail Rations (1 week)
Traveler's Garb
Wood Carving Tools

Notes

The adept possesses the human Versatility racial ability.

Keeper of the Beasts

We are fortunate to have received the following treatise on the Discipline of the Beastmaster from an elven follower of that Discipline Named Esteyria. Other essays on this subject, delivered to us over the years, tended to deal only with the superiority of wild creatures as companions and teachers without revealing anything of the deeper motivations of the adepts who follow this path. Non-elven readers should take note that, because Esteyria sees her Discipline in the context of the elves' unique spiritual paths, her description of the Beastmaster Discipline is somewhat unusual. The exact date of this manuscript is unknown, but many of the references in it indicate that it was transcribed within the past ten years.

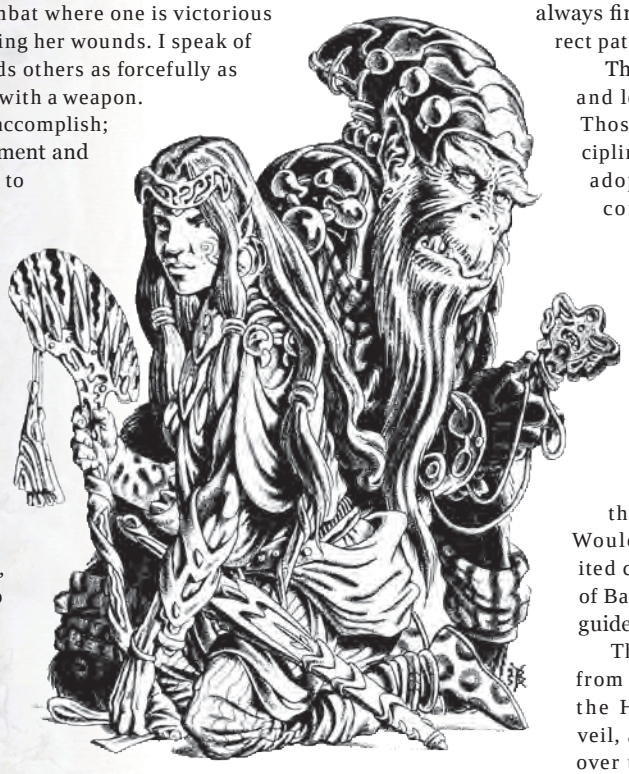
• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

On Becoming a Beastmaster

As a Follower of *Mes ti'Meraerthsa*, the Path of Warriors, I might easily have chosen to become a Swordmaster or a Thief. Many of my kind do. Thankfully, I am *Dae'mistishsa* and so do not see the choices of life as rigidly as some. I became a Beastmaster because that Discipline allows me to know intimately the truest and greatest conflict, that between Name-givers and our own spirits. I speak not of war, nor of combat where one is victorious and the other either dead or nursing her wounds. I speak of the mastery of self that commands others as forcefully as and to better effect than prowess with a weapon. Such mastery is no easy thing to accomplish; we must fight our own poor judgment and impatience every step of the way to attain it.

The beasts of our world teach us the first lesson of self-mastery: that our strength of will avails us nothing if we use it only to force our wishes upon others. If a carter whips his horse to make it go, the horse will buck and strain against its harness but will not move forward so much as a hand-span. The carter must master his annoyance, speak gently to the animal, and remind it that it wants to do as he commands.

Beasts do not disobey us for the pleasure of it; only Name-givers are such willful beings. The beasts, having no such flaw, survived the Scourge much better than we. The Name-giver races fell prey to the Horrors because they could so easily tempt us into a battle of wills, and our fruitless struggles fed their evil. The Horrors have no need to torture animals who neither resist, bargain, nor plead for their own desires to be met. But we Name-givers, intent on getting our own way, can be tricked. We enter into impious bargains to achieve our desires at any cost. In the end, however, we cannot master the world. We can only master ourselves. This is the first lesson of the Beastmaster.



On Learning Mastery from Beasts

When a Beastmaster takes the first steps on her path, she may feel little more than a fondness for beasts and a desire to spend time with them. The true teaching comes from the beasts themselves and is interpreted for the student by a Beastmaster adept. Such a teacher can be found wherever animals are trained, and the student who seeks truly will always find someone to set him on the correct path.

The Beastmaster must first discover and learn to see through the first veil. Those who are truly called to the Discipline will discover the veil simply by adopting and observing an animal companion. Many readers might believe that city life gives them an advantage in this, because companion animals such as donkeys, horses, and dogs abound there. In truth, however, it is difficult to learn of the first veil from a tame beast. A city-dwelling Beastmaster should choose as her companion an untamed city cat, rat, or bird in order to learn the lessons of its independent spirit. Would-be adepts who find wild-spirited companions in the untamed lands of Barsaive usually travel with a better guide through the first veil.

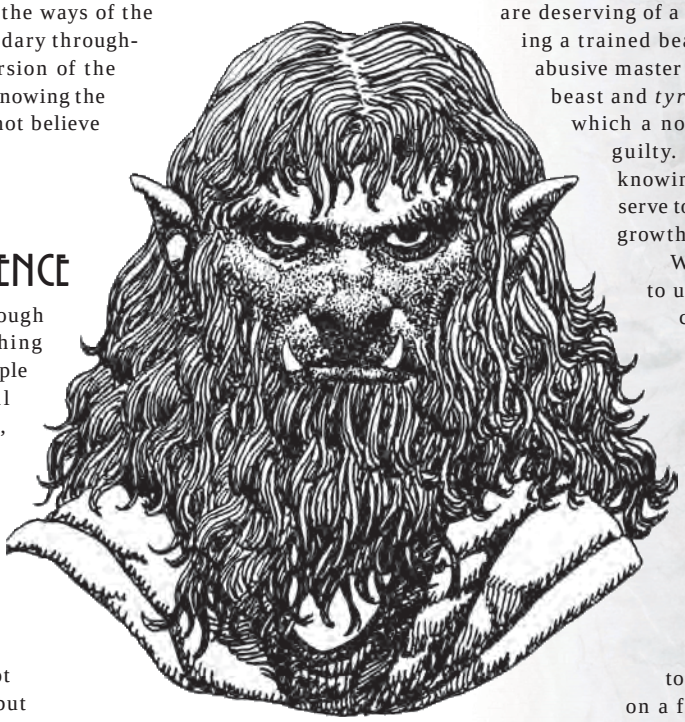
The first veil separates Name-givers from beasts, and all living things from the Horrors. Once you perceive the veil, and then see through it, the mist over the world clears and lets you see your surroundings truly for the first time. When you gaze at your faithful steed and see not merely a burden beast, but a spirit shining at you from its eyes with the clarity of starlight—when a beast's soul reaches out and touches yours—you have achieved your first glimpse through the veil.

Some Beastmasters find their way through the first veil without a teacher's guidance, though only under unusual circumstances. An ork Beastmaster of my acquaintance, M'rok

Grimshock, followed the Cavalryman Discipline before undergoing the transformation that led him to the Beastmaster's path. Though a true friend to his mount, he knew nothing of the ways of other animals. He did not even like them much; they made him uneasy.

During one brutal battle, Grimshock's mount fell beneath him, sending them both tumbling into a steep ravine. His companions, unaware of his fate, gave him up for dead when the fighting ended. All night, Grimshock sat beside his gravely injured mount, until at dawn the steed passed from this life. Grimshock, overcome with grief, stormed the deaf heavens with tears and cried in memory of his slain companion.

When the beasts in the ravine heard his heart-felt mourning, they gathered around the stricken ork. Perhaps it was Grimshock's strength of will or the depth of the bond he still felt for his dead mount, but the beasts responded to something in Grimshock—rather than slay him and devour both bodies, the beasts mourned with the Cavalryman. In the dawn of that sad day, Grimshock broke through the veil. He saw the animals' hearts, and they comforted him. Later that day, Grimshock returned to his fellows on the back of a huge, brown bear. From that time forward, Grimshock studied the ways of the Beastmaster, and has become legendary throughout Barsaive. (In Grimshock's version of the tale, he tamed and rode a brithan. Knowing the nature of those beasts, even I cannot believe that story!)



On the Virtues of Strength and Patience

Once the Beastmaster sees through the first veil, she can begin reaching the minds of the beasts. Many people believe that training an animal means forcing your will upon it, but this is not so. A Beastmaster must possess a strong will, but only because no animal will bond with a weakling. Weakness is dangerous, for a weak animal swiftly succumbs to peril. A Beastmaster must prove to the creatures she trains that she is strong and knows what needs doing. She does this not by forcing the beast to follow her, but by clearly showing the creature the direction she intends to go. All creatures know when to follow a leader. Show them that you are such, and the beasts cannot help but fall in line.

Consider the wolf and the cougar. One hunts alone, the other follows the leader of its pack. Yet both recognize the weakness of their prey, and that is why they attack. And both will come at the call of a strong Beastmaster; a weak and undisciplined Beastmaster, they abandon. They can see strength and weakness at a glance, and know the difference between them.

A Beastmaster must also have patience, for it takes time to build the trust that truly commands an animal. You cannot simply flash them an empty smile full of charm and hope to win them over. Animals know nothing of flattery. They see what is before them and respond to it. A Beastmaster must therefore also know her own flaws and how best to overcome or hide them. If you stink, beasts do not politely hold their breath and stay near you. If you speak loudly and foolishly, they do not listen patiently while you babble. If you are drunk, they do not carry you back to your pallet to sleep it off. The beasts of the world will not bear your flaws; they react to those they see and ignore what you do not flaunt at them.

Patience lets a Beastmaster bond with many creatures by learning how each expects to be treated. Patience builds trust and shows a beast your worth. Patience is the soul of self-mastery. Only if you prove your worthiness to a creature can you teach that creature. After all, a trained beast gives us far more than we give it. We train them to work for our needs, not for theirs. If we want the beast we train to give of its best for a far lesser return, we must be worthy of such a gift. Therefore, after we have taught the horse the way in which we need it to carry us, we must then recognize what it needs in return, and fill that need as best we can. A Beastmaster who does this receives the willing service of a companion who will never betray her.

One who has acquired an animal companion and pierced the first veil is a novice, known to other Beastmasters as a *tyro*. A *tyro* does whatever is needed to deepen her understanding of many beasts' ways, often earning her daily bread taming and training work-beasts for others. In addition to animal ways, this work teaches the *tyro* more of the ways of her fellow Namegivers by requiring her to discover whether they are deserving of a beast's labor or not. Turning a trained beast over to a neglectful or abusive master violates the trust between beast and *tyro*; it is the worst deceit of which a novice Beastmaster can be guilty. Such a betrayal, whether knowing or unknowing, can only serve to impede the Beastmaster's growth in her Discipline.

When a *tyro* has learned to understand many different creatures, she tests herself by forging a bond between creatures that are natural enemies, using their mutual trust of her to bring them together. If she succeeds in this, she becomes a Journeyman, or *par*. I achieved that station by calling upon creatures of land and sea to save a troll child stranded on a friend's raft from floating away. I persuaded several giant salmon to push the raft downriver to a ford, where a family of bears waded into the shoulder-high waters and stopped the raft's descent. None of the bears so much as glanced at the salmon, though great salmon are a bear's favorite delicacy.

Once a Beastmaster becomes a *par*, she tests her own skills against the strength of the beasts of the land. Such tests are often solitary, including such acts as attending the birth of wild animals, or joining a pack of animals and being accepted as one of them. Some *pars* begin working with only magical beasts. A *par* must set herself the most exacting tests possible, and repeat them until she can meet their challenges. A Beastmaster who does this may rightly claim the status of Warden. Though it is the *par* herself who determines when she has become a Warden, rather than a teacher, she may only claim this status when inner truth tells her that she merits it.

A Beastmaster who deceives herself or others about her true standing may as well renounce her Discipline, for she will never progress any further.

On the Many Kinds of Beastmasters

Some Beastmasters feel drawn to all types of beasts, desiring to work with and learn from them all. Such a one loves nothing more than learning the ways of an unfamiliar animal, and often travels across the land in search of more and more different creatures with whom to bond. I have known such many-minded Beastmasters to spend years wandering through wild lands, seeking fantastical animals who exist only in rumor or legend. Barsaive owes these devoted Beastmasters a debt beyond price, for it is they who bring back tales of the unusual creatures they have encountered and share with their fellow Name-givers the secrets they have uncovered.

Still other Beastmasters are drawn to magical beasts. I have known pars and wardens who so thrive on challenge that they work only with magically endowed creatures, finding all others too biddable for their liking. It is indeed a much greater challenge to prove oneself a worthy leader to an animal capable of wielding magic! Some magical Beastmasters believe that the secret to all beasts' survival of the Scourge lies in the creatures with magical skills. Indeed, some claim that certain beasts developed magical abilities because of the Scourge!

I have also met certain Beastmasters who call themselves Scouts. These, more than any, wish to learn from the beasts in order to help themselves, rather than to learn self-mastery. More than one young Scout has come to me for training, seeking the gift of knowledge so that they may borrow the sharp nose of the wolf or walk the silent tread of the cat. Too often, regrettably, their interest stops there. They are quick to pick up certain talents, and if they had the proper devotion to their Discipline, they could become able Beastmasters.

To the everlasting sorrow of every true Beastmaster, some of our number enslave the beasts who trust them. Such folk most often work only for profit and know nothing of self-mastery. Because the bonds formed between these Beastmasters and their animals are flawed and weak, such enslaved beasts often break free from their captivity or perish in the attempt. Such tragedies only serve to hide the secrets of the beasts deeper from us, because they teach the beasts to run from the Name-giver races. The Beastmaster who forsakes her duty to treat the creatures of the land with respect in return for power or coin can scarcely be called a Beastmaster, save that she has certain talents of our Discipline. Those of us who live by higher ideals know it is a sin to abuse our Discipline's magic and so dishonor the noble creatures who survived the Scourge. We who follow the true path shun the lesser Beastmaster, and no honorable teacher will train one. Just as stronger animals leave the weak and sickly to heal or die alone, so we leave the Beastmaster who exploits her animals to suffer the pangs of her own conscience.

I have often heard the tale of such a lesser Beastmaster, Named Kreg Shuerslan, who lived in Bartertown. Each year he paid others to capture animals from the wilds and bring them to his stable. There he whittled away at their hearts and minds, forcing his will upon them with lash and stick, preparing them for service in the mines or on farms or as pack animals for adventurers. Drunk with his own power, he enslaved all creatures on whom he could lay his brutal hands: even those creatures who should never have felt the hands of a Name-giver master.

One day, a mysterious stranger offered Kreg unheard-of wealth to tame a fleet of espagras as battle mounts. The espagra is a dangerous creature, able to wield magic in its wrath. But Kreg, sure that he could break any creature's will, gathered many hearty souls together for his espagra-hunting expedition. One of their number was a windling Troubadour, brought along to commemorate the event with a song. As Kreg strode out of town with much fanfare, he bragged that all of Bartertown would fall at his feet when he returned with his tame espagras.

A year and a day later, the windling Troubadour returned to Bartertown alone. She landed atop a statue in an open square, unslung her harp from her back, and began to sing the song of Kreg's expedition. She called it the *Song of the Great Espagra*. It told of a foolish Beastmaster battered to death by the great espagra, who then carried the Beastmaster's broken body straight toward the sun and dropped it in the path of his fleeing retainers.

I have always liked that story.

Of Those Races Unsuited to the Discipline

Though it might seem that any Name-giver race should be able to learn from beasts, two have marked difficulty doing so. Neither the obsidiman nor the t'skrang are well suited to the Beastmaster Discipline, and I believe I can guess why.

The obsidiman, though patient enough to prove himself a worthy leader and heart-strong enough to learn self-mastery, is most often so devoted to the earth itself that its mere creatures cannot hold his attention. He is so busy caring for the land that he cannot care for the beasts of Barsaive as a Beastmaster must. I once met an obsidiman merchant who had learned the skill of training animals, but he was no adept, nor did he care to become one.

The t'skrang sit on the other side of the donkey. For them, impatience is the great failing; no t'skrang I have met is willing to take the time to slowly teach an animal that he is its master. Also, the t'skrang love showmanship, and there is little dazzle or flair in what a Beastmaster does. I have met many t'skrang Scouts who have adopted practical applications of Beastmaster talents, but they care little for the underlying truths of our path. The Beastmaster's way requires a steady mind and a contemplative soul, and most t'skrang prefer to live their lives too swiftly.

Anyone who believes that t'skrang lack patience has never sailed a riverboat, nor tried to sell spices to orks who lack any decent palate.

—Sylviril, captain of the *Nemorth*

On the Beastmaster's Faith in Jaspree

Though a Beastmaster certainly may follow other Passions, all those I have met give the first loyalty of their hearts to Jaspree. No other Passion is closer to the spirit of the Beastmaster. Half beast and half Name-giver, Jaspree watches over her beast-children, aiding them and speaking directly to their hearts. This last is what all true Beastmasters strive to do, and Jaspree shows us the way. Someday, when we Name-givers are ready, the Passion will impart this knowledge to us so that all may know what we who master the beasts seek to discover.

We Beastmasters know that Jaspree loves all living things, but some followers of this Passion sadly believe otherwise. Certain questors of Jaspree value plants over animals, and of these misguided folk the Beastmaster must be wary. I once encountered such a solitary questor in a peaceful forest glen, wherein I had settled to carry out my Karma ritual. The questor happened upon me, realized what I was doing, and cursed me for drawing in beasts to destroy her forest. As she raved, she flung herself at me and began beating me about the head and shoulders. As soon as I recovered from the shock of her attack, I fled.

Since then, I have avoided places where I can see no beasts, rather than run across such a questor again and perhaps be forced to hurt her in my defense.

On Avoiding the Taint of the Horrors

The Beastmaster, by nature, spends a great deal of time with the beasts of the wilds. Traveling the untamed lands in search of new creatures is exciting, but also full of hazards. A Beastmaster must not allow her interest in strange animals to overshadow caution when approaching such beasts, lest she be entrapped by a Horror using some animal-like construct as a lure. A Beastmaster is a great prize for a Horror; if these abominations from other-where can pervert our Discipline's magic, they may use the Beastmaster's talents to create bestial servants. Such tainted animals can be the Horror's eyes and ears to far-off villages and towns; they may run mad under the Horror's touch and maim or kill all in their path. If a Horror uses the Beastmaster's bond to taint a magical beast, the beast's powers are turned to the Horror's will, causing untold destruction.

Worse than this, however, is the corruption of the very fabric of nature by a Horror-tainted Beastmaster. Through a Beastmaster's mind and heart, a Horror can manipulate the first veil, warping it so that the Beastmaster sees only the brutality that that Horror wants the Beastmaster to absorb. The Beastmaster's tainted sight in turn taints the veil, so that the darkness of it forever destroys the possibility of trust between beast and Name-giver. Sometimes, though less often, the Horror will cloud the veil, showing the beasts in a dimmed light so that the Beastmaster will overestimate her power over them. Many Beastmasters die under this foul influence, however, and few Horrors will slay quickly if they can torment a soul for years.

Those town and village folk who dwell in safer lands often fear the "touch of the wild" that the Beastmaster brings, and so we often must prove ourselves untainted by the Horrors. Simply working harmoniously with our creature companions does not always allay these fears, as many folk are unaccustomed to Beastmasters and our ways. Art is a better way to prove one's purity, and gives the artist much joy besides. Some Beastmasters engage in body painting, and a true master of this art can achieve a masterpiece that rivals even the loveliest embroidered creations. Others of us practice sculpture of stone or wood. I am a woodcarver, and

know no greater joy than to vividly render the form of a living beast in unliving wood. I was once asked to carve a statuette of a gazelle for King Varulus III, as much to test my purity as to enrich His Majesty with the beauty of my work.

On the Beastmaster's Duty Since the Scourge

Some who call themselves scholars tell us that the ferocity we see so often in the beasts of Barsaive nowadays is a permanent change, wrought by the ravages of the Horrors. These same bookish folk would have us believe we can do nothing to reverse the change. Such convictions are an appalling display of misguided ignorance. If the Scourge had so greatly changed the beasts of Barsaive from friend to enemy, no adepts could follow the way of the Beastmaster, nor could we still learn from our animal companions. Jaspree would never so utterly forsake her children, both beast and Name-giver, as to leave a permanent gulf of fear between us. If the mistrust between beast and Name-giver truly cannot be bridged, there is greater reason than ever to lament the Scourge and fear the lingering presence of the Horrors.

Indeed, the presence of so many generations of Beastmasters in Barsaive only reaffirms my belief that Jaspree has called us to bridge the gap created by the Scourge and strengthen the too-often weakened bond between the Name-giving races and the creatures of the land.

I urge the reader to keep in mind the often maudlin temperament of Beastmasters when considering this final paragraph. Many of Barsaive's beasts are dangerous, and Beastmaster sentimentality should not lull anyone into thinking otherwise.

—Melim, Assistant Scribe and Copyist of the Hall of Records

Game Information

Beastmasters have an innate affinity for working with animals. Many Beastmasters feel uncomfortable in large cities or towns, and prefer to live in the wild, away from other people.

Important Attributes: Charisma, Toughness, Willpower

Racial Restrictions: Obsidiman, T'skrang

Karma Ritual: The Beastmaster walks off a large circle, at least 20 yards in diameter, around the area on which he last slept. Then he sits in the center of the circle and makes a silent, meditative call to the animals of the area. At the end of the half hour long ritual, an animal typical of the local wildlife approaches, but does not enter, the circle. The Beastmaster motions for the animal to enter the circle, thus completing the ritual. The animal then leaves the circle and departs.

Artisan Skills: Body Painting, Sculpting, Wood Carving

Beastmaster Abilities

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

First Circle

Talents: Animal Bond[D], Claw Shape[D], Dominate Beast[D], Karma Ritual, Tracking, Unarmed Combat

Second Circle

Talents: Animal Training[D], Creature Analysis[D], Durability (7/6)

Third Circle

Talents: Lizard Leap[D], Cat's Paw[D]

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Charisma-only Tests.

Talents: Frighten Animals[D] *or* Enduring Art[D], Thread Weaving (Beast Weaving)[D]

Fifth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Willpower-only Tests.

Talents: Borrow Sense[D], Heal Animal Servant[D], Ritual of the Ghost Master[D]

Sixth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Toughness-only Tests.

Talents: Endure Cold, Incite Stampede[D]

Seventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.

Talents: Claw Frenzy[D], Sense Poison

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Talents: Leadership, Lion Heart[D], Poison Resistance

Ninth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.

Talents: Animal Possession, Bestial Toughness, Howl[D]

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.

Talents: Animal Leadership[D], Lion Spirit

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.

Talents: Develop Animal Sense[D], Tame Mount[D]

Twelfth Circle

Ability: By taking 2 permanent Damage Points, the adept gains the **Death Claw** ability. This damage can never be healed. When using the Claw Shape talent, the adept may spend an additional Karma Point (2 points in total) on each Damage Test.

Talents: Bestial Resilience[D], Chameleon

Thirteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and Spell Defense.

Karma: The adept adds +25 to his Maximum Karma Points.

Talents: Second Chance, Talent Pattern, Trample

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical and Spell Defense.

Initiative: The adept adds +1 step to his Initiative step.

Talents: Echo Location[D], Spirit Strike

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +2 to his Physical Defense.

Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.

Talents: Astral Web, Attribute Pattern, Venom[D]

Half-Magic

Beastmasters may use half-magic when dealing with animals in ways beyond those described by their talents, including animal breeding, first aid, and confronting or approaching wild beasts. When attempting to calm a wild animal, a Beastmaster can make a Charisma-based Half-Magic Test before attempting to use the Animal Bond talent.

Other possible uses of half-magic for Beastmasters include recognizing different animals, animal tracks, and abnormal behavior among animals and creatures.

Animal Companions

Beastmasters usually take a companion from the animal kingdom at some point in their lives. These partnerships resemble those between a Cavalryman and his mount, though they are not usually as strong or as lasting.

Beastmaster characters can gain an animal companion through use of the Animal Bond and Animal Training talents. If a character takes the time to correctly bond with and train an animal, the Beastmaster gains an ally that may accompany her on adventures. If the gamemaster permits it, this animal can attack enemies and perform other duties for the Beastmaster.

Gamemasters should carefully consider a player's choice when allowing a Beastmaster character to choose a potential animal companion. For example, only a few Beastmasters throughout all of Barsaive have magical creatures as companions and that percentage should remain low, though high-Circle adepts may manage this difficult feat. The most common companions for Beastmasters are mundane animals such as dogs, tigers, monkeys, eagles, or hawks.

Roleplaying Hints

The Beastmaster should strive to strike a balance between his appreciation for animals and his own status as a Name-giver. The Beastmaster delights in the company of animals, but cannot simply shun his fellow Name-giver races. The player should emphasize the Beastmaster's aloofness without making him anti-social.

Beastmasters run quite a gamut of personalities, from those who view animals with sentimental affection to those who see them as enigmas to be deciphered. Beastmasters also express varying views as to the superiority or inferiority of Name-givers versus beasts. How the Beastmaster character behaves toward his animal companions when he is not seeking adventure can offer an opportunity for great insight into his personal vision of his Discipline.

What animals does he work with? How does he spend his time? What is he learning from the animals, and what is he teaching them? Though encounters that answer these questions may be brief, occasionally playing out these everyday interactions can enrich the character immeasurably.

Gamemasters should look for ways to encourage this kind of roleplaying, even during adventures that might not otherwise focus on the Beastmaster and/or his creatures. If a Beastmaster regularly travels with one or more animals, the gamemaster should not conveniently forget these beasts when the character enters an inn or goes into combat. The player may want to control the beasts' actions, but ideally those decisions should come from the gamemaster. After all, animals are independent beings, and may react predictably, but should not be taken for granted. Even the most gifted Beastmaster cannot always accurately predict or dictate the actions of his animal companions.

A Beastmaster's personal vision should encompass at least some of the Discipline's higher ideals. An adept who acts like the "lesser Beastmaster" described in the fiction may suffer fewer talent crises, but he will likely have more difficulty finding Beastmasters willing to train him. He may even have difficulty working with his animals, because of the lack of mutual respect and trust between the character and his beasts.

Possible Discipline Violations

No matter how a Beastmaster sees the world or his Discipline, he should be committed to his relationship with animals. A Beastmaster who bases his relationship with animals on falsehood, tricks his animals into sacrificing themselves, or sells them into slavery to cruel masters is likely to sever a vital link with his Discipline and suffer a talent crisis. Such a character might restore the broken bond by performing a Deed of Atonement. He might confess to other Beastmasters what he has done, rescue animals he has sold into slavery, or nurse an animal wounded on his behalf or as a result of his deceit.

Rituals of Advancement

Beastmasters do not observe formal advancement rituals. To gain recognition of their advancement to higher Discipline circles, an adept usually displays an increased understanding of the natural world. The adept customarily devises these demonstrations herself.

Recruitment: Adepts recruit new members into this Discipline in a haphazard fashion. For example, ordinary Name-givers in life-or-death situations involving animals (facing a ferocious tiger, stranded with only a dog for a companion) sometimes undergo "spontaneous initiation" into the Discipline as a matter of survival.

Novice (2–4): The adept demonstrates the ability to communicate with a wide variety of creatures.

Journeyman (5–8): The adept successfully calls many creatures to execute a single task. Impractical but dramatic events may enhance the adept's prestige. A legendary example of an advancement ritual describes the ork Beastmaster Hulgrin luring a forest full of beasts to Vivane's town square and persuading them to lick the faces of every citizen present.

Warden (9–12): Adepts of these Circles test their own talents to satisfy themselves.

Ghost Master Ritual: The Beastmaster must meditate alone in the wilderness at night while sitting in a circle drawn around him. As animals and birds arrive to commune with him, the adept asks them to seek the desired ghost master. They fan out into the wilderness. After an hour, the ghost master appears and the ritual proceeds as normal.

Possible Discipline Combinations

The Disciplines most likely to appeal to a Beastmaster are the Cavalryman, Scout, and Warrior, each of which shares at least some Beastmaster talents, or emphasize a relationship with animals or the natural world.

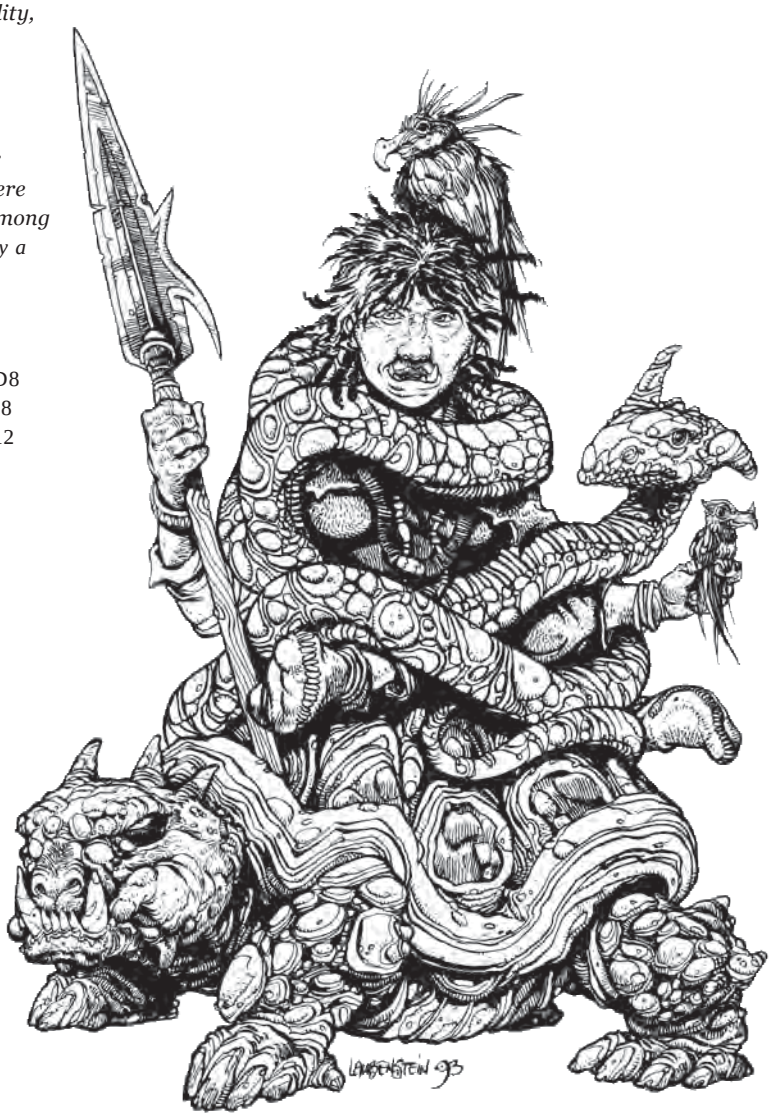
Other Disciplines traditionally require an adept to focus energy and attention on a single aspect of her personality, instead of mastering her whole self.

Spellcasting Disciplines in particular rarely appeal to Beastmasters as a second Discipline because of their emphasis on manipulating magic and book learning.

Ork Beastmaster

"Bah! What do you know of me? You see only what you wish. You think animals are crude and dirty, and so therefore I am as well. You have lost sight of their inherent nobility, the purity of their beings, their honor.

"There is a trust among my animals and between them and me that I do not find among people. My animals do not lie, nor do they betray, nor do they scheme. They are quick to love and forgive, and their loyalty, when earned, knows no bounds. Tell me, where can I find this in civilization? Where can I find this among people? Yes, some men I count as my friends, but only a handful have earned that status."



Attributes

Dexterity (13): 6/D10
Strength (16): 7/D12
Toughness (14): 6/D10
Perception (10): 5/D8
Willpower (11): 5/D8
Charisma (16): 7/D12

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 6
Social Defense: 9
Initiative: 5/D8
Physical Armor: 6
Mystic Armor: 2
Death Rating: 36
Wound Threshold: 10
Recovery Tests: 3
Knockdown: 7/D12
Unconsciousness Rating: 28
Combat Movement: 28
Full Movement: 56
Karma Points: 10
Karma Step: 5/D8

Talents

Animal Bond[D] (1): 8/2D6
Claw Shape[D] (1): 8/2D6
Dominate Beast[D] (2): 7/D12
Karma Ritual (1): 1
Tracking (1): 6/D10
Unarmed Combat (2): 8/2D6

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills

Artisan:
Wood Carving (1): 8/2D6
Knowledge:
Creature Lore (1): 6/D10
Wild Animals (1): 6/D10
General:
Fishing (1): 6/D10
Read and Write Language (1): 6/D10
—Dwarf (Throalic)
Speak Language (2): 7/D12
—Dwarf (Throalic), *Or'zet*
Swimming (1): 8/2D6

Money

Copper Pieces: 6
Silver Pieces: 1
Gold Pieces: 2

Equipment

Hide Armor (Phys 5; Myst 1; Init 1)
Buckler (Phys 1; Shatter 17)
Hand-Axe (Damage 11/D10+D8)
Whip (Damage 10/D10+D6; Entangle 9)
2 × Daggers (Damage 9/D8+D6; Range 9–15–18)
Adventurer's Kit
Trail Rations (1 week)
Traveler's Garb
Wood Carving Tools
Fishing Kit

Notes

The adept possesses the ork Low-Light Vision and *Gahad* racial abilities.

THE DARING AND DAUNTLESS CAVALRYMAN

This treatise on the Cavalryman Discipline I transcribed from the words of Jenna Kinkeeper, a human from the hinterlands. For all the hours we spoke together, she leaned against and petted her fine black horse, Caliph—whom she insisted on introducing at the start, as one might introduce a fellow Name-giver. This, more than anything else, gave me insight as to how Cavalrymen regard their animals.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

A Cavalryman lives for her mount, and her mount lives for her. We ride in the teeth of the wind; we eat, sleep, and wake part of another's existence. We are closer than mother and daughter, wife and husband; our fates are entwined in a way no one else can truly understand. Only when a mount chooses you and you accept can you truly understand what it is to live joyously in this world.

I have been a Cavalryman since the moment I drew breath, though it took me my first fifteen years to realize it. Throughout my life I have ridden with Cavalrymen of all races and know we are among the bravest and most loyal souls roaming this battered land. Were we not, our mounts would not love us so nor would we know the unequaled joy of their friendship.

THE WORLD OF THE CAVALRYMAN

An ancient saying among Cavalrymen goes, "every foal is born of a mare, and every mare was once a foal." Aged Cavalrymen often speak thus to their young charges about what it is to be an adept. Though such sayings do little to ease the joyous bewilderment of a youth who has just experienced her first Ceremony of Joining, the truth of these pearls of wisdom cannot be denied. No one can become a Cavalryman unless she possesses a natural empathy with animals and a need for motion that goes gut-deep. But the bond between rider and mount grows with learning, and as it grows it colors the Cavalryman's view of the world.

Caliph and I have known our bonding for eleven turns of the seasons now, ever since she was a spindly-legged foal who chose me as her rider, and I see the world as much through her eyes as through my own.

ON THE BOND BETWEEN MOUNT AND RIDER

We Cavalrymen see the world the Scourge has left us in a way few others can. The Air Sailor in her flying ship, perhaps, might understand what we mean when we say that the world is meant to be traveled. Life is meant for movement, for discovery, for the rhythm of hooves fading into the distance as a rider and her horse canter over the horizon. Floating a-horseback across the land, your senses sharp and alive, you touch the world with eye and ear and nose and skin, yet feel gloriously apart. Time has stopped for you and your mount, and it seems your ride will never end.

Why stay in one place for any length of time, when you can feel the wind tugging at your hair like a playful child as you bend over your mount's neck? Why stand still, when your horse's heart and yours blend together like your hair with her mane, together in perfect agreement as the world flows by around you? Even now, I can feel the tugging at my heart. Caliph and I would go and race the wind, had I not so much more yet to tell. But Caliph knows my mind, and will wait for me.

Though I cannot scent the wind as Caliph can, and she cannot grasp a pen in her hoof, we each understand something of the world as each of us experiences it. Scent, sound, and sight combine in our experience of the world, making it far more brilliant and vivid—we sense the world from two different and sometimes confusing perspectives at once. Experienced Cavalrymen learn to deal with this, and find it as easy as riding and shooting a bow at the same time. Our mount's perceptions join with our own just below the surface of our thoughts; we need only open our hearts to see through different eyes.

ON THE LIMITS OF RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS

Our universe is a wild and uncertain place, like a hurricane surrounding an island of perfect trust and

understanding. This island is the partnership between horse and rider. Outside stands the rest of the chaotic, chancy, often dangerous world; within, all is peace and pure intimacy. Though a Cavalryman can make friends and take lovers like any other Name-givers, no tie ever becomes as important t0 us as the bond between rider and mount. Now you know, scholar-scribe, why so few Cavalrymen marry; very few husbands or wives are willing to play second-best saddle to a horse! Only another Cavalryman truly understands how we feel, and so many of us seek companionship in the arms of others of our kind. That way, we need not feel torn between the affection of lover for lover and our overriding loyalty to our mounts. Both adepts know and accept the limits of their lover's bond.

A Cavalryman makes close and true friends, others by whose side we can rid our battle-scarred world of Horrors and other unimaginable evils. Though we can fight and laugh and sleep side by side with others of our own, two-legged kind, no one can touch our innermost souls save our mounts.

Most of us find the prospect of going through life without a partner whose heart and mind are as open to us as our own souls a terrifying—even horrifying—thought. The constant flow of affection between horse and rider simply outshines all other attachments, and Cavalrymen would have it no other way. So the next time a Cavalryman suddenly loses interest in your latest Theran joke, don't believe him contemptuous or arrogant. He feels no such thing toward you; you are simply less interesting to him than his horse.

Though Jenna barely makes mention of it, the reader should be aware that many Cavalrymen choose mounts other than horses. It is true that most humans, elves, and orks choose horses as their partners, but few horses can comfortably carry a troll rider, while windlings ride mounts better suited to their tiny size. Also, many orks, especially among the scorcher tribes, choose massive thundra beasts as partners. It is a minor point to be sure, but one worthy of making if this treatise is to be considered any form of authoritative information about the Cavalryman Discipline.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

On Life in a Cavalry

Though the love between each horse and her rider sustains a Cavalryman throughout her life, few of us live only in the company of our steeds. Almost all Cavalrymen join regiments, troops or other cavalry bands. The ork scorchers are particularly well known for their crack cavalries whose diverse members can act as one better than any other group in Barsaive. Certainly no Theran whip elicits such unity among them.

We join our fellow Cavalrymen because we and our horses wish to. Horses are herd animals, and enjoy each other's company as much as do Barsaive's Name-giver races.

Most cavalry troops are led by a "captain's pair:' the rider and mount who command the greatest respect from the greatest number. The captain's pair chooses aides, who each command a number of cavalry pairs beneath them. The manner of choosing leadership and position within the ranks varies greatly from band to band, but both horses and riders have a say in such decisions, and the abilities of each pair when working together are given great weight. Often, Cavalrymen advance through individual challenges, in which two pairs compete in races, battles and other tests of skill. Most battles are fought with blunted weapons, though I have heard that ork scorchers prefer challenges to the death.

Though Cavalrymen rarely practice a second Discipline, many devote themselves to a specific aspect of our Discipline. Many cavalries are made up almost solely of those we call soldiers, who devote themselves to the arts of war. Certain bands, most notably the windling Aisling Cavalry, so justly famed for their amazing speed and endurance, serve as messengers and couriers.

Messenger cavalries tend to be much smaller than soldiering troops and usually include a number of what we call horsemen, Cavalrymen who pursue riding skills and talents to the near exclusion of all else. A few Cavalrymen also become Beastmaster adepts. Such pairs have an unmatched ability to work together, and so can make their way safely through almost any territory.

On Daily Practices

A Cavalryman's life revolves around her horse, and the horse's around the Cavalryman. Nothing is as important to a Cavalry-

man as caring for her mount, and she will see to her mount's comfort even before breaking her fast. The Cavalryman feeds her horse, brushes and curries it, then checks its legs for splints and its hooves for signs of thrush, stone bruises or other problems. A Cavalryman can often sense if her mount is in pain or gravely ill; some troubles can be insidious, and so it pays to be cautious. A mount's legs and hooves must be well cared for, because a horse whose leg or hoof is seriously injured may never recover. To lose a mount is the worst nightmare a Cavalryman can imagine. I know; I have lived through that agony.

Unless a cavalry band is on active service, each pair spends the day rehearsing battle moves, riding maneuvers and other important skills. Cavalrymen on active duty do whatever is required of them; patrolling the outskirts of cities or towns, watching for trouble in city streets, carrying messages, or even fighting—though battle has become rarer since the end of the Theran War. In all such activities, the Cavalryman must give constant attention to strengthening the link between the spirits of rider and horse. At the end of the day, when mount and rider retire to rest, they often sleep together. All Cavalrymen sleep beside their mounts when traveling, and many Cavalrymen prefer to sleep in the stables of an inn rather than leave their mount alone in a strange place. Sleeping with my horse comforts both my body and my mind; my steed's warmth and strength enfold me, and the musky scent of horse lulls me to sleep in my soft hay-nest as surely as any lullaby.

On Becoming a Cavalryman

With every new foal born, a new Joining can begin. As they travel, Cavalrymen keep a constant watch for riding animals near to giving birth. When they spot a likely mount, they often arrange to stay near the pregnant animal until the birth of the offspring, and spend much of the time while they wait searching for Cavalrymen candidates. When the foal is born, the Cavalryman spends a day with the newborn animal, stroking its rough coat and whispering tales of glory and valor in its ears, all the while concentrating her thoughts on the potential adepts she identified earlier. If no one responds to this call, we accept that this youngling was not meant to be a mount and move on. If someone responds to the miracle of this birth, they will approach the foal before another sun sets. If the foal seems as drawn to the adept candidate as the candidate to the foal, and even if the potential adept does not realize why she has come, the Cavalryman then offers to train the foal as a mount for the candidate. If the candidate accepts this offer, she immediately becomes an apprentice Cavalryman, or else pledges to return in two or three years when the mount has matured. The dispute as to which method produces the better adept goes on as fiercely among us as ever, though never so bitterly as disputes among adherents of some other Disciplines.

Most Cavalrymen I know believe that any new bond that is truly forged will be strong enough to bring horse and rider together at the proper time, regardless of how many months or years they spend apart. Riders of this gait see separation as good and necessary, so that each member of the pair-to-be can know himself better before becoming so intimately bound up with another. Other Cavalryman believe just as strongly that the apprentice rider and foal should not be parted once they have bonded, however tentatively. They say that continuous company and shared experiences strengthen the bond between horse and rider, and make them truly one as no other kind of training can.

Regardless of the method, the official Rite of Joining cannot be performed until the foal has lived thirty months. Though every cavalry has its own ways of performing this sacred ritual, its core remains the same from band to band. From the pair's teacher and mount, the newly bonded horse and rider each receive a mark of joining. Though derived by custom from the mark worn by the teaching pair, it is always different enough so that each mark is as unique as the pair it binds. The mark may be branded on the new pair with fire, or tattooed, or the teacher may cut the flesh and rub dirt into the cut to form a raised scar. I have heard that ork scorchers favor the last method. Once adorned with this symbol of the Cavalryman's bond, the rider leaps onto his mount's back for the first time. As the two gallop together in joy, the rider silently Names their partnership. This Naming cements the budding heart-bond between the two of them. No Cavalryman tells another this Name, and to ask it is a deadly insult.

On Bonding More than Once

Death is part of life in Barsaive, more so now than in the times before the Scourge came to trouble us. Often, the dangers of our world leave one member of a bonded pair—most often the Cavalryman—to grieve for her slain companion. The survivor of a pair sundered by death, whether horse or rider, may bond again, though no Cavalryman can bond with more than one mount at a time. Such a thing would be a travesty; it would be like a king owing his whole loyalty to more than one realm, or a husband giving all his heart to more than one wife. None among us has discovered precisely why, but it is far rarer for a horse to bond again than for a rider to do so. All too often, a horse whose rider dies simply refuses to eat or drink, disappearing into the wilderness to die rather than going on without his bondmate.

Of all the Name-giver races, humans like myself recover most swiftly from the worst depths of our grief to form another bond. Some claim this is so because humans are more versatile than others; I believe we are simply stronger of mind. Trolls are the least likely to find another mount, partly because their notions of honor are tangled with the pair-bond and partly because it is no easy task to find a mount suitable to their size. Regardless, no Cavalryman of any race ever completely sets aside her sense of loss. We always remember our mounts, and miss them as a mother misses her departed children. Some Cavalrymen never recover from the shock of losing a mount, particularly if they feel somehow to blame for the horse's death. Such unending despair is a hazard of our Discipline. Because a Cavalryman's horse lives at most to the age of twenty-two years or so, and other mounts often less, all Cavalrymen know they will face a mount's death at least once in their lives. To know this and still enter the Discipline is a true feat of courage.

Of the Rite of the Hero

The end that Cavalrymen dread more than a mount's clean death in battle or the gentle passing that comes with age is a broken leg. Not even magical healing can make the bone as strong as it once was, and no horse cares to live on three legs. A horse that can never gallop again knows only a life of agony. We Cavalrymen have a duty to our mounts if they are injured so grievously that life will become unbearable for them. If in battle or accident a horse suffers a crippling, but not fatal wound, the Cavalryman must perform the Rite of the Hero. To leave your mount alive and suffering rather than face this awful and solemn responsibility is the single greatest shame that can befall a Cavalryman. Horses can sense such shame, and an adept who so disgraces herself will never find another horse willing to accept her after such a betrayal. I have heard the few scattered stories of Zena of Throal, a dwarf Cavalryman who redeemed herself in the eyes of the mountain ponies through a series of heroic trials, but this ancient tale cannot possibly have any truth in it.

The rite is simple and stark, as befits such a somber occasion. The adept cradles her wounded mount's head in her lap, and they meditate together on their bond-Name and all that it has grown to encompass. When both feel ready, the Cavalryman slices her mount's neck, then touches her dying mount's blood to the marks of their joining. As the mount dies, the joining brand fades (though it never fades entirely). I performed this rite for my first mount, Dancer, who gave his life fighting shadowmants in the

Thunder Mountains. I felt the bond between us slip slowly, torturously, out of my grasp, as a lifeline slips out of the weakening grip of a drowning sailor. The quick shock of death in battle is as nothing by comparison. Yet it was my duty to face this pain, and I dispatched my mount to the comfort of death as I had sworn to do. Any true Cavalryman would do as much, no matter what it cost her.

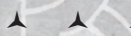
Of Honor Braids

This braid I wear honors the memory of my departed mount. Pay special respect to any Cavalryman you see wearing such an honor braid, for he has suffered a trial beyond any that you have ever experienced. Three sections of hair taken from the mount's tail are intertwined with three sections of the rider's hair to make an honor braid, and no rider will ever unbraid it. Sometimes, but only in the most dire circumstances, a Cavalryman will sacrifice her honor braid by cutting it off and casting it into a fire. By doing this before or during a great quest or battle, the Cavalryman may gain extra strength to face the challenge. Yet this act causes the adept such anguish that it is only done as a sign that a Cavalryman will give more than her life for the cause at hand. A dishonored adept may not wear an honor braid, and as a symbol of her disgrace it is shorn from her head.

On the Training of a Cavalryman

Every teacher of young Cavalrymen has her own way of training, but all teachers I know of teach the fledgling adept to ride first without bridle and saddle. Those things come later. Even after training, most Cavalrymen I know eschew such ungainly items as saddles and bridles; all the straps and reins and such that other riders find so indispensable only interfere with the bond between rider and horse. There is no need for a guiding rein when you need only open your heart to tell the horse where to go; the subtle pressure of thigh or knee to withers or flank is all we need to direct our mount.

No Cavalryman's mount will ever suffer a bit between her teeth—and woe to the fingers of whoever attempts to put one in her mouth!



No fighting Cavalryman should discount stirrups. Having a leather strap against which to brace your feet helps a rider stay on his mount's back in the thick of battle, where a sharp plunge or a quick turn at the wrong moment can toss you right onto someone's sword. I tie a simple girthband around my mount's belly, and the stirrups dangle from that. Peloquin fights better, too—he doesn't worry so much about throwing me to my death.

—Gether of the Red Plains Riders

In the beginning, training exercises increase the heart-bond between horse and rider. Games of hide and seek, in which the rider must sense where her horse has gone, are a favorite method of mine. In teaching the two younglings to work together as a team, many teachers blindfold rider and then horse in turn, so that each learns to rely on the senses of the other while in motion. Beginning with simple circles on lead ropes, the young adept learns to use legs, seat, and hands in conjunction with her mind to guide her mount, while the mount learns to send her own thoughts back to the adept. It is a delicate and wondrous time of learning for both!

Most Cavalrymen and their mounts benefit from the bond partly because we complement each other. Both Caliph and my lost Dancer are high-spirited and almost reckless, whereas I am serious-minded and calculating. Our differences cause disagreements at times—as Caliph's snorts testify—but we balance each other's weaknesses admirably.

Once the bond between them is firm, the pair learns more difficult riding and fighting techniques. Fighting skills vary from region to region, race to race, and regiment to regiment. Both horse and rider are always taught to fight; the adept with any one of a number of weapons, and the horse with hooves, teeth, and body. If fierceness can be lyrical, it is so when a Cavalryman and his mount engage in battle. They move together as one, using their weapons in a dance of deadly grace.

After a time, the novice adept can truly enter the ranks of our Discipline by performing a certain Karma ritual. She plants a target in the earth, then gallops away from it in random patterns for several minutes. Then she blindfolds herself and must return to the target, seeing her way solely through her mount's eyes. A new pair who completes this ritual is welcomed by their fellows into the proud First Circle of the Cavalryman Discipline. Moving to higher and higher Circles of accomplishment almost always requires an adept to prove an even stronger heart-bond between horse and rider, because that tie is the linchpin around which all else revolves.

Of Soldiers and Horsemen

Certain Cavalrymen choose to set aside certain facets of the Discipline in order to hone other skills to the finest possible point. Many Cavalrymen feel such limited focus is unwise, but plenty take up the most common specialties of soldier and horseman.

The soldier and his mount study the arts of warfare to the exclusion of all else. A well-trained soldier pair is one of the most deadly foes an enemy will ever face. Because battle fills their souls and leaves no time for other learning, the soldier pair may fall short in riding skills not used in battle. The partners also risk succumbing to battle lust, each feeding off the other's frenzy. Such berserkers can endanger friend and foe alike until the battle fever fades.

As the soldier eschews certain particularly tricky riding skills, so the horseman forgoes the arts of war in order to ride with the greatest skill possible. A horseman and her mount can certainly defend themselves, but the consummate skill with which they move almost as one being sets these pairs apart from other Cavalrymen. Horsemen often take on a second Discipline, almost always that of Scout. These horsemen pairs love to travel and explore; more than do all other heroes, Barsaivians owe to horsemen-Scouts our ever-growing knowledge of our land. They have been where others both long and fear to go, and have brought their knowledge back as a gift.

Well-loved tales told around many a cavalry's campfires concern the ork Yanock the Calloused and his great horse, the Wind. In all versions I have heard, Yanock and the Wind were two of the first beings to emerge from the earth toward the end of the Scourge. Tired of living trapped within their kaer's walls, the two agreed to journey for nine days toward each of the four winds. If they survived, they would report to the kaer that the end of the Scourge had come. The adventures of Yanock and the Wind during their journeys have spawned legends more numerous than the hairs of a horse's mane, but in the end they return triumphant to their kaer.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

Game Information

Members of the Cavalryman Discipline are fierce, mounted warriors. They train with their mounts and form a close empathic bond with them. In fact, a Cavalryman respects his mount more than any Name-giver, with the possible exception of other Cavalrymen. This Discipline emphasizes motion and empathy for one's mount.

Important Attributes: Charisma, Strength, Toughness

Racial Restrictions: Obsidiman

Karma Ritual: To perform his Karma ritual, the Cavalryman plants a target in the ground, then rides his mount several minutes distance away. First blindfolding himself, he directs his mount to return to the target. Once he closes to about 100 yards, which takes him half an hour to do so, the Cavalryman uses the almost psychic connection with his mount, and whatever other empathic talents he possesses, to urge his mount to charge the target. Still blindfolded, the Cavalryman strikes the target with one of his weapons. He then removes the blindfold to end the ritual.

Artisan Skills: Runic Carving, Wood Carving

Cavalryman Abilities

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

First Circle

Talents: Animal Bond, Avoid Blow, Charge[D], Karma Ritual, Melee Weapons, Trick Riding[D]

Second Circle

Talents: Blood Share[D], Durability (7/6), Empathic Command[D]

Third Circle

Talents: Spirit Mount[D], Wheeling Attack

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Strength-only Tests.

Talents: Resist Taunt[D], Thread Weaving (Rider Weaving)[D]

Fifth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Toughness-only Tests.

Talents: Ritual of the Ghost Master[D], Sure Mount[D], Wheeling Defense[D]

Sixth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Charisma-only Tests.

Talents: Dominate Beast, Mount Durability (6/5)

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on his mount's Damage Tests.

Talents: Lasting Impression, Missile Weapons

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.

Talents: Fearsome Charge[D], Leadership, Trample[D]

Ninth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.

Talents: Call Mount[D], Down Strike, Rally[D]

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and Spell Defense.

Talents: Armor Mount, Champion Challenge

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical and Spell Defense.

Talents: Heal Animal Servant[D], Tame Mount

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical and Social Defense.

Talents: Frighten Animals[D], Momentum Attack

Thirteenth Circle

Ability: By taking 3 permanent Damage Points, the adept gains the **Resurrect Mount** ability. This damage can never be healed. The mount must have been dead for less than a week, and the adept must make physical contact with the body of the mount to resurrect it. Each time the adept uses this ability to bring a mount back from the dead he loses an additional 1 permanent Damage Point. The adept's mount is restored to full capability, with all Wounds and damage healed.

Karma: The adept adds +25 to his Maximum Karma Points.

Talents: Life Check, Shield Beater[D], Talent Pattern

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical and Spell Defense.

Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.

Talents: Mount Attack[D], Spot Armor Flaw

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.

Initiative: The adept adds +1 step to his Initiative step.

Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.

Talents: Attribute Pattern, Ethereal Weapon, Multi-Charge[D]

Half-Magic

Cavalrymen may use half-magic for knowledge of different types of mounts used by the Name-giver races, upkeep of riding

gear, animal breeding and first aid, basic riding skills, and knowledge of significant cavalry units in Barsaive.

Mount

Cavalrymen begin game play with a mount of the gamemaster's choice. Such mounts are trained for riding only; the Cavalryman will need to invest time and effort into training his mount for battle. While humans, orks and elves prefer riding horses, trolls, windlings and dwarfs would obviously find horses awkward to ride. Some dwarf Cavalrymen ride smaller horses and ponies due to their short size; some use other animals as mounts, such as the troajin and the huttawa. Because of their great size and weight, troll Cavalrymen are known to ride large war horses, but most ride an unusually strong and sturdy breed of horse called a granlain. Too small to ride normal horses or thundra beasts, windling Cavalrymen most often ride small lizard-like mounts known as kues, or large birds called zoaks.

Descriptions for these different types of mounts can be found in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 456.

Death of a Mount

The death of a Cavalryman's mount is very serious for the adept. The Cavalryman suffers a –2 penalty to his Talent Tests until he successfully bonds with a new mount. This penalty is equivalent to that for a Serious talent crisis.

Effects of Honor Braids

An adept who performs the Rite of the Hero for a fallen mount may wear an honor braid (see **Of Honor Braids**, p. 88). A player character should record his current Cavalryman Discipline Circle when noting the honor braid on his Character Record Sheet.

For each honor braid an adept wears, add +1 to his Social Defense when dealing with other Cavalrymen. An adept who cuts off and burns an honor braid to gain power for some heroic purpose (saving a kaer, fighting a Horror, and so on) gains a number of Karma Points equal to his Discipline Circle at the time of that mount's death. These Karma Points must be used in the adventure or quest that prompted the Cavalryman to burn the honor braid. Unused Karma Points are lost. Once burned, the honor braid cannot be replaced.

Roleplaying Hints

Cavalrymen are generally a restless lot, driven by the need to move and act. A Cavalryman will rarely walk when he can gallop; he often charges into every situation and faces foes head on.

Unlike most adepts, who typically concentrate only on their own abilities, the Cavalryman is intimately bound to his mount. Even when physically separated, the two maintain a unique empathic bond. A Cavalryman's bond with his mount affects him mentally, emotionally, and physically. Because his mount is more important to him than any other being, the Cavalryman tends to keep a certain emotional distance from other people. For this reason, other Name-givers often see Cavalrymen as rude, brusque, or even a little brainless.

A Cavalryman's true brilliance and heroism most often shines while working in tandem with his mount. A mounted Cavalryman draws on the strength, will, and senses of two beings. The Cavalryman who seems shy and taciturn often startles his companions by making a dramatic personality change when working with his mount. While a Cavalryman does not usually find it difficult to work with other Name-givers, he often seems a bit odd to all but Beastmasters, who understand a little of these adepts' unique partnership with their mounts.

Possible Discipline Violations

Because the bond between a Cavalryman and his mount is so central to the Discipline, anything that diminishes its importance may trigger a talent crisis. A cavalryman who neglects his mount may suffer a talent crisis, the severity of which depends on how serious the neglect was. The longer the neglect continues, the more serious the crisis will become, until the bond between horse and rider is damaged so severely only a Deed of Atonement will restore it.

A Cavalryman may also trigger a talent crisis by valuing another Name-giver over his mount. An infatuation or other distraction with another Name-giver can weaken or even shatter the adept's empathic bond with his mount and harmony with his Discipline.

A Cavalryman who does not perform the Rite of the Hero for his mortally wounded mount (see **Of The Rite of the Hero**, p. 87) is guilty of a Heinous Discipline violation. Only a Deed of Atonement, such as an epic quest to honor his fallen mount, will make such an adept acceptable to another mount.

Rituals of Advancement

Many Cavalryman adepts belong to companies organized as military units. These units traditionally recognize an adept's advancement with ceremony and promotion. Player characters and other unaffiliated Cavalrymen tend to follow less formal guidelines.

Recruitment: When an adept's mount either sires or births a foal, the adept meditates at the birthing, then spends a point of Karma. Within a day someone will arrive to visit the newborn foal. If the foal likes the newcomer, the Cavalryman offers to train the animal as a mount and, when the mount grows old enough, recruit the visitor into the Discipline.

Novice (2–4): While mounted, the adept demonstrates a talent of the new Circle for an elder.

Journeyman (5–8): Accompanied by an elder, the adept rides blindfolded to an unknown destination, at least half a day's ride away, then returns to the starting point, still blindfolded. The adept then describes the destination to the elder, as seen through the mount's eyes.

Warden (9–12): A fellow Cavalryman rides for one hour in a randomly chosen direction, leading the adept's mount. At the end of the hour, the adept spends a point of Karma then sets out walking with a confident gait. When the adept finds the mount, the ritual is complete.

Ghost Master Ritual: The adept rides into the wilderness at night. After an hour of riding he makes a Ritual of the Ghost Master Test. At that moment he sees a dimly lit figure galloping away in the darkness and pursues it. If the test succeeds, he catches the ghost master and the ritual proceeds as normal.

Possible Discipline Combinations

While few Cavalrymen adopt multiple Disciplines, the Beastmaster/Cavalryman combination is the most common because both Disciplines emphasize empathic abilities and concern for animals. The Scout and Warrior Disciplines mesh well with the Cavalryman's aggressive instincts and desire for motion.

Cavalrymen almost never become Air Sailors, Sky Raiders, Nethermancers, or Elementalists. The Air Sailor and Sky Raider are divorced from the land the Cavalryman loves, while the Nethermancer and Elementalist separate themselves too much from the emotional, living world in order to pursue their Disciplines. These conditions would make it virtually impossible to maintain the Cavalryman's empathic bond with his mount.

Dwarf Cavalryman

"There is nothing, nothing, *like a good charge. Spurring my mount, coaxing her forward faster and faster until the land and the sky are nothing but passing blurs. That is when I am at peace.*

"We move as one, my mount and I, as a great, single unstoppable force. Brave and terrible, we ride without fear. When Cavalrymen ride together as a band, nothing can stop them. We become a whirlwind that pushes all else aside."

Attributes

Dexterity (12): 5/D8
Strength (16): 7/D12
Toughness (21): 8/2D6
Perception (11): 5/D8
Willpower (12): 5/D8
Charisma (10): 5/D8

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 6
Initiative: 4/D6
Physical Armor: 7
Mystic Armor: 1
Death Rating: 46
Wound Threshold: 13
Recovery Tests: 3
Knockdown: 7/D12
Unconsciousness Rating: 39
Combat Movement: 20
Full Movement: 40
Karma Points: 6
Karma Step: 4/D6

Talents

Animal Bond (2): 7/D12
Avoid Blow (1): 6/D10
Charge[D] (1): 8/2D6
Karma Ritual (1): 1
Melee Weapons (1): 6/D10
Trick Riding[D] (2): 7/D12

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills

Artisan:
Runic Carving (1): 6/D10
Knowledge:
Ancient Weapons (1): 6/D10
Weapon Lore (1): 6/D10
General:
Read and Write Language (1): 6/D10
—Dwarf (Throalic)
Speak Language (2): 7/D12
—Dwarf (Throalic), *Or'zet*
Tactics (1): 6/D10
Tracking (1): 6/D10

Money

Copper Pieces: 4
Silver Pieces: 2
Gold Pieces: 2

Equipment

Padded Leather Armor (Phys 4)
Rider's Shield (Phys 3; Init 1; Shatter 19)
Flail (Damage 12/2D10)
Spear (Damage 11/D10+D8; Range 18–30–36)
2 × Daggers (Damage 9/D8+D6; Range 9–15–18)
Adventurer Kit
Traveler's Garb
Carving Tools
Trail Rations (2 weeks)
Water Skin
Troajin (racial mount)

Notes

The adept possesses the dwarf Heat Sight racial ability.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ELEMENTALIST

As a practitioner of the Discipline of Wizardry, I took particular interest in the essays of those whose Disciplines have the most in common with my own. Or perhaps I should say, those I believed to have the most in common. I have since learned, as the following essay from Jedran the troll will attest, that the differences in world-view between the Wizard and the Elementalist, Illusionist and Nethermancer, are far more striking than I had expected.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

As a cranky old troll with a bad back, I've little patience for wasting time with flowery words. You want frills and lace about the world, about magic, go to an Illusionist. They'll tell you whatever you want to hear and do it up in all colors of the rainbow.

Me, I'm for plain speaking. I've been an Elementalist for more years than my old back cares to remember, and I see straight to the core truths in things. Almost can't help it, these days. Don't ask me what I see in you, scholar. You won't like it.

Most people, even trolls, don't take enough time to look to the heart of matters. When you boil all the world down to what's what, every single thing in it is made up of the five elements.

Oh, but I'm flesh and blood, you're thinking—or stone, for any obsidimen feeling left out of this lecture—and what in Scarrin's Horns does wood, air, fire, water and earth have to do with flesh and blood? Plenty. You have water in your blood, earth in your bones, air in your lungs, fire in your heart, and wood in your spine. Not literally, of course, but it's there just the same. If you were an Elementalist, you'd understand that. But you're not. So bend your ears my way, scholar, because old Jedran's going to tell you what it's like to know the elements in your heart and mind as well as your bones.

How the Elementalist Sees the World

Most folk see the world as a blurred jumble of sights and sounds, tastes and smells. They sense a hundred thousand things in a hundred thousand ways and label them all "different," without understanding that there really isn't all that much difference between any of them. Elementalists see the world much more clearly. When we look at plants and people, stones and flowers, we see the five elements of the Universe. Everything in this world of ours is created from the five elements. Everything. Now, some things are made up of only one element, some of two, some of all five, but every blessed thing holds its own piece of the Universe's building blocks. Even the foul Horrors that came near to destroying our world contain something of the elements, twisted though that something is! Don't give me that shocked look, scholar. Don't like the notion that Name-givers share anything with Horrors? Well, get used to it, because it's true. No sense hiding from truth just because it's unpleasant. If you try, it'll come back to bite you.

When an Elementalist like me looks at the world, he sees the elements in action. When we smell flowers or gaze at a rock formation, we're not just resting our eyes on something pleasing. We're watching how the air moves the pollen, or contemplating the pattern of the stone's growth through the years. Lots of times, we're communing with an elemental spirit, which most Name-givers can't see. No matter what, we're practicing our Discipline.

Do you see what I'm getting at, scholar? Elementalists move through a world of fundamentals. We can't escape the truths of life and death that the elements spell out, and we don't care to try. Leave that to Illusionists and other ostrich-headed folk. If they want to cover their world and their senses in layer after layer of pretense, muffling themselves and others in blankets of deception, they're welcome to it. But to Elementalists, who strive to strip away all sorts of eyewash, the whole idea is repugnant. We won't drown ourselves in drink or get caught up in a magician's tricks. Where's the pleasure in tricking your senses or in shutting them down? How can you see and know the world that way, hmmm?

Elementalists have no need for trickery. Reality is complicated enough, and we love the puzzles it sets us. Go ahead—ask one of your fellow librarians in the Hall of Records to give you every treatise in the library on the nature of reality written by Elementalists. You'll give him heart failure with a demand like that! Certain aspiring Elementalists I know have spent several months on their rumps in the Great Library poring over scrolls and tomes on the nature of a single element. Our curiosity about the world and the nature of reality colors our dealings with elemental spirits, those peculiar beings that live just the other side of most people's "real-

ity." I'll speak more of them later—but not until I'm sure you've got at least some of the essentials.

I can't say life as an Elementalist is easy. But we know just how important we are to Barsaive and we won't leave our task to be done by anyone else. Because Elementalists are the only Name-givers who are always aware of reality's true nature, we are also the only ones who can do anything with the five elements from which the entire world is built (and the only ones who can keep an eye on them). We're the ones who deal with the elemental spirits, most of whom care little for Name-givers or anything that distracts them from striving for more power for their own element. We do these things for a vital purpose: maintaining the balance between elements in our world. No Name-giver could exist without the presence of all five elements, and the nature of reality will warp if we ever let the balance veer too much in any one direction.

And another thing. During the Scourge, kaers with copies of the Book of Tomorrow knew to place a ball of True earth over a bowl of True water, so that when the two touched and turned to mud they'd know the level of magic in the world had fallen low enough to end the Scourge. Well, we all know the level of magic has held steady at just above that mark, and even we Elementalists don't completely understand why. But because the balance of elements must hold the key to answering this question, every Elementalist takes it as his duty to learn more about elemental balance and its meaning for Barsaive.

We practice our Discipline nearly every waking moment, and we must regularly speak with the elemental spirits. Not an easy thing, scholar, to switch from communicating with spirits to talking with other Name-givers. I'm telling you now why Elementalists seem so odd to ignorant folk. When we talk to the air, stick our hands in the fire, or blurt out bits of what sounds like nonsense, our actions make perfect sense to us in our dual awareness of spirit and flesh. Just as orichalcum is the inanimate manifestation of the elements in balance, so are we its living manifestation.

We use the symbol of the five-pointed star, which represents a perfect balance among the five elements, to remind ourselves to honor all the elements to keep our world safe. So that we are consciously aware of the importance of balance (it is always prominent in our hearts), we use the five-pointed star in many of our rituals, speak of it in our proverbs, even embroider it on our robes. Watch for Elementalists wearing and using distorted or misshapen stars, though. They may signal a Horror's taint.

On the Need for Balance

Our world requires the elements to remain in balance, lest the nature of reality change. Some of my fellows tell me that the balance of the five elements somehow affects the ebb and flow of magic. If so, the key to lessening or even preventing another Scourge may well belong to a lock within the Elementalist's grasp. Now there's a notion, eh, scholar? Keeping a balance among the five elements sometimes gets difficult. In order to work our magic best, we need the aid of different elemental spirits, and each of them wants us to favor its element in exchange for its help! I've lost count of how many times an air elemental has demanded that I not cast any earth spells for a year and a day, or a wood elemental insisted that I cease casting fire spells. But if I agree to these demands, I stop balancing my use of elemental magics. And then I'm in sore trouble.

Whenever an Elementalist adept favors weaving the spells of any one element, or stops weaving one element's spells, the balance within his own spirit tips out of whack. If the imbalance becomes critical enough, the adept may even lose the knack of using certain elements in his spells! An adept who favors or ignores one element too much will suffer the consequences. I knew a young windling adept who favored air spells above all others, and rarely honored fire magic. Soon, the poor little wisp of a thing could only think clearly while in flight, and he lost all the energy and passion that fire brings to life. He was constantly exhausted and depressed, and ceased to care much about anything. Lucky for him, he managed to re-balance himself over a period of several months, but the effort cost him most of his remaining strength.

Now that you bring it to mind, there is one curious exception to all that. Elementalists who openly acknowledge favoritism toward a certain element don't suffer for it as others of us do, though they have their own peculiarities. I'll speak more of that later.

I can tell by your face that you don't understand why an unbalanced Elementalist is so bad for anyone except the poor fool himself. Well, I'll tell you. We have a saying: "As the Elementalist goes, so goes the world." Ever hear of the Great Mountain, or the Great Tree? Those are symbols we commonly use to describe and represent the world. As a troll, I prefer the Great Mountain, though elves and humans and the lizard-men prefer the Tree symbol. I'll give you both, as I can't guess what ragtag assortment of folk will end up reading this. Don't want anyone to feel left out, after all, though I doubt most of you bookish types and paper shufflers will understand half of what I've said. The Great Mountain has its stony roots in the earth, its slopes bear wood and the water of a thousand cold streams, its peak is air, and its heart is fire. The Great Tree also has roots of earth, a trunk of wood, branches of fire, and leaves of smoke—that's air, for the ignorant—and the water of life runs through every vein of it. All the elements are there, scholar—all of them, in perfect balance, make up the fabric of reality. Throw off that balance and you've got trouble worse than a Horror breathing its foul stench on the back of your neck! And because we Elementalists live so close to the heart of reality, and strengthen or weaken the elements by our actions, an unbalanced Elementalist means an unbalanced part of the Great Mountain.

I've seen it happen myself. Some silly fool of a novice Elementalist came close to washing Urupa into the Aras Sea because he didn't know enough about what he was doing. An elf, he was, who loved water best of all the elements. He also loved greenery, and thought it a crying shame that all Barsaive wasn't covered in trees and underbrush and whatnot. He happened to be traveling in the arid lands between Urupa and the Thunder Mountains, the part just before you run into the lush delta country, and he decided to grow an oak forest for some local villagers because it would be pretty. Pretty, of all things! So he cast water spell after water spell, drawing on the water of the Serpent River and far-away Lake Ban. He got armies of delighted water elementals to make rainstorm after rainstorm for him, until the land near the village was awash in water. The oak seedlings sprouted, sure enough—but he'd thrown the balance of elements in the region so far off kilter that the storms wouldn't stop. The river and lake waters grew higher and higher, and the terrible floods all but drowned the delta near Urupa. There was water up to my waist in most of the city's streets that year. Silly fool drowned most of the village's crops, too, which consisted of local plants that thrived on the meager water they customarily received. And what did he leave them with? A fine stand of completely inedible young oak trees! You see the trouble caused by imbalance?

Of Elemental Spirits

Contrary to the belief of any number of ignoramuses wandering around Barsaive, elemental spirits are not simpleminded, easily bullied serfs who come running at the beck and call of any wet-behind-the-ears novice Elementalist. Elemental spirits are extraordinarily independent beings, and I've never met a single one who thought itself inferior to Name-givers. Truth be told, I've had more than a few arguments with spirits who claim that we Name-givers are confused and pathetic creatures whose patterns are all mucked up in a wild mishmash of elements we don't understand. The antics of certain of my children lend weight

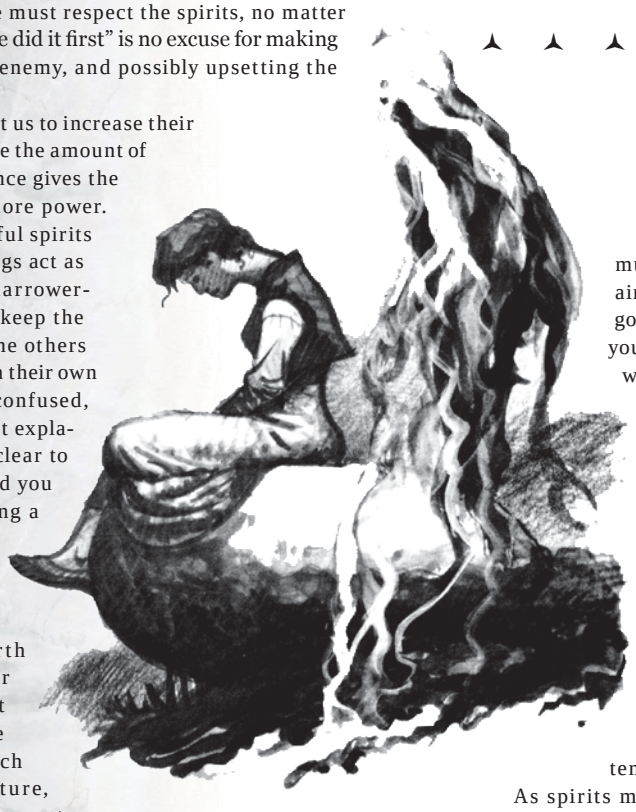
to such assertions, but I see both viewpoints as mistaken. We Name-givers are not superior to elemental spirits just because we're complicated beings, nor are they superior to us by virtue of their simplicity.

The second mistake most often made about elemental spirits is the variety in existence. There are a lot more than the five or six everyone may think they know—hundreds of them share our world with us. The most common are spirits of earth, air, fire, water and wood, but I've also met flower spirits, mud spirits and hearth spirits, to name just a few. And I've read or heard of hundreds more.

Elementalists treat with these spirits, even making friends of them on occasion. Dealing with them successfully, though, is much more difficult than most of you ignorant folk realize. We can see straight to the heart of reality, but we don't live there. Elemental spirits do. The reality they understand and the one we understand are two different places, and sometimes that gets in the way. Many a time, a simple misunderstanding by an Elementalist or a spirit sends the spirit off in a snit before we've even finished talking to it.

Each type of element, and each spirit, has its own peculiarities. An Elementalist needs to keep firmly in mind that most elemental spirits *want* to aid us in our magical workings, because our efforts often extend the spirit's influence in the world. Even a hint of arrogance in our behavior, however, makes these proud beings angry. They've a sense of personal honor touchier than a troll's and that's saying something! So we hammer it into every apprentice's brain that he must respect the spirits, no matter how they act in return! "He did it first" is no excuse for making an elemental spirit your enemy, and possibly upsetting the balance into the bargain.

Elemental spirits want us to increase their particular element because the amount of a given element in existence gives the spirits of that element more power. Fortunately, some powerful spirits with a larger view of things act as a counterweight to the narrower-sighted ones, striving to keep the elements in balance as the others strive to dominate through their own element. You're looking confused, scholar, but that's my best explanation. Seems perfectly clear to me. And because you said you didn't want this becoming a magical-theory tome, I suggest you ferret out *Of Elemental Balance*. Nice piece of work, that.



No Elementalist worth his salt, sweat, breath, or passion goes long without weaving the power of the elements into spells. Each element has its own nature, which the Elementalist must know in his bones if he's to use the magic at all. We learn to know each element by channeling its energy through our own bodies, because the body remembers better than the mind! (And my apprentices wonder why my old back hurts so much! Humph.)

Remember too, that many spells are woven of two or more elements. To wield them properly, the Elementalist must understand each element involved. When I cast Plant Talk, I know that the element of wood is present in the plant's strength, and that the element of air is present in the plant's and my own speech. Both send their energies through my old bones. Youngsters are too likely to forget such things.

Of Working with Earth

Catching the attention of earth spirits requires deep meditation, because these beings communicate at the roots of our own awareness. They also think slowly, compared to most Name-givers save obsidimen. Achieving that slowness of mind is a difficult trick for young adepts especially, because they're so easily distracted. Urgent needs are hardest to convey to the earth spirit, because urgency and slowness just don't mix. In truth, many Name-givers find it difficult to think at all while in deep trance, though obsidimen have a real knack for it.

When casting with earth, the Elementalist must draw upon heart and bone. Your mind must be as implacable and unchanging as earth while you weave the element through your body. If you falter or change your intent while wielding earth spells, the threads of your spell may well shift away from you like dust in the wind.

Of Working with Air

Air spirits are light-minded, intelligent, and as changeable as spring breezes. One minute they love you like a brother, the next they're convinced you mean to betray them. Patience and clear speaking are needed when dealing with these spirits, as is a sense of humor. Air spirits also enjoy strange jokes, and often practice them on their Elementalist friends. Windlings have what might be considered an affinity for air spirits, being of like temperament.

Ah, but a windling is not so fickle.

—Keohrt, windling Elementalist

Funny enough, air is the element of communication when used in spells. Casting an air spell is like holding a conversation; you've got to know exactly what you want to say, but you've also got to listen sharp and respond to what you hear. The adept must hearken to his own senses and the movements of air through his body in order to weave this element in magic. If you try to grab hold of the air and force its power—shouting, we call it—you'll lose the threads of the spell.

Of Working with Fire

Fire spirits are almost as changeable as air spirits, though less suspicious. The same fire spirit may have far different concerns and even show a far different temperament from one meeting to the next. As spirits made of light, they see farther and faster than other kinds of spirits, and often allow or deny the Elementalist whatever aid he wishes far more quickly. I've never known an Elementalist who successfully lied to or tricked a fire spirit, and I wouldn't care to try.

Passion, hunger, and truth revealed are the first words that come to my mind when I think of the element of fire. I remember what fire's wild energy feels like, and my heart beats harder and faster in anticipation. Intoxicating, that's what it is. Makes you feel warm all over, like a good strong ale. Fire spells are not for the weak-willed, which is why they're a favorite of mine. To wield this element, be single-minded and passionate about what you want. Otherwise, the fire will escape and burn whoever is in its path. I've seen some fools so drunk by the power of fire at their

fingertips that they lose control of it and harm themselves or their friends. Luckily, such lapses are rare.

Of Working with Water

Spirits of water are less like each other than any other kind of spirit. I've dealt with no small number of them over the years, and I still wonder what sort of a creature I'm going to encounter every time. The only constant I've ever noticed among water spirits is their unwavering confidence. Other Elementalists of my acquaintance tell me that water elementals hold back more and bargain more shrewdly than other elementals. They seem to particularly love t'skrang, for obvious reasons.

Every Elementalist must find his own way to wield this ever-shifting element. An old t'skrang colleague of mine speaks of the "everchanging changelessness" of water spells, and I think she's got the right of it. Water is a paradox, always changing but always the same. The best advice I can give for casting water spells is to work from your heart, open yourself to the water flowing through your veins, and to flow with whatever emotions or thoughts fill your empty self with each casting. Look within, and find your own answer.

Of Working with Wood

Wood spirits vary from tree to tree. I prefer oak spirits because their solid strength reminds me of my own people, but that's my bias. Wood elementals are the most bound to the world of we Name-givers, and so bespeaking one isn't all that different from talking to an elf or a t'skrang or a human. Wood spirits drive the hardest bargains, though. They're as unyielding as their element can be. Unless an Elementalist can prove that his actions will somehow aid the wood elemental, it is almost impossible to get help from the pesky thing without promising to do it a service. I know one young Elementalist, desperate for a wood spirit's aid, who spent the next year and a day planting acorns and other nuts! And yes, wood spirits do seem to prefer working with elves. As to blood elves and wood elementals, some claim the wood spirits prefer these twisted excuses for Name-givers. Others say most wood and other elementals refuse to deal with the thorn-pierced ones.

Wood is the stuff of growth and life. When an Elementalist stands near young saplings in the spring, he should feel their exuberant growth as surely as he feels his heartbeat. When casting spells with wood, remember growth and the goodness of change. An adept who has grown too comfortable with unchanging patterns of thought or action soon loses his touch for casting spells relying on this element.

Of the Place of Orichalcum in the Balance

Orichalcum holds special significance for we Elementalists. This magical substance symbolizes the world in perfect balance. Not for us the worry of you other folk over how much coin a piece of orichalcum or a True element can bring you—we see such things as objects for study, not gain. My children roll their eyes and argue with me every time I bury pieces of orichalcum in the earth or within the bole of a tree, or otherwise "lose" them. I pay them no heed. By such acts, I am honoring one of the elements without which orichalcum could not exist. This practice, which we call "orichalcum tithing," brings us goodwill from the spirits of the element to which we tithe.

Though I have never met one, some adepts are said to attain such amazing skill and understanding in the Discipline that they can bespeak orichalcum spirits. Tremendously powerful, these spirits rarely deign to communicate with any Name-giver. The so-called "orichalcum adept" is honored above all other Elementalists, even those of a higher Circle. They are said to wear an orichalcum pentagram as a mark of their status. As to their specific abilities, none save the orichalcum adepts know what they are.

These so-called orichalcum spirits and orichalcum adepts are the stuff of children's tales! No substantial scholarly information about them exists, and that leads me to doubt their existence. Readers, learn a lesson here. Do not embrace every word that is written.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

On Training an Elementalist

Though we Elementalists tend to be close-mouthed about the details of our Discipline, we always keep an eye out for new recruits. Unlike certain other Disciplines, the Elementalist Discipline doesn't tend to attract hordes of would-be practitioners eager to learn our ways so they can accomplish feats of daring. The Discipline is too subtle for that sort of nonsense. Instead, we watch non-adepts for signs that they respect the elements or are sensitive to their workings. I found my latest apprentice, a young innkeeper's daughter, when she insisted I not travel onward because a fierce storm was coming. She said this even though the skies were as clear as a mountain spring. Much to my surprise, the innkeeper actually heeded his daughter's warning, setting his children to close the shutters and lock the animals in the barn. He told me the child had a knack for predicting storms, and I knew right then she was an Elementalist born.

Having set his sights on a potential apprentice, the Elementalist talks to him or her to find out how the apprentice-to-be sees the world and his own affinity for the elements. Weather-sense or some such isn't enough by itself; an apprentice must be able to learn the Discipline. Often, an adept places the would-be apprentice where one or another of the elements clearly holds sway; they go walking in a rainstorm together, or stand near a bonfire. The adept then asks his companion what he sees and feels. If the answers are promising, the adept formally asks the candidate if he wishes to become an apprentice. My young apprentice heard unintelligible whispers and felt a cold breeze in her hair when a storm was coming, so I knew she was well-suited to the Discipline.

The apprentice starts learning at once, thrown into a physically and mentally exhausting array of experiences that will help her sense and understand how the elements work in the world. Along with this, the adept discusses with the apprentice the nature of reality. Gradually, the apprentice learns to see the world through new eyes. She comes to understand the balance between the elements, and how to manipulate them to her advantage without doing the world harm. She also learns about the elemental spirits and the grave consequences of "twisting the pentagram," or purposely working to pull the elements permanently out of line.

Once an apprentice demonstrates sufficient knowledge and ability to reach the First Circle, her most difficult training begins. As we say, 'True learning comes by doing." Elementalist adepts learn a number of techniques and spells that are theirs alone, and so I cannot discuss such things in this essay. Not my secrets to reveal, are they? I can tell you that rituals play a particularly important part in the Elementalist Discipline.

On the Significance of Ritual

Ritual is a private, personal, and very important aspect of any Elementalist's existence. Only ritual can truly open our eyes and minds, and only continued practice of rituals lets us maintain our unique ability to touch both our own world and the realm of the spirits. Rituals are the lenses that allow us to shift our vision from one world to another.

In his Karma ritual, each adept brings each of the elements into his heart and sinews. Boiling water on a fire, mixing the water and earth to make mud, painting the mud on our faces with a wooden stick, and letting the wind dry the mud in patterns, allows us to experience each element in turn. Often, the patterns made by the wind in the drying mud show us patterns of power to embroider on our robes. I have also heard of adepts whose Karma ritual warned them of a temporary but grave imbalance in the local elements, which they were able to keep from becoming permanent. If ever the breeze blows out my fire, or the water in my pot boils over and burns my hand, I will know trouble is nigh.

Elementalists conduct numerous rituals. The simplest to perform (but often the most difficult to set up) are the rituals of Circle advancement. Adepts attempting to reach Fifth Circle and beyond have the greatest trouble, because of the sheer complexity of the task they must accomplish. These Elementalists must demonstrate their power in front of an elder adept and a number of spirits equal to the desired Circle. But the more elemental spirits are present, the more chances there are for disputes among them that can keep the ritual from happening. Innumerable Elementalists have been stymied by feuding elemental spirits, or their own short-sighted treatment of one. Other difficulties include convincing enough spirits to attend the ritual without too much fuss, and inevitably at least one of them will demand that the Elementalist perform a service for them in exchange. Most Elementalists consider these services part of the Discipline, of course. As long as the elemental does not demand something that might throw off the balance of the elements, these services are of as much value to the adept as to the spirit.

Of Those Who Follow One Element

Given what I've said about the importance of elemental balance, it may surprise readers to learn that some Elementalist adepts confine their studies and workings to only one of the five elements. Granted, most of us frown on such a choice as possibly irresponsible, but it seems that Elementalists who narrow their paths in this way *follow*, rather than cause, shifts in elemental power. For example, water Elementalists seem to crop up by the dozens when water becomes scant. Some of us wonder how long it will be before these single-element practitioners pull the balance awry, but even I have to admit we've discovered no evidence that they'll cause that kind of harm. Why not, I can't imagine—but then, the world has a few secrets from us all.

One who chooses a single element can still cast spells using other elements and can still bespeak the spirits of those elements. However, they lose a certain amount of ability in working with elements other than their chosen preference. In that one, they excel. Though an Elementalist of any race can choose any element, obsidimen tend to prefer earth, windlings air, elves wood, and t'skrang water. Orks, humans, and trolls rarely favor one element over another, though certain Sky Raider clans are thick with air Elementalists. Troll stories say these air Elementalists helped several kaers of Sky Raiders to keep their skills sharp during the Scourge, when the raiders were forced underground along with the rest of us.

On Those Adepts Known as Enchanters

Certain Elementalists follow the path of the enchanter, focusing on manipulating elements physically and magically. Enchanters create magical items whose power and beauty are second to none. They have unsurpassed skill at creating items from one or more True elements, infusing such objects with elemental energies. A number of the magical items in Barsaive were made by enchanters, a fair lot of them humans. Every Name-giver race has its enchanters, but humans seem to like this path best of all. They love things, humans do, especially adornments. Perhaps that explains their enchantment with enchanters! (You're not laughing, scholar. Didn't you like my joke?) Many enchanters also learn the Weaponsmith Discipline, and can create amazingly powerful weapons. Almost all the most famous magical weapons are the work of such adepts.

Game Information

An Elementalist is a spellcaster who focuses on learning about, and gaining power over, the five magical elements: air, earth, fire, water, and wood.

Important Attributes: Perception, Willpower

Racial Restrictions: None

Karma Ritual: To perform his Karma ritual, the Elementalist first draws a triangle on the ground. While sitting in the triangle, the Elementalist boils a pot of water, singing to the fire all the time to encourage its heat. Then the Elementalist extinguishes the fire and adds earth to the water, turning it into hot mud. When cool enough, the Elementalist covers his face with the mud like war paint, then sings to the wind, calling a small breeze. As the wind

dries the mud over the next half hour, much of it cracks and blows away, leaving behind a series of intricate, swirling patterns. The Karma ritual is then complete.

Artisan Skills: Robe Embroidery

ELEMENTALIST ABILITIES

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

First Circle

Talents: Karma Ritual, Read and Write Language, Read and Write Magic[D], Spellcasting[D], Spell Matrix, Spell Matrix, Thread Weaving (Elementalism)[D]

Second Circle

Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.

Talents: Durability (4/3), Fire Heal[D], Spell Matrix

Third Circle

Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.

Talents: Air Speaking[D], Elemental Tongues[D]

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Perception-only Tests.

Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.

Talents: Astral Sight, Spell Matrix

Fifth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Willpower-only Tests.

Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.

Talents: Elemental Hold[D], Ritual of the Ghost Master[D], Summon (Elemental Spirits)[D]

Sixth Circle

Ability: By taking 1 permanent Damage Point, the adept learns the **Fire and Ice** ability. This damage can never be healed. For 1 Strain Point of damage, the adept may do one of the following:

1. Create a small flame between his thumb and forefinger. This fire lasts for only 1 round, but is intense enough to light a torch. If used in combat, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against his opponent's Spell Defense to burn him. The flame inflicts Step 3 fire damage. Physical Armor protects against this damage.
2. Freeze water by touching it with his middle three fingers. The adept can freeze up to 1 quart of water from each use of this ability. If used in combat, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against his opponent's Spell Defense to freeze him. The touch inflicts Step 3 cold damage. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Talents: Cold Purify[D], Willforce

Seventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Talents: Enhanced Matrix, Unshakable Earth

Eighth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on spell Effect Tests.

Talents: Enhanced Matrix, Leadership, Temperature[D]

Ninth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.

Talents: Armored Matrix, Metal Ward[D], Safe Path[D]

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.

Talents: Plant Shelter[D], Reshape Object[D]

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical and Spell Defense.

Talents: Animate Object, Summoning Circle[D]

Twelfth Circle

Ability: By taking 2 permanent Damage Points, the adept learns the **Earth and Wind** ability. This damage can never be healed. For 2 Strain Points of damage, the adept may do one of the following:

1. Create an earth circle 3 yards in diameter. Every character within the circle, friend or foe, adds +3 to their Spell Defense. The effect lasts for as long as the adept desires, up to 24 hours.
2. Create a flow of air that circulates through a 10 yard by 10 yard by 5 yard area. The air is brought in from and returns to the Plane of Air and, although cold, is clean and fresh. The effect lasts for as long as the adept desires, up to 24 hours.

Talents: Armored Matrix, Bargain With Summoned Creature[D]

Thirteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and Spell Defense.

Karma: The adept adds +25 to his Maximum Karma Points.

Talents: Moving Earth[D], Talent Pattern, Water Dancing[D]

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense and +2 to his Spell Defense.

Recovery: The adept gains an additional Recovery Test per day.

Talents: Earth Armor[D], Shared Matrix

Fifteenth Circle

Ability: By taking 3 permanent Damage Points, the adept gains the **Element Matrix** ability. This damage can never be healed. For 3 Strain Points of damage, the adept can create a temporary Rank 5 Enhanced Matrix from any object made of a single element (a rock or a piece of wood, for example). The matrix lasts for as long as the adept desires, up to 24 hours.

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.

Talents: Attribute Pattern, Hold Thread, Shared Matrix

HALF-MAGIC

Elementalists may make Half-Magic Tests to recognize different plants, different elements, uses of elemental magic, and other magical rituals.

Sensing Elements

Elementalists may make Perception-based Half-Magic Tests to locate and gather True elements (see **Gathering and Mining True Elements** in the **Enchanting** chapter, p. 279).

Sensing Elemental Spirits

Elementalists may also use Half-Magic Tests to sense the presence of elemental spirits. When in or near an area dominated by one element (i.e., a forest or jungle for wood or plant spirits, near Death's Sea or a large fire for fire spirits, on an airship for air spirits, and so on), an Elementalist may make a Perception-based Half-Magic Test to detect the presence of elemental spirits within 20 yards of his location. The Detection Difficulty for sensing an elemental spirit is equal to the spirit's Spell Defense (determined by the gamemaster). If the test succeeds, the Elementalist can

sense the presence of the elemental spirit and can use spells, or talents such as Elemental Tongues and Elemental Hold, to communicate and interact with it.

The gamemaster may also choose to make a Half-Magic Test on behalf of an Elementalist character at any time. If the test succeeds, the gamemaster informs the player that his character senses an elemental presence of some sort. The player then determines how his character reacts to this information.

Orichalcum Tithes

If he wishes, an Elementalist can tithe to a particular elemental spirit by placing an orichalcum coin within the element in question (throwing the coin off a cliff, placing it in a lake, burying it in the earth, and so on). The coin is lost to the Elementalist; it cannot be recovered or re-used. If the Elementalist is out of favor with the spirit or is suffering a talent crisis, the tithe may restore the Elementalist to the spirit's good graces, serving as a Deed of Atonement. In other cases, the Elementalist gains a +1 bonus to his Spellcasting Tests when casting spells involving the element to which he has tithed. This bonus lasts for one month for every coin tithed.

Specialists

An Elementalist who specializes in one element gains a +2 bonus to his Spellcasting and Thread Weaving (Elementalism) Tests when casting spells based on his element. However, he also suffers a –2 penalty to those talents when casting spells that utilize other elements. For example, a water Elementalist gains a +2 bonus to his Spellcasting and Thread Weaving Tests when casting the Ice Mace and Chain spell, but suffers a –2 penalty to his Spellcasting and Thread Weaving Tests when casting the Path Home spell. The gamemaster has the final say as to which element or elements a particular spell uses.

Roleplaying Hints

Many Elementalists see their role as a living bridge between the "real" world and the realm of elemental spirits—a realm most Name-givers never see. The Elementalist must connect with the denizens of both worlds while maintaining enough emotional and intellectual distance to keep an impartial watch over the world's elemental balance. This difficult balancing act sometimes causes the Elementalist to behave in ways others find odd, and he may often seem to be slightly distracted.

Also, because Elementalists tend to see their Discipline as a way of getting at essential truths, few of them care to spend time and effort on unnecessary words or flowery phrasing. They often speak and act with a frankness and openness that other people may find blunt, rude, or refreshingly honest.

Elementalists who specialize in one particular element tend to have personality traits and quirks similar to those of the elemental spirits they favor. Of all Elementalists, specialists are most likely to behave in ways other Name-givers find inexplicable.

Possible Discipline Violations

Elementalists try to remain in tune with the elements, respecting nature in all its forms and placing the balance of the elements before other considerations. These constraints even apply to specialists; they may favor one element, but not to the extent that the overall balance is threatened. Elementalists who do not acknowledge the importance of each element in his life risk losing touch with the elemental balance, suffering a talent crisis. Elementalists may also bring on talent crises by purposely harming the elemental balance, purposely polluting or harming a given element, or overusing or underusing a particular element. The severity of the violation depends on the nature of the specific offense.

Offending or ignoring an element for a long time may cause either a standard, generalized talent crisis or a specific talent crisis that only affects the adept's ability to wield the neglected element. The adept may fail completely the next time he attempts to use the element in question, and in the interim he may feel a loss of qualities he associates with that element. For example, an Elementalist who deliberately stopped using air spells for a month or more might suffer a Serious or even Severe air talent crisis. The adept might wake up short of breath every morning, suffer dizzy spells, or hear curses whispered on the wind.

Rituals of Advancement

Because most magicians (with the exception of Illusionists) prefer to keep the extent of their abilities a secret to all but their most trusted allies, Elementalist rituals usually involve private displays of spellcasting and thread-weaving prowess.

Recruitment: Elementalists recruit new adepts privately, sometimes secretly. A magician who needs an apprentice watches for likely candidates in his or her everyday travels. When she finds a potential adept, the magician tests him or her in some way suited to the Discipline. For example, an Elementalist may invite the candidate to share the experience of seeing or feeling a natural event; a rainstorm, surging river, forest, or even a campfire. In the course of ordinary conversation, the adept casually asks the candidate to describe what he sees. Candidates who answer with unusual sensitivity undergo more obvious tests; the adept may summon a spirit and ask the candidate to converse with it. If satisfied by the candidate's responses, the adept recruits the candidate to the Discipline.

Novice (2–4): The adept casts a spell of the new Circle in the presence of an elder.

Journeyman (5–8): The adept must cast a spell of the new Circle in the presence of an elder and 5–8 elemental spirits. The higher the Circle of advancement, the more spirits who must attend. The adept must personally locate and persuade the spirits to appear. This may be more difficult than it sounds, because enlisting an elemental's cooperation often requires the adept to fulfill a request or execute a task for the spirit.

Warden (9–12): The adept researches and demonstrates for other Elementalists a new spell of the new Circle.

Ghost Master Ritual: Elementalists use a variant of the Nethermancer's Ritual of the Ghost Master. The Elementalist draws a pentagon rather than a circle, its five points representing the five elements. Ambitious Elementalists, those who would summon a particularly skillful master, disdain to bring the required orichalcum coin to the ritual. Instead, they collect quantities of all five elements and bring them into the pentagon, during the summoning assembling them into new- made orichalcum. The summoned ghost master accepts the raw orichalcum and, when he or she reappears three nights later, returns it in the form of a pledge coin.

Possible Discipline Combinations

The Weaponsmith Discipline is a common choice for a second Discipline, because the Weaponsmith focuses on working with the elements in physical form. The Wizard Discipline also works well as a second choice, as it traditionally encourages stern pragmatism in its practitioners.

The only Discipline that is nearly impossible to combine with that of the Elementalist is the Illusionist Discipline, because the two traditionally require antithetical views of the world. The Illusionist tends to find the truth of things by disguising it, while the Elementalist tends to break something into its component elements, stripping away all disguise and artifice.

Dwarf Elementalist

"The world works in balance. Air, Earth, Fire, Water and Wood together and alone form everything that we know. Control these forces and you control reality.

"Such forces, however, must not be taken lightly. An Elementalist's power really lies in coercion. We coax and push the elements to do our bidding, knowing full well that the slightest wrong move could shift them against us. Elementalism requires concentration and great force of will, for nature is not commanded lightly nor easily, and she is very unforgiving."

Attributes

Dexterity (13): 6/D10
Strength (13): 6/D10
Toughness (15): 6/D10
Perception (16): 7/D12
Willpower (15): 6/D10
Charisma (9): 4/D6

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 6
Initiative: 6/D10
Physical Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 2

Death Rating: 38
Wound Threshold: 10
Unconsciousness Rating: 30
Recovery Tests: 3
Knockdown: 6/D10

Combat Movement: 22
Full Movement: 44

Karma Points: 7
Karma Step: 4/D6

Talents

Karma Ritual (1): 1
Read and Write Language (1): 8/2D6
—*Sperethiel*
Read and Write Magic[D] (1): 8/2D6
Spellcasting[D] (2): 9/D8+D6
Spell Matrix (1): 1
Spell Matrix (1): 1
Thread Weaving (Elementalism)[D] (1): 8/2D6

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills

Artisan:
Robe Embroidery (2): 6/D10
Knowledge:
The Horrors (1): 8/2D6
Magical Lore (1): 8/2D6
General:
Melee Weapons (1): 7/D12
Read and Write Language (1): 8/2D6
—Dwarf (Throalic)
Speak Language (1): 8/2D6
—Dwarf (Throalic)
Wilderness Survival (1): 8/2D6

Money

Copper Pieces: 4
Silver Pieces: 8
Gold Pieces: 1

Elementalism Spells

First Circle: Earthblend, Earth Darts, Flameweapon, Plant Talk, Purify Water, Resist Cold, Resist Fire

Equipment

Leather Armor (Phys 3)
Broadsword (Damage 11/D10+D8)
2 × Daggers (Damage 8/2D6; Range 9–15–18)
Adventurer's Kit
Booster Potion
Embroidered Robe
Embroidery Kit
Traveler's Garb
Grimoire
Trail Rations (1 week)

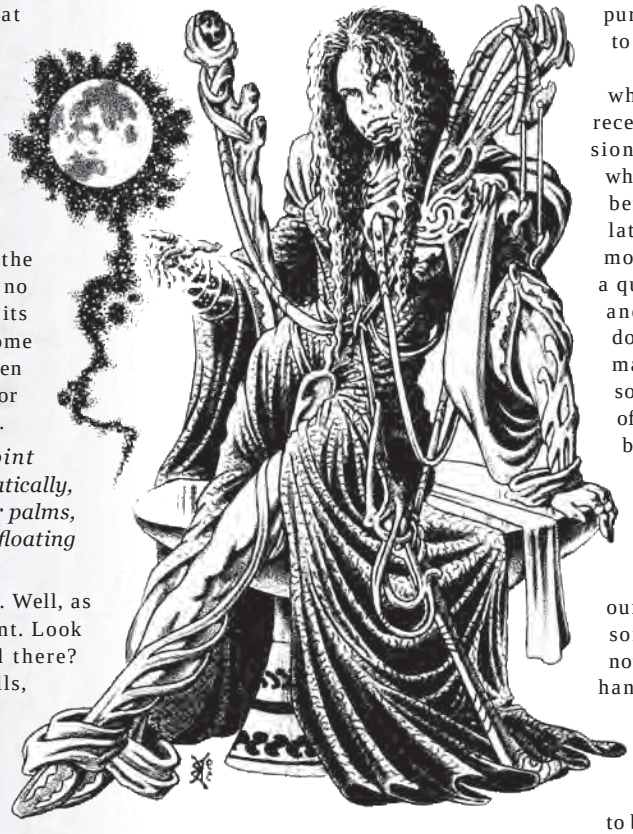
Notes

The adept possesses the dwarf Heat Sight racial ability.

An Illusionist Reveals the Truth

The following are the words of Illianstra, Illusionist from the city of Urupa. Her first explanations of her Discipline troubled me, but as she spoke further I realized that her heart is as sound and true as any Wizard's. Many of my fellows who believe otherwise—as many do, for prejudice between magicians is shockingly common—would do well to read this text and revise their opinions a little.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •



So you've come to see what secrets you can pry loose from my wagging tongue. Well, you won't be disappointed!

Illusionists know the greatest secret of all: the secret of truth. To know what illusion is, you must first know what's real. Understand?

Your eyes tell me you believe the lies told about Illusionists. That's no matter. Remember, every lie has its seed of truth—though more in some than others—and the truth itself often lies. Puzzled? Consider an onion—or no, an apple—no, a—oh, here, look.

[Editor's Note: At this point Illianstra waved her hands dramatically, produced flashes of light from her palms, and created a vision of Barsaive floating in the air before us.]

This is our world as we see it. Well, as you see it. But that's not the point. Look closer. See, there and there and there? That darkness lurking in the hills, those shadows washing out of forgotten kaers? Those are the Horrors. You don't think about them; most Barsaivians don't. They'd not know a Horror if it walked up and pinched them on the cheeks. Why? Because they've gotten too used to trusting their senses to tell them the "truth" of what they see. And that, my friend, is utter nonsense. In fact, it's dangerous nonsense.

When we lived in the kaers, no one dared trust something as faulty as their own senses. No kaer allowed any one person to decide what was true, and therefore how to live, because the Horrors can so easily fool our senses. Illusionists reminded the people of Barsaive how easily they could be gulled, and kept them vigilant.

Some say our Discipline began in the kaers—maybe so. I've read ancient tales of Illusionists entertaining the people in the kaers, creating great plays for them with magic. Men and women alike fainted at the sight of phantasmal dragons rushing toward them, jaws dripping with flame, or cheered at the spectacle of the hero slaying the Horror and saving the kaer from destruction. But the tales also say that the people picked apart the Illusionist's work for days afterward, uncovering its inner workings through consensus about what was real and what was not. That is the true purpose of my Discipline: not merely to entertain, but to instruct.

We still teach what is real and what is fantasy, though we often receive scant thanks for it. Our illusions and glamours surround us wherever we go, casting bold images before us. Some fools call us charlatans, and claim we do nothing more than use our magic to make a quick bit of silver off the gullible and feebleminded. Not so! Oh, we do earn something for our "performances," but not nearly as much as some would have you believe. Most of us do what we do because it must be done. We will not cease trying to teach you people how to see, though you despise us for it.

I suppose our methods do paint a picture of deception. It's true we often use illusion to hide our faces and pass ourselves off as something we are not. But we are not common thieves! If coin changes hands because of our illusions, or if others are foolish enough to pay far too much money for spells in which they put far too much stock, is that our fault? Are we to blame? No! We do these things so that others will learn to look closely at all things magical. Magic can be beneficial, but can also pose grave danger. We left the kaers, but we have not left behind all the dangers from which they sheltered us. Horrors still roam the land at will, and we Illusionists fear that our fellow Name-givers may have forgotten how subtle these monsters truly are. So when we work illusions that may cause pain or cost someone money, we do so for the greater benefit of all. Through our actions we try to teach others to see as we do, to realize that all of our world is but a thin veil hiding reality in the illusory folds of Truth.

You hear my words with skepticism, as well you should. Questioning face value is a sign of a healthy mind. Also, I admit that some of my kind are more than a little self-serving. There is the seed of truth in your doubting! But I challenge you to find even one Illusionist who has ever deliberately used his craft to harm another Name-giver. You won't find one. If our magic causes harm, it is only the harm that other people allow to fall on themselves! If you believe harm should befall you from an Illusionist's spells, then it certainly will. If not, our magical workings will not disturb even a hair on your head.

I know that to most people this attitude makes it look as if we Illusionists shift responsibility for our own actions to others, but I don't intend it so. I have spoken the truth as I know it. But then, the heart of Illusionist teaching tells us that truth isn't always what it seems...

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I sincerely hope this serious flaw in perception is not common to other Illusionists. Do all of these men and women believe themselves blameless for the harm their spells can do because nothing happens unless the victim wills it to or believes it will? Interesting—and frightening.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

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The Tale of Odu Fratan

For your better understanding of the worth and power of illusion, I offer this tale. When I was much younger, having just reached the Fourth Circle of my Discipline, I came to live for a time in a small village at the western edge of the Liaj Jungle. The little town was always on the verge of collapse, and I used my talents constantly to keep the people from despair. I learned that the town had begun as a way-station for the caravans that folk were sure would soon begin to pass through with the re-opening of the high roads, but no one came when it became common knowledge that travel through the Liaj was nothing short of suicide. Without the coin and goods that the caravans would bring, the town withered. The villagers scraped a livelihood however they could, and the going had been much harder than they had expected.

Not long after I arrived, Odu Fratan pulled his wagon into town. A tall, strapping human with scraggly hair and a livid scar down his right arm, Fratan doled out food and other sorely needed supplies from the covered back of the wagon. He asked for nothing in return, save that the people listen to his counsel and abide by his advice while he stayed in the town. He claimed his stay would be brief, as he had business in the jungle. No one bothered to ask him the nature of his business.

I didn't much care for Fratan. Most of the townspeople thought me wary of him because he had done what I couldn't: brought them food and other necessities of life. But I knew he was an evil man, for I could practically smell the mark on him. I also knew no one would believe me if I simply said, "Don't listen to this evil man, he'll harm you." So I watched his comings and goings, and waited for a chance to show them the truth.

Odu Fratan made a trip into the jungle once every month, and each time was gone for a week or more. During one of those weeks, I convinced my neighbors to at least give me a chance to show them that Odu was up to no good. If I was wrong, I said, I'd move on and never bother them again.

I was ready the night Odu returned. I made a simple glamour that wouldn't fool anyone close up, but would do the trick perfectly in the moonlight at a distance. My illusion was a hand-span larger than a human, rising out of a shadow at the edge of the town. Covered with spikes, it oozed a malignant purple glow. As I sensed Odu Fratan cresting the rise, I began speaking to the shadowy form. "Yes, master, I have delivered them all to you," I said, in the shiveriest voice I could manage. "This is the last." So saying, out of the shadow I worked another, more lifelike illusion of a young girl. Sweat beaded my brow, and I felt a trickle of blood dribbling from my nose as I strained to hold both illusions together. Then I made the shadowy form grab the little girl and devour her in a gulp.

Shaking with fatigue, I bowed to the thing I'd made and said, "The town is yours, master. Give me the power you promised me."

Suddenly Odu charged at me, screaming and howling for blood. "They were mine," he screeched. "My master promised that if I delivered them to him, my power would reign eternal!"

The town Archer shot Odu Fratan through the eye before he reached me. Our "benefactor" was the tool of a Horror, and I alone had sniffed out its taint. With the help of my illusions, he was unmasked before he could harm anyone. Only my illusions could have done it.

That is the power of my Discipline.

On the Life of an Illusionist

How do I spend my time? Studying, traveling and performing, and having the occasional adventure. Adventures usually prove quite enlightening, and so I go wherever they take me. I pity those magicians who spend all their time with their beaky noses shoved into the spines of moldering texts. Oh, they may understand the theory right enough, but how can anyone truly know what magic is who hasn't hastily whipped off a spell to save herself from certain doom? You can't know the truth without living in the wide world, as the saying goes. And that's as near to an absolute truth as you'll ever hear, so take heed.

I suppose I'm as much a "typical" Illusionist as any, which is to say I'm about as much like another Illusionist as a windling is like a troll. So in that sense, it's nonsense to speak of "the life of an Illusionist." But if it will help people to understand the truth of my Discipline, I'll gladly describe a day in my life to you.

Mornings come early for followers of my Discipline, just as they do for most magically minded individuals I know. Before I even rise from my bed, I spend a few minutes looking around for illusions or changes; after all, you never know what this lovely, changeable world will throw at you next. If I'm satisfied that nothing much has changed, I perform my morning ablutions. Never you mind the details; let's just say I like to be clean and to wear my hair knotted above my head, as it is now. I can see you admire it, and I thank you.

My morning meal varies, depending on where I am. I'll try just about anything once, adding new flavors, smells, and textures to my repertoire in case I want to use them for illusions. Those three things are the hardest to create, you know. Sight and sound are incredibly simple; most people believe anything that comes through their eyes or ears. But the tongue, nose and skin are touchier, likely to pick up even the smallest mistakes. So I like to eat a lot of different things to see how they feel to these three senses. While I'm eating, I try to puzzle out a little more of the truth of the world. Not easy to do, but I have my training to fall back on. I'll describe that later on, when it will make a little more sense to readers. I spend an hour or so every morning taking in the world around me and seeing if it all makes sense according to the rules I understand.

If I plan to travel, I spend a little time packing up and plotting a trail that won't involve hiking over mountains or through swamps (two geographical nightmares that seem to exist solely to confound travelers). If I plan to stay in one place for a while, I poke around and find someone to talk to. Oftener than not, I discover someone who needs to look a little harder at the world around him. I can't explain how I know them when I see them—we Illusionists simply sense these things. My Discipline demands that I help such people, and so I begin by working a few uncomplicated spells on him to see how he reacts. Sometimes I take a little coin from him if he seems to need an extra effort on my part. As soon as he realizes that I may be gulling him, or that something unusual is happening, I know I've succeeded in opening his eyes to the truth. Off I go, casting a few illusion spells to cover my tracks. After all, I'm no help to others if I'm running from an angry mob of good-hearted but simple-minded citizens eager to avenge a harmless bit of foolery!

If I don't run across someone who needs a truth lesson—a rare occurrence—I practice my spells somewhere out of sight, usually in my room. This practice-time allows me to perfect the little

spells I use every day, and to work on the more difficult ones I use more rarely. It also allows me to study the difference between the "real" spells I know how to cast and the illusory ones. It's fascinating how these two types of spells work together, and the differences between them. That very distinction probably holds more than a few clues about the nature of the world we inhabit. That's also part of my training, so it seems like a good time to tackle that subject.

Illianstra's practice of eating new foods in order to master illusions of taste, smell and touch is an excellent example of something few people consider in relationship to this Discipline. The idea that an Illusionist might need to experience something before she can devise an illusion of it is a new idea to me. My own understanding of such things is now more complete, for which I am indebted to Illianstra.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

On Training and Teaching

Some people, especially other magicians, seem to go out of their way to claim that Illusionists have no formal training. That is simply not true, and represents one of the many falsehoods often repeated about the Discipline by those who ought to know better.

The School of Illusion—a fancy Name for our Discipline, isn't it? Quite imposing—includes three kinds of Illusionists: students, teachers, and phantasms. I am a student, and so spend much time traveling across Barsaive to discover the truth for myself. I and my fellow students return home from time to time lest our travels lead us too far from the path, and during these respites from travel we spend most of our time with our teachers.

Our teachers do not lead us by the hand, as they do in some other Disciplines. They rarely tell a student anything as fact, instead confronting us with problems and questions that can guide us to a new level of awareness. All teachers encourage free thinking and a ready exchange of all ideas, no matter how strange or radical. Teachers are often called guides, because they guide the flow of our thoughts where they are naturally inclined, gently prompting us to recognize the truth of our lessons within the frame of our individual world-view rather than forcing us to see our lessons in a specific light as do many teachers of other Disciplines.

Teachers choose their Illusionist apprentices long before the candidates themselves realize they have been singled out. Illusionists seek out would-be adepts who naturally possess a keener eye for what is real than most, and then test the chosen apprentice with illusions designed to distract or terrify her. My teacher chose several particularly horrifying waking nightmares with which to plague me, and I spent several days in numbed terror before I understood what I was seeing. My friends and family all became terrifying monsters; I still see them leering in my dreams from time to time if I have been badly upset. After three days, I began to notice small clues that hinted at the falseness of what I saw, and at last I managed to track down the illusions' source. When I confronted the woman who wished to be my teacher, she congratulated me. Then my training began in earnest. I believe that this is a common way for teacher and student to meet.

Training is a never-ending series of tests and illusions that can drive many a student to complete distraction. In fact, they are meant to do precisely that. The best metal requires the hottest fire, and only stringent training will make a worthwhile Illusionist. Teachers often place their students in the middle of incredibly vivid, lifelike illusions, then giggle hysterically as the student blunders around in search of a way out. This is the essence of training with an Illusionist. You no longer accept things as real simply because you see or hear or smell them. Instead, you test and test and test again absolutely everything before you accept its reality. Of course, one must also become very thorough and very fast at testing reality. Most Illusionists excel at making accurate judgments based on small details. Without swift and accurate analysis, an Illusionist's life would become a never-ending series of tiny, cautious steps in the face of possible peril. What can you possibly hope to accomplish by living that way?

Teaching our Discipline is every bit as demanding as learning it. The teacher must be several steps ahead of the pupil in order to create illusions and cast spells that the student will find nearly impossible to disbelieve. Most Illusionist teachers are far more advanced than their pupils. A Third Circle Swordmaster may very well be able to instruct one of First or Second Circle, but not so an Illusionist. A student rarely learns anything of value from a teacher of a Circle less than three above her own level of ability; most of the time, the difference is five Circles or more. As you might guess, good teachers are in great demand. The best ones often have lists a year and a day long of students waiting for their attention. An Illusionist who finds a good teacher should do everything possible to stay in his or her good graces. If you find a ghost master, so much the better; they can teach some truly extraordinary things! Teaching is time-consuming, and a teacher rarely has time for much adventuring while instructing a pupil. Most teachers take long breaks between students in order to accomplish deeds by which they can advance in the Discipline themselves. Some Illusionists prefer to give up adventuring for a few years while they teach, and then travel for a full year or more.

The beings we call phantasms are mysterious, so much so that some Illusionists do not believe they exist. I am not one of these. I know phantasms exist—I have seen one. According to Illusionist tradition, phantasms are members of our Discipline who have passed beyond the constraints of bodily perception and can see the truth in everything around them. They wander throughout our world, far beyond the borders of Barsaive and even the once-mighty Theran Empire to the south. They offer perhaps the only real hope we have of ever discovering the true nature of the Horrors. I know they are real because one of them, a woman all shimmering and silvery, rescued me from the clutches of a particularly vile Horror last year. People keep telling me she was an avatar of Garlen, but I know the truth. I could see the tell-tale play of illusion magic in her silvery hair and the hem of her dress.

I know the truth.

Might phantasms be Illusionists of sufficient understanding to perceive the place we Wizards Name the Realm of Ideas? From that realm, we believe the ideas of all things come. Readers interested in exploring this possibility may wish to peruse the essay "The Way of Mind and Symbol."

—Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane

On the Rituals of Advancement

All Disciplines have unique methods for determining when an adept is ready to proceed to the next Circle, and we Illusionists are no different. The way in which we mark advancement, however, is different indeed. In most other Disciplines, an adept is given some kind of test to determine his readiness to learn more, and these tests are the same (or nearly so) for all. Staggering under the weight of tradition, these tests admit no changes, great or slight, to better suit them to the individual practitioner. Illusionists see the folly in this way of testing. Why test different students the same way? We tailor our rituals for Circle advancement to each teacher and student, and so more truly measure progress. More than one teacher may use the same form of ritual but each student

learns from that ritual in a different way. So for me to speak of this ritual or that ritual would do your book no good, and certainly won't serve truth. The most I can give you is a few hints and loose patterns.

Most advancement rituals test the student's perception, requiring her to discern reality and truth from illusion and falsehood. In one of my earliest rituals, advancing from First to Second Circle, I faced two threats—one real, one illusory—and had to choose which to defend against. (I passed that test with my usual flair, of course.) Magical duels to the first blood sometimes serve as advancement rites, with elegant illusions cloaking the damaging real spells as they fly toward their target. In truth, the only limit to an Illusionist's advancement ritual is the inventiveness of the teacher—and those of my Discipline are nothing if not inventive! Prospective Illusionists, take heed; expect everything and nothing, and you won't be surprised.

I personally know no one who has advanced beyond the Ninth Circle, though such people certainly exist. What manner of ritual they undergo to advance so far, I can't guess, but I imagine it must be quite hazardous. It would have to be, wouldn't it, to test the discerning eye of so powerful a mage? Rumor has it that the highest levels of advancement require rituals that can only be performed by a phantasm or even a dragon. A seed of truth doubtless lives in these tales, but how much of the plant is an outright lie I cannot tell.

Concerning Charlatans

The charlatan is the Illusionist everyone despises, especially those of us who care about our Discipline. Any real Illusionist will warn you away from these despicable liars. Shortly after Barsaive's people left the kaers, certain Illusionists allowed the acquisition of silver to concern them more than teaching the world to see the truth. These adepts and their dishonorable descendants continue to travel across Barsaive, bilking the gullible out of their fortunes and working "miracles" for fantastic sums of money.

I am not speaking of a harmless play-illusion for which one might charge a few copper or a couple of silver coins. I speak of frauds that reduce good folk to beggars, at the very least parting them from their coin without teaching them a thing.

A charlatan possesses little or no knowledge of real magic. All his spells and talents are illusory, save those that affect himself alone. Charlatans show exceptional skill at creating illusions, but once those illusions are dispelled or disbelieved he cannot defend himself or do any harm to his angry audience.

Some charlatans have good hearts and do what they do out of simple laziness. They feel little desire to understand the truth, and prefer enrichment to enlightenment. The ignorant tend to tar all Illusionists with the charlatan's brush, but as much as I protest that injustice, I urge readers of this discourse to remember that charlatans exist. Not all of them have rotted wood for hearts, though—many are much like any other Name-giver trying to keep herself in food and shelter by any means she can. So judge them with charity, and the Passion of Justice will smile on you for it.

Game Information

Illusionists cast spells that work through deception. However, some Illusionist spells do have real effects; Illusionists learned long ago that if everything they did was an illusion, people quickly caught on and their magic became less effective. Now they balance real magic, illusions, trickery, and sleight of hand.

Important Attributes: Perception, Willpower

Racial Restrictions: None

Karma Ritual: Illusionists do not use the same ritual each time they regain Karma. Their Karma ritual does require them to incorporate certain elements every time, however: showy spells, tricks or snappy banter, and an assistant. Other than that, the Illusionist makes up his own Karma ritual, incorporating these elements into a half hour show. The Illusionist must do his best during this time to convince his assistant that the ritual is very serious and must conform to a precise formula.

Artisan Skills: Robe Embroidery

Illusionist Abilities

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

First Circle

Talents: Karma Ritual, Read and Write Language, Read and Write Magic[D], Spellcasting[D], Spell Matrix, Spell Matrix, Thread Weaving (Illusionism)[D]

Second Circle

Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.

Talents: Disguise Self[D], Durability (4/3), Spell Matrix

Third Circle

Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.

Talents: Dead Fall[D], Speak Language

Fourth Circle

Ability: By taking 1 permanent Damage Point, the adept gains the **Glamour** ability. This damage can never be healed. For 1 Strain Point of damage, the adept can create a simple illusion. The illusion cannot be larger than human-sized, and must appear and remain within 3 yards of the adept. The adept can create and control a maximum number of illusions at a time equal to his Thread Weaving rank. The illusions are for show only—they have no effect on their surroundings. Viewers can disbelieve an illusion with a successful Willpower (6) Test. The illusion lasts for 10 minutes.

Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.

Talents: False Sight[D], Spell Matrix

Fifth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Perception-only Tests.

Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.

Talents: Ritual of the Ghost Master[D], Slough Blame[D], Willforce

Sixth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Willpower-only Tests.

Talents: Astral Sight[D], Fast Hand[D]

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on spell Effect Tests.

Talents: Engaging Banter[D], Enhanced Matrix

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Talents: Enhanced Matrix, Leadership, True Sight[D]

Ninth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.

Talents: Armored Matrix, Resist Taunt[D], Detect Falsehood[D]

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical and Social Defense.

Talents: Mind Wave[D], Memorize Image

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and Spell Defense.

Talents: Armored Matrix, Hypnotize [D]

Twelfth Circle

Ability: By taking 2 permanent Damage Points, the adept gains the **Hide Matrix** ability. This damage can never be healed. For 2 Strain Points of damage, the adept can make a spell matrix invisible in astral space, even to those with astral sight or sensing capability. The adept makes a Thread Weaving Test, the result of which becomes the Detection Difficulty to spot the hidden spell matrix using the Astral Sight talent or a similar ability. The effect lasts for 24 hours.

Talents: Safe Thought [D], Thoughtful Expression [D]

Thirteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.

Karma: The adept adds +25 to his Maximum Karma Points.

Talents: Matrix Strike, Shared Matrix, Talent Pattern

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense and +2 to his Spell Defense.

Talents: Multi-Weaving [D], Shared Matrix

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Initiative: The adept adds +1 step to his Initiative step.

Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.

Talents: Attribute Pattern, Second Chance [D], Shared Matrix

Half-Magic

Illusionists can make Half-Magic Tests to recognize different types of magic use, as well as specific uses of illusion magic. They can also make Half-Magic Tests in place of Perception Tests when attempting to perceive the "truth" of a given situation.

Illusionists may also make Half-Magic Tests in place of Willpower Tests when attempting to disbelieve illusions cast by others (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions** in the **Illusionism Spells** chapter, p. 322).

Roleplaying Hints

For most Illusionist characters, nothing is as it appears. An Illusionist's talents allow her to alter reality to suit her whims, and she assumes that other powers existing in the world do the same. An Illusionist is therefore far less likely than others to take things at face value, and enjoys investigating oddities in order to understand them. Of course, Illusionists usually know enough to accept as real those things that present an imminent and obvious threat (for example, by eating one of his companions). An Illusionist may spend one or two brief moments inspecting the threat for flaws that might indicate its falsity, but she will not simply stand there disbelieving in the thing while it does her injury.

Illusionists are often entertainers at heart. They love delighting crowds with their magic, and often perform without being asked. They typically regard their entertainment as filling two vital needs: providing amusement to lighten dark hours, and giving the common folk a lesson in how to perceive the truth. Most Illusionists see truth as being more subtle and elusive than people perceive through their senses. Through their illusions, they demonstrate how easily the senses can be befuddled, and teach that reality is not always what it seems. Illusionists often go out of their way to explain their motives to onlookers; if sufficient silver is not forthcoming or the crowd does not seem suitably impressed by the illusory display, many Illusionists resort to sermonizing on the nature of truth in the hope of shaming people into paying up.

Possible Discipline Violations

Because of the transitory nature of illusion magic, the Illusionist Discipline has few true traditions that are passed down from master to student. This makes generalizations about followers of the Discipline difficult, and a Discipline violation for one adept is less likely to hold true for another. Some of the more common violations include relying too heavily on "real" magic instead of illusions, abandoning the search for truth behind the world's façade, or taking the world at face value.

Rituals of Advancement

The masters of illusion refuse to subscribe to established rituals. An elder improvises each advancement ritual, and ideally the adept never realizes the ritual has begun until it ends. Typically the elder contrives an elaborate hoax, some sort of pretext for the adept to learn and use a new spell or talent of the appropriate Circle. Troubadours recite with glee the Twelve Rites of Master Jonwal, whose mentor devised brilliant, devious rituals to test Jonwal as he advanced. He failed to even suspect the tests she set him while advancing through the Twelfth Circle, only recognizing her illusion when he advanced to Thirteenth Circle. This amazing level of deception has never been duplicated. During Jonwal's progress, both mentor and adept suffered several mental breakdowns.

Recruitment: Illusionists recruit new adepts privately by watching for candidates in their everyday travels, then testing likely candidates in some way suited to their Discipline. Illusionists often recruit compulsive liars into their Discipline, choosing people whose reputations precede them so far that adepts can easily track them down. An Illusionist who decides to recruit a candidate usually approaches his target masked by an rudimentary illusion, then engages the compulsive liar in conversation. If the candidate penetrates the illusion, the Illusionist may offer to initiate him or her into the Discipline.

Rituals of Advancement: Illusionists observe no common rituals to mark their advancement through the Circles of their Discipline. At each Circle the adept simply attempts to deceive his or her teacher with ever more elaborate illusions.

Ghost Master Ritual: The Illusionist learns and unerringly performs the ghost master ritual of another Discipline. If the Ghost Master Test succeeds, the Illusionist summons a ghost master of that Discipline. The Illusionist gives this ghost master an illusory orichalcum coin and must persuade him or her to bring an Illusionist ghost master when he returns in three days. At the next summoning, the Illusionist ghost master appears and receives a true orichalcum pledge coin. The Illusionist must also somehow pacify the ghost master he deceived.

Possible Discipline Combinations

The Thief Discipline works well as an Illusionist's second Discipline; the magician's spells and abilities help make this combination a master of larceny. The Troubadour Discipline also blends well, as the adept can use illusion magic to enhance her performance abilities, and Troubadour talents like Item History and Empathic Sense can help an Illusionist more readily perceive truth. Few combat-oriented Disciplines are well-suited to the Illusionist, as magicians typically spend years honing their mind instead of their body. The Swordmaster is perhaps the most complementary, as illusion can be used to enhance the flashiness of combat, and the Swordmaster's social talents blend well with Illusionist abilities. Despite the shared focus on spellcasting, Illusionists rarely work well with a magician Discipline as their second choice. The additional spells often drive the adept to rely too much on real magic instead of illusions, a common Discipline violation.

The Archer, Elementalist, and Weaponsmith Disciplines are the most difficult combinations, as they traditionally follow an honest, straightforward philosophy that clashes with the shifting perceptions of the Illusionist.

Troll Illusionist

"What you see is rarely what truly is, as mystery and guise embrace all aspects of life. We all wear masks to hide and protect our true selves, and we tell our friends half-truths for their own good. We change things to what they are not, so that we may live comfortably with them.

"Why deny this? I do not. Trickery is my trade. Deception and guile are my friends, illusion my life's work. Yes, illusions entertain, but they serve other purposes as well. They hide and reveal, change and maintain, obscure and enlighten."

Attributes

Dexterity (11): 5/D8
Strength (16): 7/D12
Toughness (15): 6/D10
Perception (15): 6/D10
Willpower (15): 6/D10
Charisma (13): 6/D10

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 7
Initiative: 5/D8
Physical Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 2

Death Rating: 38
Wound Threshold: 10
Unconsciousness Rating: 30
Recovery Tests: 3
Knockdown: 7/D12

Combat Movement: 22
Full Movement: 44

Karma Points: 5
Karma Step: 3/D4

Talents

Karma Ritual (1): 1
Read and Write Language (1): 7/D12
—Troll
Read and Write Magic[D] (1): 7/D12
Spellcasting[D] (1): 7/D12
Spell Matrix (1): 1
Spell Matrix (1): 1
Thread Weaving (Illusionism)[D] (2): 8/2D6

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills

Artisan:
Robe Embroidery (1): 7/D12
Knowledge:
Alchemy & Potions (1): 7/D12
Magical Lore (1): 7/D12
General:
Climbing (1): 6/D10
Read and Write Language (1): 7/D12
—Dwarf (Throalic)
Speak Language (2): 8/2D6
—Dwarf (Throalic), Troll
Streetwise (1): 7/D12

Money

Copper Pieces: 0
Silver Pieces: 2
Gold Pieces: 2

Illusionism Spells

First Circle: Assuring Touch, Best Face, Disguise Metal, Displace Image, Rope Guide, Unseen Voices

Equipment

Leather Armor (Phys 3)
Quarterstaff (Damage 9/D8+D6)
Sling (Damage 9/D8+D6; Range 20–40–80)
Adventurer's Kit
Booster Potion
Embroidered Robe
Embroidery Kit
Grimoire
Rope (6 yards)
Trail Rations (1 week)
Traveler's Garb

Notes

The adept possesses the troll Heat Sight racial ability.

WALKERS IN SHADOW

The following treatise is the work of the noted t'skrang Nethermancer T'shan V'ruda, until recently a resident of Throal. Sadly, V'ruda had not completed the document at the time of his banishment from our kingdom, thus leaving several tantalizing hints unexplored. I have noted such omissions as they occur in the text. Though the Hall of Records adopts no official position on the veracity of the charges against V'ruda, I will permit myself to observe that future scholars will bemoan the incompleteness of this account long after all have forgotten the complicated web of accusations and counter-accusations that occasioned his departure from our kingdom.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

Many speak ill of the path I walk, the path of the Nethermancer. My colleagues and I are regarded with distaste, unease, even violent prejudice. As is the case in any such discrimination, its roots lie in ignorance. Simply because we inquire into the worlds beyond our own, we are suspected of consorting with Horrors and treated as pariahs. Of course, nothing could be further from the truth. Our explorations serve only to protect our fellow Name-givers from the ravages of the Horrors and their constructs, including the undead. Do the spells and talents we wield carry a dark tang to them, a stench of the grave? Perhaps to the clouded mind, to the Name-giver who gives credence only to his untutored feelings and flees from the blandishments of reason. But any who care to think carefully on the matter recognize the Nethermancer as a bulwark, the last line of defense between this fragile world of life and the encroaching worlds of horror and death.

I consider the invitation to contribute to this esteemed anthology an opportunity to correct many of the misapprehensions and downright calumnies that surround the way of the Nethermancer. I am confident that, should you read this with a mind even half open, any misgivings you might have toward my Discipline shall be allayed utterly.

ON THE CONTINUUM THAT IS LIFE AND DEATH

People fear Nethermancers because they fear death, and Nethermancers are symbolically bound to the concept of death. But Nethermancers do not fear death, for we know it intimately. We know that it is not an impassable barrier, a wall between something that is good and something that is bad. Death is but a doorway, a threshold into another way of being. Life is not superior to death, nor is death superior to life. Both have their struggles, their pleasures, and their terrors. Only a fool looks upon death as anything more than another phase in the building of one's legend. Sadly, the land of the living is awash in fools who forever dread their mortality. But mortality is as much a part of us as our eyes or our toes. Those who fear death fear themselves. And if we Nethermancers are thought of as harshly mocking or haughty, it is only because others have not accepted the inevitable fact of death as we have. For with acceptance, we give up our fears.

Fear is not an emotion worthy of a Nethermancer. The true follower of the path learns discretion, certainly—we are not known as a foolhardy group. But every day we contemplate the worst that can happen to us and accept its possibility. To conquer fear is to gain power. Fear is something that is useful to us, when found in others. The Nethermancer learns to foster fear, to manipulate it.

If your heart contains fear, we will grab hold of it and use it to lead you about like a dog on a rope. And you shall deserve such treatment, for fear is the hallmark of the inferior mind. You need not be a Nethermancer to conquer your fears. But in my experience, you must be able to see that life and death are not separate things. They are different ends of the same path, separated by no more than a gentle stream.

Learn this lesson and gain power.

Bravo for brother V'ruda! If only more of the ignorant masses would read these words, they would realize how wrong-headed and groundless are their fears of us.

—Elron, Nethermancer of Rhegion

On the Nature of the Spirit

As I have mentioned, the superstitious and willfully ignorant associate my learned craft with death and the undead. However, the Nethermancer concerns himself not so much with life and with death, as with the spirit, or soul. All Nethermancer talents emanate from an understanding of the spirit. And the majority of Nethermancer spells work through the spirit, either the spirit of the spellcaster or of his target. Granted, sometimes the spiritual aspect of a nethermantic spell like Shift Skin may not be immediately apparent to the uninitiated. But it is my fervent hope that by the end of your perusal of this document, you will at least begin to understand the subtle spiritual resonances that accompany this and other gruesome-seeming effects in the Nethermancer's arsenal. Soon you will be able to look upon the spontaneous wrenching and tearing of the epidermal surface occasioned by the Shift Skin spell and think not, "How thoroughly appalling!" but, "Ah, what a profound lesson in the metaphysics of the soul!"

The metaphysics of the soul—this is the Nethermancer's field of expertise. You might then ask, what is the soul? This, dear reader, is the question all Nethermancers spend their lives seeking to answer. For the spirit is an elusive thing, one that forever evades precise definition and explication. We grope tentatively toward knowledge of it. This in itself should tell you something very important about Nethermancers. Unlike other Disciplines I could name, Nethermancers do not claim to possess definitive answers to the questions posed by existence. The Nethermancer learns that all certainty is but self-delusion, for the most important single element of any Name-giver's being—his spirit—remains an enigma. It is not knowing the correct answers that really matters, for there is no single truth. Rather, the superior being knows the correct questions and strives to answer them, and that is more than enough.

This is not to say that we are entirely ignorant about the spirit. Generation upon generation of Nethermancers has examined its nature. Though many of the conclusions we have reached are altogether too subtle for a general audience to grasp, I will attempt to elucidate a few of the general principles for you.

The spirit can be defined as the essential essence of a being. The spirit is connected to the body, and provides its basic impetus, much as a fire engine provides the impetus for the riverboats of my people. Without an engine, the boat does not run. Without a spirit, thought and emotion end, and the body eventually dies. The spirit is the vessel that contains a being's identity, its Name, which gives birth to all thoughts, memories, emotions. Though the body cannot truly live on without a spirit (I'll touch upon apparent exceptions in due course), the spirit almost always persists after the decease of the body, for the True pattern of any Name-giver is connected more to the spirit than the physical body. When the body dies, a severance occurs in the pattern, and a vestigial fragment of the pattern remains connected to the corpse. However, the remainder of the True pattern persists with the spirit—or, as some claim, *is* the spirit. (The question of whether the True pattern and spirit are in fact one and the same has raged among Nethermancers since legendary times. It is essentially a matter of semantics.)

At any rate, it is knowledge of spirits that enables us to understand and influence spirits—both of the living and the unliving—the ability that most strongly characterizes the Nethermancer. We must first of all understand our own spirits before we can learn to engage in dealings, consensual or otherwise, with other spirits, discorporate or otherwise. A Nethermancer is therefore a contemplative individual, one given to great introspection. Solitude is the Nethermancer's friend. Though I have met talkative and loquacious colleagues in my day, most of us are quiet and restrained. Indeed, our fearsome reputation is quite at odds with our sedate behavior, a fact which occasions many delightfully droll comments at Nethermancer gatherings. The fact that we are considered sinister embitters some of us, but most of my colleagues are acute connoisseurs of irony, and treat the absurd general dislike of our Discipline with sardonic humor. I remember one interesting occasion when a windling spy was found secreted in an empty ale barrel at a symposium of Nethermancers I attended in Iopos. We were able to wring much amusement from a series of experiments designed to acquaint the irritating interloper with—but I digress.

The t'skrang expresses here the true heart of the nethermantic way. Understand the never-ending quest, and you understand the Nethermancer.

—Yllom, Nethermancer of Throal

On the Migration of the Spirit After Death

The relationship between True pattern and spirit brings us naturally to the question of the fate of the spirit after death. Where does it go? This is another of the profound questions that guides the Nethermancer. Simply put, the spirit goes to many places, some unknown, for there appears to be no single destination for a spirit that has passed over the life/death threshold.

Some have proposed that an orderly determination of the migration of spirits after death once existed. These individuals believe that the fate of a spirit can be predicted based on certain observable factors concerning the being's life. They believe that the souls of those who live virtuous lives travel to a variety of different paradisiacal realms on the other side of astral space. Such realms are described in great detail in early legends, though the accounts differ greatly from one another. Needless to say, the definitions of virtue required for admittance vary just as widely from tale to tale. Some of my brethren take these tales literally, claiming that all of these blissful afterlives truly existed, in harmony with one another. The assignment of particular souls to particular paradises depended upon the culture of a Name-giver's birth, or on the Passion with whom the Name-giver chose to identify. Other Nethermancers argue that these legends are unreliable as factual accounts and contend that they refer to a single afterlife realm capable of altering itself to fit the desires of each soul it contained. I have personally encountered evidence that would, frustratingly enough, seem to confirm both theories simultaneously!

[Here T'shan includes a marginal note which, if I decipher his hand correctly, reads: Include story of the Seven Stairways? *It is a great loss to scholarship that this must remain but a tantalizing hint.*—Derrat*]*

The same legends also describe a similarly elaborate web of hells that awaited the souls of those who had committed misdeeds in life. Again, Nethermancers differ as to whether these actually existed in a vast jumble of separate realities, or if the truth must be considered lost, transmuted to legend by the drift of memory and fantasy. Yet a third theory may also explain the variety of hells in old legends: this theory holds that these references describe the home realm of the Horrors themselves. This seems convincing to me. Perhaps those whose True patterns became twisted by their own foul deeds came to mystically resemble the Horrors and were drawn to their realm after death.

At any rate, these explanations now are of mere historical interest. At some point in history, the orderly transmission of souls to proper destinations was permanently disrupted and remains so to this day. This may have happened during an earlier

Scourge, or it may have happened when Death itself was buried beneath the volcanic fury of the sea that now bears his name. We can no longer predict where a Name-giver's soul will go when his body dies. Some spirits continue to wander Barsaive (and presumably other earthly regions) after the deaths of their bodies. (Though they maintain only insubstantial forms, it is possible to interact with them via the use of certain of our spells and talents.) These souls may remain here for various reasons. Some wish to finish some task uncompleted in life, from the building of a bridge to the guarding of an ancient manuscript. Others may be unreconciled to the manner and timing of their deaths and wish to exact vengeance on the living being they deem responsible. Still others may simply be unaware of the fact that they're dead; not surprisingly, death can interfere with correct perception of one's circumstances. (Are you sure you didn't meet with a fatal accident today?) There also exist those unfortunate souls shackled to this plane by the foul magics of Horrors and their allies. Here I speak of the ranks of the undead.

Still other spirits migrate into astral space, where the metaphysical pollution found there transforms some into quite fearsome entities. Other astral spirits, particularly those that once belonged to strong and worthy adepts in life, may in fact continue their battles against the Horrors in their ghostly forms. Both twisted and heroic spirits can be contacted by Nethermancers, particularly by those powerful and courageous enough to enter astral space.

However, this still leaves many spirits unaccounted for. There are vast numbers of dead individuals—particularly those long dead—who can no longer be contacted. The fate of this majority of dead remains one of the ultimate mysteries. Perhaps, somehow, they have entered the forgotten paradises of legend. Or perhaps they have been swallowed by the home of the Horrors.

On the State That is Undeath

If life and death are separated by a stream that represents the shift from one state to another, the undead are beings who straddle that stream. They are forever arrested in the moment of death, neither truly living nor truly dead. They are greatly feared for this very reason. Even the lowliest cadaver man engenders fear far out of proportion to any actual threat it poses. For example, to anyone with a whit of combat experience, the cadaver man poses a threat only if it achieves a great stroke of luck. Yet the cadaver man inspires primal terror. This is because it and other undead creatures are thought to be "unnatural." If you believe that magic is unnatural and that any state that cannot be achieved without resort to the arcane arts is somehow sinister and terrifying, you are likely to fear the undead. But this makes you a benighted idiot, for magic is the best representation of what is natural. It suffuses the world and permeates all of us. It is as much a part of us as the air we breathe. No magic, even the magic we Nethermancers use, even that which exists on the threshold between life and death, is inherently evil. Nor, for that matter, is it inherently good. Magic has no mind, no morality—those who wield it make the choices for good or evil. I can use the spells that disturb you so much and yet protect you and your kin from the Horrors. If you are alive and well because of my efforts, how can you call the mere tools I used evil? Is a sword evil in and of itself? A vial can be used to hold healing potions or poison—if it is filled with poison, is it the vial or the poisoner who does wrong?

I have created undead beings myself. Does this shock you? No doubt it does. But wait, do you know what I did with my undead servants? I sent them to fight the Horror called Shezkseti, and saved more than a dozen villagers it had penned up for future torture. My creations were victims it had already slain, relatives and loved ones of those I rescued. They fought against that Horror with passion and fury. Though they were torn to bloody shreds by the Horror's claws, I am confident that they suffered their second, more infinitely painful deaths with equanimity. For they knew that their sacrifice fulfilled a vital goal. And their sacrifice gave meaning to their lives. Yes, I used the same tactic favored by the Horrors themselves. I threw that tactic in their faces, cut them with their own blades. If you call me a monster because of this, I can only laugh at your contemptible stupidity.

Perhaps those of you still reading are interested in the technical aspects of undeath. The zombie offers an interesting example. When the spirit departs the body, it takes most of a Name-giver's True pattern with it. But it leaves a small part of the pattern behind, the part that connects the subject's soul and mental faculties to its body and physical abilities. Various spells, Horror abilities, and magical treasures can attach a spiritual pattern to this part to reanimate the dead. Most often, the worker of the magic will be reattaching the being's original spiritual pattern. It is often the case that the crude force of the required arcane energies warps and degrades the spiritual pattern. This is why most cadaver men are but drooling engines of destruction; the fine details of their mortal existence have been melted into a clump of vague intelligence and malice. It is possible, however, to restore a relatively intact personality to a cadaver man. A prime example of this would be the subjects of the legendary Twiceborn, Queen of Parlainth's dead.

On the Workings of Nethermagic

I describe the manufacture of cadaver men in detail not simply out of arrogant pedantry. It is also a prime example of the practical application of our craft. The Nethermancer consciously manipulates patterns, reaching out and shaping the patterns of others to achieve our effects. If you find the Nethermancer's gaze unpleasantly penetrating, it is because we know the magical materials of which you are made.

Here I do not speak of pattern magic, of finding the pattern items which relate to you and thereby gaining power over you. This area is not specifically the province of the Nethermancer. I speak instead of abilities which affect the things held in common by all patterns. We can manipulate your pattern not because we have access to knowledge of its unique characteristics, but because we know of the parts that comprise all patterns. All of us have a consciousness, which is partly generated by the body (by the brain, to be precise) and partly by the spirit. All intelligent beings have a point in their pattern where the body and spirit connect to form the mind. All of us have other common connections in our patterns, fusing together all of the separate things that make up a whole being. Many of our magical spells operate by subverting the magical energy of patterns, moving it around to achieve desired effects.

Further examples will illuminate my point.

[The examples exist here only in point form. V'ruda evidently intended to flesh these out later in the process.—Derrat*]*

Spirit Grip: taps into pattern of spirits, leaking from severed junction: death/life pattern break—question of malevolence?

Undead Struggle: tendril fires from own TP to TP of undead, hitting warped spirit/body juncture.

Bone Dance: access through spirit/body juncture, disconnects subject's spirit to body flow, repl. by nethmr's willpower.

Experience Death: in through severed s/b juncture, momentary connection of nethmr's memory sense juncture to brain/pattern juncture.

On Cosmology and Other Dimensions

[To our great frustration, this aspect of the Nethermancer's way exists only as a title with no body of text.—Derrat*]*

On Understanding the Horrors

As I have described in the preceding passage, finally sealing off our dimension from the Horrors will only be possible once we have answered the Eight Questions of Jsona Var. Until that time, we must rely instead on countermeasures to fight the Horrors after they have crossed the threshold to our world. And if these measures are to be effective, they must be based on knowledge. Nethermancers are oft accused of all manner of vile acts because we dare to investigate the very nature of the Horrors. Though such investigations bring temptations that have felled more than one Nethermancer, on the whole our efforts have been a boon to all Name-givers. We have learned advanced techniques for dampening the Karma abilities of Horrors, for mimicking their forms and actions, for restraining them where they stand. Yet we have received little credit for this from the mindless wad of Barsaivian citizenry. I am told that the residents of Thera are more advanced in this regard, that they understand the true importance of the Nethermancer to the survival of our races. But here we receive only abuse for our efforts. It should be little wonder that we regard the uninformed masses as essentially moronic.

Here is one final secret many may not wish to hear: just as the line between life and death is largely illusory, no real line exists between the behavior of Name-givers and the behavior of Horrors. To understand them, you must realize that the emotions we often consider evil—fear, jealousy, rage, hatred, confusion, despair—are their food. They need these things to survive, as we need meat and bread. (The question of how they survive in their own realm during times of low magic is one that has puzzled Nethermancers for centuries.) They elicit these emotions in us in order to live, just as we grow crops or hunt for game. We feel no guilt when we slaughter a thundra for its meat. Likewise, the Horror feels nothing but appetite and anticipation when it marks a Name-giver and begins to elicit in him the dark and delicious emotions it so craves.

Take the worst thing you have ever heard of a Horror doing, and I will show you a Name-giver who did the same. These bizarre beasts from beyond have no monopoly on acts of atrocity. We Name-givers have been slaughtering one another since the days of legend. The Horrors do what they do in order to feed. Yet when we strike out at one another, we do not necessarily need to do so to survive. We have killed one another in the name of kings, in the name of Passions, in the name of racial hatreds, in the name of stupid and petty ancestral squabbles. We continue to believe that we are fundamentally better than the Horrors, when, if anything, we are worse.

This is why, when you proclaim that the struggle against the Horrors is a fundamental fight between good and evil, the Nethermancer laughs. The laugh of the Nethermancer is long and loud, and inside that laugh is the rattle of bones. The rattle of a mountain of bones, bones of the innocent, a mountain built by Name-givers as well as Horrors. It is true that we must fight them and we must slay them. They might need us for food, but we have no need to be eaten. But this is no battle of ultimate morality. It is simply another jungle struggle between predator and prey, a battle the Nethermancers will help win. And after the Name-givers win, we will go back to slaying one another as if nothing had happened. And beneath the clatter of sword against shield shall be the laughter of the Nethermancer. You shall shiver, wonder briefly what it is all about, then shrug and return to your killing.

I have refrained from comment in this document, thinking that my uneasiness about it was a result of my own prejudices and not the information contained within. After considerable thought, and multiple readings, I have concluded that my unease is entirely justified. The view of the Nethermancer Discipline as portrayed in this document is frightening. The author has not done as he promised in the introduction and has perhaps worsened my own beliefs about adepts who follow this most dangerous and suspicious Discipline.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

Game Information

Nethermancers are spellcasters who specialize in the magic of the netherworlds. Their interests focus on other planes, and the spirits and creatures that inhabit those planes. Most people consider Nethermancers to be a little "off" in an eerie sort of way, and consequently most followers of this Discipline are unlikely to win many popularity contests.

Important Attributes: Perception, Willpower

Racial Restrictions: Windling

Karma Ritual: Nethermantic Karma rituals are quiet affairs in which the Nethermancer drinks tea with a spirit servant or other otherworldly creature and talks of life beyond this world. The ritual ends after a half hour has passed with the Nethermancer draining the last drop from his final cup of tea.

Artisan Skills: Robe Embroidery

Nethermancer Abilities

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

First Circle

Talents: Karma Ritual, Read and Write Language, Read and Write Magic[D], Spellcasting[D], Spell Matrix, Spell Matrix, Thread Weaving (Nethermancy)[D]

Second Circle

Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.

Talents: Astral Sight[D], Durability (4/3), Frighten

Third Circle

Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.

Talents: Spell Matrix, Spirit Talk[D]

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Perception-only Tests.

Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.

Talents: Animal Possession, Spell Matrix

Fifth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Willpower-only Tests.

Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.

Talents: Ritual of the Ghost Master[D], Spirit Hold[D], Summon (Ally Spirits)[D]

Sixth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Talents: Lifesight[D], Willforce

Seventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.

Talents: Enhanced Matrix, Spirit Dodge[D]

Eighth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Action Tests made by a spirit or creature under his control.

Talents: Enhanced Matrix, Leadership, Orbiting Spy[D]

Ninth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests. He may also spend 1 Karma Point on spell Effect Tests.

Talents: Arcane Mutterings, Armored Matrix, Astral Pocket[D]

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical and Social Defense.

Talents: Animate Object, Summoning Circle[D]

Eleventh Circle

Ability: By taking 2 permanent Damage Points, the adept gains the **Otherworldly Control** ability. This damage can never be healed. For 2 Strain Points of damage, the adept may make an additional Willpower Test to resist fear or other magic which causes him to lose control of his emotions. If the adept cannot normally resist the effect, this ability does not work; Otherworldly Control allows additional attempts to resist, but does not create them where no opportunity exists.

Talents: Armored Matrix, Bargain With Summoned Creature[D]

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and Spell Defense.

Talents: Matrix Strike[D], Netherwalk[D]

Thirteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.

Initiative: The adept adds +1 step to his Initiative step.

Karma: The adept adds +25 to his Maximum Karma Points.

Talents: Shared Matrix, Spell Crystal Lock[D], Talent Pattern

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +2 to his Spell Defense.

Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.

Talents: Multi-Weaving[D], Shared Matrix

Fifteenth Circle

Ability: By taking 3 permanent Damage Points, the adept gains the **Astral Face** ability. This damage can never be healed. For 3 Strain Points of damage the adept can alter the features of his face and head. His altered appearance is smoother, the skin often silver or black. Altered eyes contain specks of unearthly light and the teeth are dull and unreflective except for narrow-writ runes centered on each tooth. This new face gives the adept a better sense of astral space. He gains a +5 bonus to his Spellcasting and spell Effect Tests while it is in effect. The ability lasts for as long as the adept desires, up to 24 hours.

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Talents: Attribute Pattern, Shared Matrix, Soul Shatter[D]

Half-Magic

Nethermancers may use half-magic to recognize uses of nethermantic magic, different types of undead and spirits, and different types of magical rituals, especially blood magic rituals. Nethermancers may also use half-magic to understand the effects of different blood charms, as these are linked with Nethermancy.

Blood Charms

Nethermancers may make Perception-based Half-Magic Tests to produce blood charms (see **Blood Charms** in the **Enchanting** chapter, p. 276).

Sensing Spirits

A Nethermancer may use half-magic to sense the presence of spirits and other entities within 20 yards of his location. The Nethermancer makes a Perception-based Half-Magic (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the Nethermancer can sense the presence of any spirits or entities with a Spell Defense equal to or less than the test result. Once he has sensed its presence, the Nethermancer can use spells, or talents such as Spirit Hold or Spirit Talk, to communicate and interact with the spirit.

The gamemaster may also choose to make a Half-Magic Test on behalf of a Nethermancer character at any time. If the test succeeds, the gamemaster should inform the player that his character senses the presence of some type of spirit. The player then decides how his character will react to this information.

Nethermancers cannot use half-magic in this way to detect the undead, as they have a specific spell designed for that purpose.

Roleplaying Hints

When creating a Nethermancer, players should bear in mind that they have chosen a Discipline that is generally viewed with suspicion and fear. Because of their reputation as meddlers in matters related to undead and Horrors, many who choose this path already consider themselves outcasts or otherwise alienated from their society.

An important consideration when creating your character is deciding how your character came to choose this unpopular Discipline. He may have been singled out for abuse by other youngsters during childhood, or been affected by the misfortunes of parents unfairly suspected of consorting with Horrors. Some Nethermancers may be members of racial or cultural minorities in their home villages and may have suffered prejudice because of it. Others may simply have been different from their peers for as long as they can remember; absorbed by death and decay and fascinated by legends describing the Horrors and the terror they spread.

Of course, not all Nethermancers need have been outcasts in their early lives. Some may seek vengeance against the Horrors, and believe that using the Horrors' own tools against them is the swiftest and surest path to victory. Others manage to hide their fascination with the dark matters of the Nethermancers' craft until the chance for initiation presents itself.

Few Nethermancers live quiet lives in ordinary villages. While most villages can boast at least one adept to serve as an advisor, few wish to have an expert in death magic act as a mentor to their children. As a result, most would-be Nethermancers leave home in search of masters to perform their initiation. This circumstance adds to most Name-givers' dislike of Nethermancers; they fear these adepts will lure their sons and daughters away from them forever with dark promises of forbidden knowledge.

Not surprisingly, these attitudes lead most Nethermancers to disdain the average Name-giver. Those who do not show a healthy disrespect for the masses often learn it from their masters, who couch their contempt in a sardonic, mocking laugh at things others consider tragic, and display little compassion for any behavior they consider foolish.

Most Nethermancers are masters of moral relativism, holding to few absolute rules of behavior. The Discipline teaches that knowledge itself is neither good nor evil; it can only be put to good or evil uses. Nethermancers generally define "good" as a long-term result; since they view death as a change of state rather than a permanent end, they generally give the possible deaths of Name-givers less weight than others might.

Possible Discipline Violations

Because Nethermancers are traditionally taught never to regret mistakes, only learn from them, a Nethermancer who begins to doubt the worthiness of his actions may suffer a talent crisis. Much of the Nethermancer's magic depends on his self-assurance; guilty feelings may also create a mental block that makes it harder to use his magic effectively. Because many Nethermancers view life and death as different ends of the same road, mourning the dead may also cause a talent crisis.

The most common taboo for Nethermancers, however, is giving in to fear. The Discipline teaches that fear is a tool; to be swayed by it is a shameful impediment to their own success. Nethermancers overcome by fear are likely to suffer talent crises until they perform a Deed of Atonement, usually by confronting and defeating the source of the fear.

Rituals of Advancement

Nethermantic rituals often involve contact with spirits or, in rare cases, Horror magic. Nethermancers often use their advancement rituals to demonstrate their skill in summoning and controlling various entities.

Recruitment: Nethermancers ask for various spirits' recommendations to help choose suitable apprentices.

Novice (2–4): The adept casts a spell of the new Circle in the presence of a living or deceased elder.

Journeyman (5–8): The adept finds a spirit that can settle the truth of some historically disputed issue. He or she summons the spirit to answer questions related to that dispute for a panel of Nethermancers and scholars supporting both sides of the issue.

Warden (9–12): The adept researches and demonstrates for other Nethermancers a spell of the new Circle.

Ghost Master Ritual: Nethermancers use the Ritual of the Ghost Master described in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 425.

Possible Discipline Combinations

Because Nethermancers are traditionally taught to seek knowledge in all forms, an individual adept may be interested in learning any of the other Disciplines. Unfortunately, Nethermancers often have trouble finding masters willing to tutor them in secondary Disciplines because other adepts are as likely as the average Name-giver to be prejudiced against them.

The overlapping of required talents for the other spellcasting Disciplines offers the Nethermancer potentially rapid acquisition of a wide variety of additional abilities. Many Nethermancers are attracted to the Weaponsmith Discipline because of the metaphorical connection between weapons and death. The way of the Beastmaster may appeal to Nethermancers who wish to demonstrate control over creatures of both the astral and physical realms.

Human Nethermancer

"Why do you fear me? If you think I mean you harm, you are mistaken. My concerns lie in worlds beyond this one.

"The netherworlds are mine to explore, its denizens mine to command. They whisper only to me, revealing the quiet secrets of impossible depths. They scream to me the terrible truths of the brilliant heights. Their words caress me like music, giving my soul flight and my mind freedom. My body may be flesh, but magic fills my mind and my soul soars through the netherworlds."

Attributes

Dexterity (12): 5/D8
Strength (11): 5/D8
Toughness (13): 6/D10
Perception (16): 7/D12
Willpower (14): 6/D10
Charisma (13): 6/D10

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 7
Initiative: 5/D8
Physical Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 2
Death Rating: 35
Wound Threshold: 9
Recovery Tests: 2
Knockdown: 5/D8*
Unconsciousness Rating: 27

* Character knows the Wound Balance skill.

Combat Movement: 24
Full Movement: 48
Karma Points: 10
Karma Step: 5/D8

Talents

Karma Ritual (1): 1
Read and Write Language (1): 8/2D6
—Human
Read and Write Magic[D] (1): 8/2D6
Spellcasting[D] (2): 9/D8+D6
Spell Matrix (1): 1
Spell Matrix (1): 1
Thread Weaving (Nethermancy)[D] (1): 8/2D6

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills

Artisan:
Robe Embroidery (1): 7/D12
Knowledge:
Magical Lore (1): 8/2D6
Scourge History (1): 8/2D6
General:
Read and Write Language (1): 8/2D6
—Dwarf (Throalic)
Speak Language (2): 9/D8+D6
—Dwarf (Throalic), Human
Unarmed Combat (1): 6/D10
Wound Balance (1): 6/D10

Money

Copper Pieces: 1
Silver Pieces: 3
Gold Pieces: 1

Nethermancy Spells

First Circle: Bone Dance, Chilling Circle, Command Nightflyer, Detect Undead, Experience Death, Spirit Grip, Undead Struggle

Equipment

Leather Armor (Phys 3)
Quarterstaff (Damage 7/D12)
2 × Daggers (Damage 7/D12; Range 9–15–18)
Sling (Damage 7/D12; Range 20–40–80)
Knife (Damage 6/D10)
Adventurer's Kit
Booster Potion
Embroidery Kit
Grimoire
Embroidered Robe
Traveler's Garb
Hooded Lantern
2 × Oil Flasks
Trail Rations (1 week)

Notes

The adept possesses the human Versatility racial ability.

On the Way of the Scout

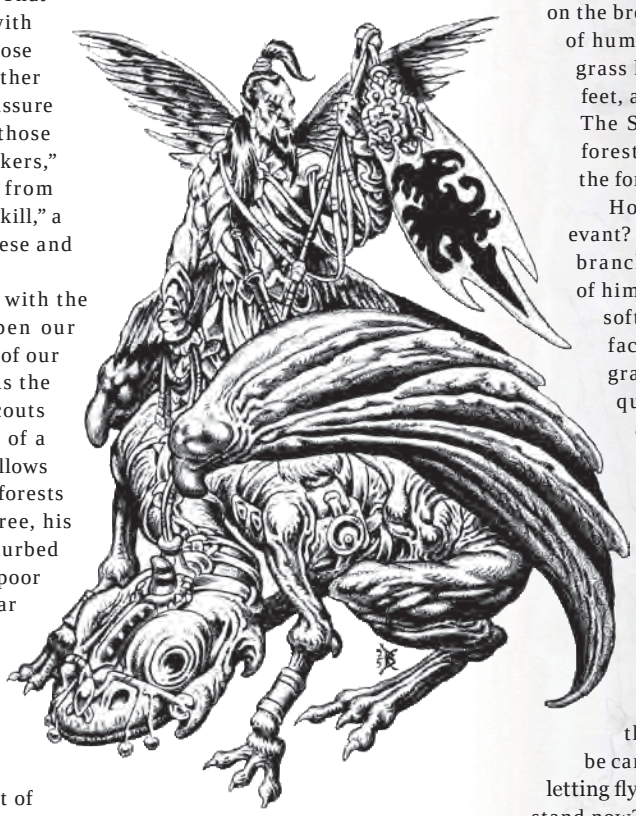
The following account was drawn from a conversation between the windling Scout Teelan Jupray and my fellow scholar Jerriv Forrim, scribe and scholar of the Library of Throal. Though I might have preferred otherwise, Jerriv had already edited this work when he presented it to me. Such is the archivist's way.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

One with the World

No one understands us—sad, but true. How many times have I heard people describe Scouts as "half-Warrior, half-Thief," and leave it at that? Such a simplistic analysis. There is so much more to my Discipline than that. However frustrating it may be, I have no choice but to accept the fact that an amazing number of misconceptions surround the Discipline of the Scout.

What misconceptions? Well, let me name some. First and foremost, that we are little more than glorified trackers. What nonsense! Anyone can learn to track; there is no magic in it. Hunters of all sorts learn the basic skills. But does the ability to follow tracks, spoor, and broken branches make one a Scout? It does not. Other misconceptions? That because we share certain talents with Warriors and Thieves, we practice those talents in the same way as those other Disciplines. Again, a sad mistake, I assure you. In truth, all of our abilities—those that lead to us being labeled "trackers," "Warriors" and "Thieves"—spring from one, well, I hesitate to class it as a "skill," a "talent" or an "ability." It is all of these and so much more. Let me explain.



To be a Scout means to be one with the world. We—I and my fellows—open our senses to the world around us. All of our senses, and all of the world. That is the part of our Discipline that non-Scouts never seem to understand. Think of a tracker for a moment. The tracker follows his quarry through the woods and forests using his eyes and, to a lesser degree, his ears. He sees broken branches, disturbed foliage, footprints, and maybe the spoor of his quarry. Sometimes he can hear the passage of that quarry through the woods—the cracking of a twig, even the creature's breathing. This proud woodsman believes he has "opened his senses" to the world around him.

Nonsense! From a Scout's point of view, his perceptions are as limited as those of a child peeking through a keyhole. Think on it: the tracker selects the senses and the clues that he believes are important. He may notice broken branches, because those clues are "appropriate" for the task of tracking. Anything "inappropriate" is ignored or discarded. (Please appreciate that I am not demeaning the tracker. Not seriously, at least. By opening two senses, he is more in tune with his world than most people, who stumble through the world guided by one sense only... and even that is used imperfectly.)

But I digress. How does a true Scout react in the same situation? The Scout opens all his senses, not simply those he has selected as "appropriate" to the situation, and expands his awareness to include everything around him. How can you know in advance what will and will not be important in a given situation, I ask you? The Scout sees the same things as the tracker, but he sees more. He sees the broken branch ahead, but he also sees, beyond that, the change in coloration of the undergrowth that indicates the ground is growing softer. He hears what might be stealthy movement to his right, but he also hears—again, to his right—the soft murmur of the wind and the twittering of songbirds. He feels the stirring of the air around him, and the faintest of vibrations through the springy ground beneath his feet. He smells the sweet scent of flax flower fruit on the breeze, mixed with the sharp tang of human sweat. He chews a blade of grass he picks from the ground at his feet, and tastes the bitterness of peat. The Scout opens himself up to the forest around him, and he becomes the forest.

How are these perceptions relevant? Think on it a moment. A broken branch implies his quarry is ahead of him, yet he knows that the ground softens ahead and to the right—in fact, it becomes a peat bog, the grass stem tells him that. Will his quarry risk becoming stuck in a bog? No—it will almost certainly turn to the left. What of the noise to the right, then, the sound the tracker interpreted as stealthy movement? The wind, no doubt, for the songbirds to his right would surely have fallen silent with the passage of a large beast. The Scout also knows that a human is in the vicinity—possibly tracking the same quarry—and hence will be careful to identify his target before letting fly with his weapon. Do you understand now? That is the difference between a Scout and a simple tracker.

Can you imagine the sheer joy a Scout finds in this oneness with his surroundings? Only another Scout can understand the joy—the transcendence—of running or flying through a dappled woodland, passing as silently as a ghost, leaving no trace behind of your passage. Practicing the Discipline of the Scout allows the adept to grasp the halcyon days of legend, when peace and tranquility lay upon the world. When we walk in the forest, we are a part of it—as much as the trees that shelter

us, and the birds that sing for us, and the animals that watch us without fear. So too are we a part of the rolling plains, or the harsh and rugged uplands, or even the arid deserts. Wherever there is life, there we are at home.

By opening our senses to our environment, we Scouts accept the world around us. We do not try to change it. We view it as it is and we work within the constraints this places on us. The environment "accepts" a Scout, just as the Scout "accepts" the environment. Why? I know not why. Perhaps a sage or Wizard could tell you. I only know that it is true. Because we are as one, the environment around us reacts as though we belong wherever we are. Think on it. How else could a Scout move silently through the wilderness, or through the alleys of a city, come to that? A woodsman or tracker might learn the art of parting branches so leaves do not rustle, of treading lightly so no twigs break underfoot. But there is more to moving silently than that. What good does it do to stir no twig if all the birds and animals of the forest around you proclaim your presence—either with their cries or with their silence? The best tracker or woodsman is still an interloper in the environment through which he passes, and the world knows this. When a Scout moves silently, he is one with the world around him. He senses the lay of the land, the interconnections between branches, the direction of the wind. But more importantly, the world around him senses him and accepts him as part of itself.

The Scout's unique ability to "belong" is as strong in a city or town as it is in the wilderness, as well. (In fact, thinking on how "belonging" occurs in a town will go some distance toward explaining how it happens in the countryside as well.)

How do you recognize someone as a stranger to your village, town or city? Perhaps you note that you have never seen their face before, but that is rarely a sufficient clue. In all but the smallest of villages, residents encounter "strangers"—those whom they have never met before. Yet they still recognize these strangers as local residents, rather than "outsiders." The major clues come from the individual's actions—the way he carries himself, the way he communicates, the way he reacts.

An individual who does not belong where he is communicates his outsider status with every movement. Making his way through the town, he becomes lost and hesitates while he regains his bearings. Unfamiliar sights and sounds startle him. He senses that he is apart—different—from the locals who surround him, and he communicates that feeling to those with eyes to see the clues in the very lines of his body. It is these clues that identify strangers among us.

Do we notice someone who is totally at home in the environment of our town or village? Of course not—he does not give off any such clues.

In this way, Scouts fit into the masses of Name-givers in a city or a town. If the birds of the forest believe that we belong, how difficult would it be to convince the people of an unfamiliar town of the same thing?

Adepts from other Disciplines can learn these techniques to some degree, but never will they attain the level of proficiency enjoyed by a true Scout adept. For though the windling gives the subject short shrift, the Scout's enhanced perceptions are supported by magic, and one who has not dedicated himself to the Discipline must do without this significant boon.

—Jol Dennequen, Wizard of the City of Iopos

I have heard tell that some Scouts go to great lengths to avoid traveling in the Wastes. Why, they will not say. My suspicion is that their powerful bond with the world puts them at risk within the Wastes, at the very least becoming one with such corruption must be a painful and disconcerting experience.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

I once had reason to hire a Scout to serve me as an infiltrator. Through intermediaries, I made arrangements for the best candidate—an ork, as it turned out—to meet with me at the noon bell in my audience chamber. The noon bell rang, and the candidate failed to appear. I waited, as the time-candle burned away. Beside me, my three hand servants stood, shifting from foot to foot as they sensed my growing anger. Finally, just as I was about to give up, one of my "hand servants" stepped forward and introduced himself as the Scout I was to meet! Needless to say, I hired him on the spot.

—Tannis Denairastas of the City of Iopos

A Discourse on Other Environments

Do not allow yourself to accept the common misconception that a Scout is at home only in the wilderness, far from the works of Name-givers. We are as much at home and at ease in the heart of a teeming city as we are in the midst of an unexplored forest. Think on it a moment. We become one with our environment by opening our senses to it. Will the same technique not work as well in an environment constructed by Name-givers? Of course it will!

The clues in a city are very different from those of the wilderness—the tone of voice and the unspoken communications of passers-by, the patterns of traffic on streets, the condition of the buildings and roads in different neighborhoods, and the like. Yet the technique of opening oneself to those clues is exactly the same. If one can be aware of the scent of ripening goldenrod on the rolling plains, one can also be aware of the cooking fires and braziers of a town and extract from them their meaning.

On Specialists

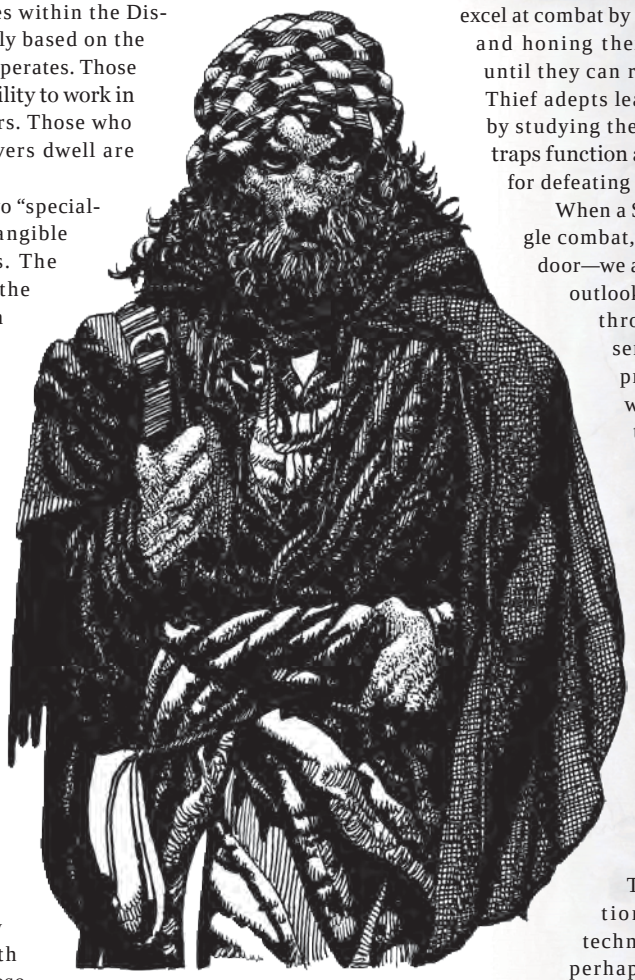
There are two main specialties within the Discipline of the Scout, quite naturally based on the environments in which the Scout operates. Those who develop to a fine edge their ability to work in the wilderness are called explorers. Those who focus on locales where Name-givers dwell are called infiltrators.

The difference between the two "specialties" lies only in the concrete, tangible skills each type of adept learns. The underlying aptitude for opening the senses to the world around them remains the same.

Adepts of one specialty often look with some degree of scorn on those who follow the other. Infiltrators, for example, consider the environment chosen by explorers to be woefully simplistic and infinitely less challenging than that in which they themselves excel. (After all, these specialists would argue, Name-givers have much the same instincts as the beasts of the wild—but they also have intellect, and no small degree of suspicion and paranoia! To move unnoticed among Name-givers, to them, offers a much greater challenge.)

In contrast, explorers hold themselves as more worthy because they deal with nature, with the "true world." Infiltrators, these Scouts contend, deal with a false and arbitrary model of nature, and so are closing themselves off from the broadness and richness of the greater world around them.

Those Scouts such as I, who have chosen no specialty within our Discipline, typically stay out of such arguments!



It is possible to subdivide Scout adepts further based on the type of wilderness where they operate, in other words, those who hone their arts in the forest, or in the desert, or in the rugged foothills form subgroups. To me, this distinction seems unimportant, though there are those who strongly disagree with this opinion.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

On Combat and Other Skills

Many Scouts are as skilled in the use of melee weapons as a Warrior adept, while others can pick a lock or disarm a trap as proficiently as a Thief adept. How then, do Scouts excel at certain skills usually viewed as skills of other Disciplines?

Though the outcomes of the use of these skills may appear the same as for other Disciplines, the way a Scout uses them is very different, for the use of these skills stems from the Scout's world view. As I understand it—and any Warriors reading my words must forgive my ignorance—Warrior adepts excel at combat by learning forms and styles of attack and honing their reactions and their instincts, until they can react to a foe's move instinctively. Thief adepts learn to pick locks or disarm traps by studying the mechanisms by which locks and traps function and practicing specific techniques for defeating those mechanisms.

When a Scout is faced with such tasks—single combat, for example, or opening a locked door—we approach it with a different mental outlook. As when we are moving silently through the wilderness, we open our senses—all our senses—to the clues presented to us. From these clues, we can build up a mental picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the obstacle before us, whether it be a swordsman or a lock. When it comes time to act, we focus all our attention and energy on the weaknesses we have detected.

On Training

Scouts learn much of their chosen Discipline by simply living the precepts of the path. Though this method of learning is quite natural and effective, many outside the path fail to understand it. They imagine that our instruction involves specific skills and techniques—"stealth," for example, or perhaps "spoor identification." Well, a Scout's training may contain some of that. But the most important facet of training is helping the initiate develop the Scout's world view, the ability to perceive unhampered by his unconscious limitations. In other words, to help the initiate strip away his preconceived ideas of the world and "see" it as it truly is. All else springs from this.

Most Name-giver races emphasize sight over all other senses. The first thing that a would-be Scout must learn is to eliminate this unnecessary reliance on a single sense. All senses are of equal importance in the grand scheme. Certainly, on specific occasions, one sense may offer the most vital information, but to focus exclusively and invariably on one sense is to limit yourself severely. One of the most important lessons I teach to initiates involves temporarily removing their sense of sight. So many students I have led through the woods blindfolded, forcing them to reach out with their other senses to avoid a painful collision or a jarring tumble!

The vast majority of the training I provide has the same goal—extending and broadening perception. Unlike the training of a Swordmaster, for example, I often simply walk with a student through a new environment—through the forest, or in the mountains, or in the midst of a bustling city—and help direct his attention and sharpen his focus with questions. Quite a contrast to the way most people envision a Scout's training, I am sure!

Certainly, sometimes I help a student work on specific, tangible skills. But such task-oriented training can come only after the student has sufficiently extended his perceptions. For teaching a student how to exploit the weakness in a swordsman's style before the student can accurately identify that weakness—well, there are less complicated forms of suicide, but few less sure.

Scouts and the Passions

Individual Scouts can revere any and all Passions. Among those members of my Discipline I number as friends, however, Lochost, Mynbruje, and, to a certain degree, Jaspree enjoy especial regard. Lochost may, at first glance, seem an odd choice for a Scout, but think on it a moment. Lochost's primary ideal is freedom, and "freedom" can mean freedom from past beliefs and prejudices as easily as physical freedom. The very nature of the Scout Discipline requires this kind of mental and spiritual freedom. A would-be Scout constrained by old ways of thought can not truly open himself to the world around him.

Many Scouts I have encountered take the physical aspect of freedom very seriously as well.

—Jol Dennequen, Wizard of the City of Iopos

Two of the ideals of Mynbruje are compassion and empathy. Scouts who seek to move without notice through towns and villages must demonstrate great compassion and empathy, making this Passion a logical choice for reverence. Still other Scouts seem to follow Jaspree almost as a consequence of their work in the wilderness, for one cannot become one with the wilderness without coming to love the wilderness to some degree.

A Scout who worked predominantly as an infiltrator presented that same argument to me, but he was explaining why he followed the precepts of Garlen.

—Jol Dennequen, Wizard of the City of Iopos

Game Information

Scouts are the vanguard, the tracker, and the brave rangers who go where others cannot. Scouts are masters of becoming one with their environment—be that the wildest primeval forest or the heart of the largest city.

Important Attributes: Dexterity, Perception

Racial Restrictions: Obsidiman, Troll

Karma Ritual: To begin his Karma ritual, the Scout allows his companions to lead him blindfolded deep into the forest, about 10 minutes walk from his starting point. The Scout meditates for 10 to 15 minutes as he visualizes the route back to where he began, then he starts the walk back, still blindfolded, to his starting point. Removing the blindfold, the half hour long ritual is complete.

Artisan Skills: Runic Carving, Wood Carving

Scout Abilities

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

First Circle

Talents: Avoid Blow[D], Climbing[D], Karma Ritual, Melee Weapons, Silent Walk[D], Tracking[D]

Second Circle

Talents: Durability (6/5), Maneuver, Read and Write Language

Third Circle

Talents: Astral Sight[D], Sprint

Fourth Circle

Ability: By taking 1 permanent Damage Point, the adept gains the **Enhance Senses** ability. This damage can never be healed. For 2 Strain Points of damage, the adept can enhance one of his natural senses. He gains a +2 bonus to Perception Tests based on the enhanced sense for 10 minutes.

Talents: Riposte, Thread Weaving (Scout Weaving)[D]

Fifth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Perception-only Tests.

Talents: Lock Sense, Ritual of the Ghost Master[D], Trap Initiative[D]

Sixth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Dexterity-only Tests.

Talents: Great Leap, Speak Language

Seventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.

Talents: Detect Trap[D], Endure Cold[D]

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Talents: Gliding Stride[D], Leadership, Missile Weapons

Ninth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.

Initiative: The adept adds +1 step to his Initiative step.

Talents: Anticipate Blow, Creature Analysis[D], Detect Weapon[D]

Tenth Circle

Ability: By taking 2 permanent Damage Points, the adept gains the **Blend** ability. This damage can never be healed. For 2 Strain Points of damage, the adept can blend in with his surroundings, with an effect identical to that of the Earth Blend spell (see the **Elementalism Spells** chapter, p. 295). The adept makes a Silent Walk Test in place of a spell Effect Test, the result of which becomes the Detection Difficulty to spot him. The effect lasts for up to 24 hours, or until the adept moves.

Talents: Missile Twister, Trace Missile[D]

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical and Social Defense.

Talents: Disguise Self, Wound Balance

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and Spell Defense.

Talents: Defense[D], Quickblade

Thirteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.

Karma: The adept adds +25 to his Maximum Karma Points.

Talents: Safe Path[D], Sense Poison[D], Talent Pattern

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical and Spell Defense.

Initiative: The adept adds +1 step to his Initiative step.

Talents: Second Chance, Poison Resistance[D]

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.

Initiative: The adept adds +1 step to his Initiative step.

Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.

Talents: Attribute Pattern, Echo Location [D], Ethereal Weapon

Half-Magic

A Scout may use half-magic to recognize tracks and trails left by different types of animals and Name-givers in wilderness or urban environments. They may also make Perception-based Half-Magic tests when looking for traps or secret doors, or in the place of Wilderness Survival Tests (see **Wilderness Survival** in the **Skills** chapter, p. 250).

Scouts can also make Perception-based Half-Magic Tests in place of Navigation or Mapmaking Tests (see **Navigation** and **Mapmaking** in the **Skills** chapter, p. 243).

Specialists

If the gamemaster wishes to differentiate between the different specialists of the Scout Discipline, he may do so by making the following changes to the base Discipline.

At First Circle, **infiltrator** Scouts replace the Tracking talent with the Astral Sight talent. At Third Circle Lock Sense replaces Astral Sight and Tracking replaces Sprint. At Fifth Circle, Sprint replaces Lock Sense. An infiltrator's Karma ritual generally resembles that of an average Scout, except that the infiltrator ritual focuses on the streets and alleys of a town. An infiltrator's advancement rituals also focus on populated areas.

For **explorer** Scouts, the Borrow Sense talent replaces the Riposte talent at Fourth Circle. An explorer's Karma ritual and advancement rituals take place in unpopulated areas, and generally focus on the dangers of the wilderness.

Roleplaying Hints

Scouts are a generally curious lot, interested in discovering what lies beyond the next hill. The simple precept "tread lightly" tends to govern their actions; the Scout who can achieve his goals with the least disruption to the world is truly living in accordance with his Discipline.

Justly proud of their abilities, many Scouts consider themselves superior to those who "blunder blindly through the world." This sense of superiority actually prevents Scouts from becoming lone wolves; while they rarely acknowledge it to those outside their Discipline, many Scouts enjoy having an audience of people who marvel at their ability to move through city streets or trackless wilds as though they had always lived there.

Though Scouts can fight, most of them avoid combat if they can. The saying, "Violence is the first resort of the incompetent," finds a place in many a Scout's personal vision. Many Scouts join merchant caravans or adventuring parties specifically seeking a chance to lead their charges through danger while avoiding direct conflict.

Possible Discipline Violations

A talent crisis is a particularly harrowing experience for a Scout. He generally feels cut off from the world around him, as blind and deaf to subtle clues of his environment as ordinary "stumblers." As usual, the exact triggers for a talent crisis vary with the adept's personal vision, but common violations include the Scout failing to "tread lightly" on the world, or acting too much like a Warrior or Thief. As a Deed of Atonement, the Scout usually finds a way to set right any harm to the world he may have caused. For example, an adept who has damaged land he has traveled through might devote himself to repairing that damage. Alternatively, a Scout may set himself a particularly challenging version of his Karma ritual—one that will require all of his skills and abilities and involves great personal risk.

Rituals of Advancement

At some point in their lives, many Scouts join an organized military order, much as Warriors do. These orders offer formal ceremonies and promotions to recognize their advancement in the Discipline. For Scouts outside of such an organization, a higher Circle Scout (often the same one who trained the adept) sets the adept some task or challenge that will require him to demonstrate his newly learned abilities.

Recruitment: In the course of their travels, Scouts often encounter or hear of young men and women who have what it takes to enter the Discipline (these candidates may have reputations as "natural woodsmen" or something similar). Scouts interested in recruiting new students organize competitions in which the candidates must follow the Scout through the wilderness. Any candidate who succeeds in following the Scout's trail can become a recruit, if he so wishes. Recruits often work under a master's tutelage for years before they reach First Circle.

Novice (Circles 2–4): When their masters judge that adepts are ready to advance to these Circles, they often invite the recruits to participate in elaborate competitions that resemble a combination of a race and a scavenger hunt. Clues leading from one checkpoint to the next along the course are concealed in various ways, so that only those participants who are intensely aware of their surroundings can reach the end. Higher-Circle Scouts observe these competitions and note those adepts who have mastered the talents required for advancement to the next Circle. These competitions take place within towns and cities as often as in the wilderness.

Journeyman (Circles 5–8): The instructor of a Scout advancing to this level hides in some safe haven—in the wilderness, in a town, or in a city—and takes steps to conceal and protect himself that are appropriate to the student adept's level of training (physical traps, obstacles, or even hired guards). The prospective journeyman must find his instructor, infiltrate any defenses, and acquire something (a tangible object, information available only through closely observing the instructor, and so on) before making his escape.

Warden (Circles 9–12): Adepts advancing to these Circles test their own talents to satisfy themselves.

Ghost Master Ritual: The adept meditates on his chosen ghost master. During the meditation, he sees a vision of a certain location, with sketchy details that he perceives using several senses in addition to sight. The adept must travel to this location, overcoming any and all obstacles in the process. When the adept reaches the site, the ghost master appears and the ritual proceeds as normal.

Possible Discipline Combinations

Because the Scout Discipline requires abilities similar to those of Warriors and Thieves, both Disciplines are common secondary choices. The Cavalryman is another complementary choice; it grants greater mobility, and expands the Scout's perceptions to include those of his bonded mount. Explorers often feel a kinship with the natural world that draws them to the Beastmaster Discipline.

Swordmasters are perhaps the least common secondary Discipline. Most Scouts feel Swordmasters tend to concentrate too much on standing out from the environment, instead of blending in with it, and approach combat in far too self-absorbed a way. Scouts also tend to avoid the Illusionist Discipline, which alters reality rather than accepting and embracing it, and the Nethermancer Discipline, which is too often concerned with the astral realms beyond.

Human Scout

"You did not take me for an adept? Well, that is a common mistake. We Scouts may not be as flashy as Swordmasters, or as brash as Cavalrymen, but neither of these Disciplines could lead your caravan through the wilderness as I can. I will find you the quickest route possible if you choose, though this might mean facing more hardships.

"Do not mistake me for a simple hunter or ranger! If you are taking your caravan to a new town I will still prove useful to you. As a stranger you will stand out in the marketplace; this might make the local populace suspicious of your intentions, especially in the hinterlands. A Scout can quickly find out which people you should make contact with to receive the best welcome. You would be surprised to find just how useful a Scout can be."

Attributes

Dexterity (16): 7/D12
Strength (13): 6/D10
Toughness (13): 6/D10
Perception (14): 6/D10
Willpower (12): 5/D8
Charisma (11): 5/D8

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 9
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 7
Initiative: 6/D10
Physical Armor: 5
Mystic Armor: 1
Death Rating: 35
Wound Threshold: 9
Recovery Tests: 2
Knockdown: 6/D10
Unconsciousness Rating: 27
Combat Movement: 32
Full Movement: 64
Karma Points: 10
Karma Step: 5/D8

Talents

Avoid Blow[D] (1): 8/2D6
Climbing[D] (2): 9/D8+D6
Karma Ritual (1): 1
Melee Weapons (1): 8/2D6
Silent Walk[D] (1): 8/2D6
Tracking[D] (2): 8/2D6

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills

Artisan:
Wood Carving (1): 6/D10
Knowledge:
Barsaive History (1): 7/D12
Creature Lore (1): 7/D12
General:
Read and Write Language (1): 7/D12
—Dwarf (Throalic)
Resist Taunt (1): 6/D10
Speak Language (2): 8/2D6
—Dwarf (Throalic), Human
Swimming (1): 7/D12

Money

Copper Pieces: 2
Silver Pieces: 4
Gold Pieces: 5

Equipment

Hardened Leather Armor (Phys 5; Init 1)
Broadsword (Damage 11/D10+D8)
Dagger (Damage 8/2D6; Range 9–15–18)
Adventurer's Kit
Trail Rations (1 week)
Traveler's Garb
Carving Tools

Notes

The adept possesses the human Versatility racial ability.

THE FIERCE AND HONORABLE WAY OF THE SKY RAIDER

The following text was transcribed from a conversation with the human Sky Raider known as Merienne Blays. Readers will note a predominance of words from the troll language used throughout this text. This tradition has its roots in the origins of the Sky Raider Discipline, which was first practiced by trolls. Over time, the trolls shared their Discipline with the other Name-giver races. With the knowledge of the Sky Raider Discipline came many terms and ideas so integral to the troll race that no adequate translation was possible. Where appropriate in this text, I and my fellow scholars have attempted to explain, or at least describe, such words. In this endeavor I am especially indebted to Thom Edrull, whose work on the Denizens of Barsaive *series granted him such a vast expertise in such matters.*

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

Of a Life in the Skies

You look askance at me, my dwarf friend. Why? Because I, a human and a female, claim to be a Sky Raider? I admit, the term Sky Raider brings the image of a large, burly male troll to the minds of most Name-givers. But there is more to being a Sky Raider than race or gender, much more. The true Sky Raider is marked by his attitude—a zest for life and for challenge and for adventure. To be a Sky Raider is to be, well, the trollish word my instructor used is *galan'kaharr*; I can think of no direct translation in the dwarf tongue.

A partial translation for galan'kaharr *might be "agent"—one who acts, rather than one who is acted upon. This translation captures the core meaning but does no justice to the far-reaching emotional resonance of the original troll word.*

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

Say what you will, only a troll can truly understand the path of the Sky Raider. Only a troll knows the true meaning of galan'kaharr, *and only a troll can truly live it.*

—Zurc of the Stoneclaws

To be a Sky Raider is to be free—to be completely independent, to follow one's own desires wherever they may lead, to be responsible to oneself and oneself alone. It is that freedom we seek when we take to the skies in our ships. It is that freedom we pursue when we wander abroad with the earth far below our feet.

That freedom is an integral part of troll culture—of highland troll culture, at least. It is the troll way to fling oneself wholeheartedly into life, to leave moderation for the races with weaker blood flowing sluggishly through their veins. This is why so many trolls become Sky Raiders, and why so many Sky Raiders are trolls. Members of other races who turn to the Sky Raider Discipline share this attitude. It is this world view that attracts them. It should come as no surprise, then, that many who follow the way of the Sky Raider also embrace other aspects of troll culture and incorporate them into our personal vision. Honor is of great importance—of overwhelming importance, in fact—to Sky Raiders of any race, as it is to highland trolls. Personal honor—that which the trolls call *katorr*—is predominant, though a modified version of *kat'ral* is also important. While a highland troll will defend the *kat'ral* of his clan or family, a Sky Raider of any race will defend the "group honor" of her crew, her colleagues, or the adventuring group to which she belongs.

Honor, for a Sky Raider, is inextricably linked with the idea of remaining *galan'kaharr*. Anyone who constrains a Sky Raider's freedom to act is slighting her honor—both *katorr* and *kat'ral*. There is nothing so demeaning to a Sky Raider as surrendering her freedom of action. We must remain free to follow our own judgment and to take complete and total responsibility for our own lives. Otherwise, where is the value of continued breath? One might as well lie down in one's grave, even before breath has finally stilled. To forsake responsibility is to turn away from life itself.

This is worth of emphasis. Kat'ral *is generally defined as clan or family honor. Sky Raiders often redefine their clan or family based on intent or goals rather than simple blood ties. Thus, a Sky Raider considers the crewmates who sail with her on a drakkar to be her family.*

—Thom Edrull, Archivist and Scribe of the Hall of Records

Actually, that freedom can be taken away—by various magics that control the mind and the will. To be treated as a puppet is the ultimate insult against katorr *and* kat'ral*—an insult most commonly answered with homicidal rage.*

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

A Discourse on Responsibility

The central tenet of a Sky Raider's life is individual responsibility. I am responsible for all that befalls me during my life—I and I alone. Certainly, circumstances beyond my control may seem to put restrictions on my freedom; an unforeseen storm might ground my ship, for example. Yet, even in the midst of the storm, I have the freedom to respond as I choose. Do I vainly curse the storm and despair? Or do I embrace the challenge and the danger, and pit my skills against the forces of Nature? It is my choice as to how I respond, and that freedom can never be taken from me.

People outside my Discipline often seem to believe that Sky Raiders are chaos incarnate, walking examples of anarchy. How can anyone trust an individual who puts personal freedom above all else, these people ask. Think it through, my dwarf friend, please. Individual freedom and personal responsibility do not preclude enlightened self-interest. Quite the opposite, in fact. As I see it, we—Sky Raiders such as myself—are less motivated by broad ideologies and belief systems than members of other Disciplines. We approach all decisions on the basis of individual responsibility.

Many people seem to believe that Sky Raiders possess an almost instinctive rejection of restrictions and guidelines and flout the laws of civilized societies at every turn. Not true! People who break all laws without thinking are as shortsighted as those who blindly follow all laws and restrictions. Sky Raiders typically examine each case on its own merits. If we believe a law or constraint is worthwhile, we will abide by it. If we believe it to be foolish or inappropriate, we will ignore it. In both cases, we take complete and personal responsibility for our decision. If I break a law, I am ready to take responsibility for that action. When I made my decision, I took into account the possible consequences, and I will face those consequences undismayed. That is one of the characteristics of individual responsibility. The central touchstone of my actions is my personal judgment. Do you understand me a little better now?

On Working with Others

It has been said—and is widely believed, in some circles—that Sky Raiders are incapable of cooperating with other Name-givers. How foolish that would be if it were true! Enlightened self-interest frequently makes cooperation necessary—no, essential. I recognize and respect my talents and abilities. But I also recognize that my individual talents are sometimes insufficient to achieve a goal I have deemed worthy. To achieve that goal, I must work alongside others, whose talents and skills complement mine.

I personally choose to believe that all those around me share my own views on individual responsibility and choice. Perhaps I am wrong to make this assumption, but so far the course I have set through life has proven to be a good one. Always I assume that those with whom I deal are honorable and responsible for their own actions—unless they prove otherwise. I deal in good faith with anyone, until the time I learn they are dealing in bad faith. Then I will re-examine the situation. Sometimes I just walk away from the honorless toad. Other times I may decide that retribution or—education—is in order. To use more colloquial terms, I will give a storm wolf one bite—but only one!

Honor—both *katorr* and *kat'ral*—require that a Sky Raider be true to her word. Her oath, once given, is binding. Honor is all that we have when we enter this world, and all we take with us when we leave it. To lessen that honor—by forswearing ourselves, for example—is to diminish who we are. Of course, most Sky Raiders are wise enough to know that the best way of keeping our word is not to give it lightly.

The reader must be aware that this is Merienne Blay's personal approach. Some Sky Raiders may share her course; others may chart a different route.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

An interesting contrast, is it not? A contrast and a contradiction. Conventional wisdom holds that Sky Raiders are capriciousness personified. Yet it also holds that a Sky Raider's word, once given, is binding ...

—Thom Edrull, Archivist and Scribe of the Hall of Records

On Loyalty to Ship and Crew

Not all Sky Raiders have ships or belong to a drakkar crew. After all, there are many more Sky Raiders than there are berths aboard the airships of Barsaive. Thus, a Sky Raider must earn his position on a drakkar crew.

Once a Sky Raider is granted a berth, her definition of *kat'ral* changes. She defines her crewmates as members of her "clan," whether or not they are related to her by blood. But she also defines the ship itself as part of her clan. A slight against a Sky Raider's ship is a slight against her own honor, both *katorr* and *kat'ral*. She will—indeed, she must—redress any such insult! This is why Sky Raiders feel such seemingly inordinate pride in the appearance and skyworthiness of their ship. Their drakkar is a visible manifestation of their own honor. A dirty, ill-maintained ship reflects a crew that lacks personal honor.

Once a Sky Raider has become part of a drakkar's crew, she will give her life to protect her ship. For losing that ship—whether or not through fault of her own—is the greatest of all dishonors. A Sky Raider who has joined a ship's company and then loses that ship is dispossessed and disgraced.

This is true even when the drakkar is owned by a troll Sky Raider's home moot. To receive a berth as a crew member is a great honor, and one that is not bestowed lightly.

—Chag Skat

Many Sky Raiders who travel with adventuring groups view their fellow adventurers as crewmates for the purposes of kat'ral. The Name and the pattern of the adventuring group take the place of the ship in the Sky Raider's world view. Slights against the group are taken as personal insults. Once a Sky Raider has joined a group, to lose that group—for whatever reason—leaves her "dispossessed and disgraced," as Blays describes above.

—Thom Edrull, Archivist and Scribe of the Hall of Records

On Raiding

Why do Sky Raiders raid? A common question. Some claim that Sky Raiders are heartless, soulless raptors who will kill and destroy to take from another. But we do not view ourselves this way. (I, at least, do not view myself this way.) As we are responsible for our own fortunes, so too are our foes responsible for theirs. In essence, we believe that others are worthy of possessing something—land, food, wealth, even life itself—only if they can defend that possession. Our raids grant our foes the opportunity to prove they are worthy. If our foes fight well but fall, we respect them. If they defeat us and drive us off, we respect them. Only if they fail to fight do we fail to respect them. Our foes do us honor when they fight to repel our raids. To simply surrender—to give up without a fight—is to abdicate their own honor and do us a mortal insult in the process!

That is why we do not hate other moots or clans who raid ours. We defend what we have to the death; we kill those who assail us. But we do not hate them, even as we slay them. If we go down to defeat, it is our responsibility. Our failure—our death—weighs on us, not on those who attacked us.

A typically troll view of the world, I must remark. Something about the Discipline of the Sky Raider carries with it a troll approach to life. Humans, even dwarfs, who follow this Discipline seem, in many ways, to become like smaller versions of trolls.

—Thom Edrull, Archivist and Scribe of the Hall of Records

Of Sky Raiders and the Passions

Ask one outside our Discipline which Passion Sky Raiders revere above all others, and the answer will almost universally be Thystonius. This Passion receives due reverence from many Sky Raiders because personal honor and valor—ideals of Thystonius—are closely held in many of our hearts. Our zest for living, our love of the opportunity to prove ourselves against threats and challenges—these things echo the precepts of Thystonius.

Yet think on it. From what I have told you, what other Passion would find a place in our hearts?

If you ventured Lochost, you are right. For Lochost is the patron of rebellion, change and freedom. Lochost strives ever against enslavement—whether physical enslavement as practiced by the hated Therans, or mental and emotional enslavement represented by the restrictive societies of the lowlands. To be enslaved—physically or otherwise—is, for a Sky Raider, a fate worse than death. There is no more heinous crime against us than to deny us the ability to be *galan'kaharr*. Do you understand that, my friend? Better to kill us then to enslave our bodies or our souls.

On Training

Trolls generally enter the Sky Raider Discipline through their trollmoot. Many highland moots have their own drakkars, and young trolls who wish to follow the Discipline of the Sky Raider will dedicate themselves early on to earning a berth aboard these vessels. Trolls from outside a moot are sometimes invited to join the Discipline, though only those who have already proven themselves in combat and shown the honor and sense of responsibility that distinguish Sky Raiders. Such *newots*, even once they have been accepted into the Discipline, must still prove themselves worthy of a berth aboard the moot's vessel, of course.

And what of *no'a'ul* such as myself? The usual avenues for joining the Sky Raider Discipline are denied to us. We are part of no trollmoot, and no troll Sky Raider would deign to seek out *no'a'ul* candidates for membership in the Discipline. In all but the most exceptional of cases, we must seek out an instructor and convince him or her to accept us as student and would-be adept.

It is true, my friend, that few *no'a'ul* become Sky Raiders. How could it be otherwise? So few outside the troll race understand what it is to be a Sky Raider. Why would someone seek to follow a Discipline that he cannot fully understand?

The word no'a'ul *is a troll designation—not necessarily insulting, but not overly respectful either—for members of other Name-giver races, except for obsidimen, of course, who are referred to as* ago'al*—rock brothers.*

—Thom Edrull, Archivist and Scribe of the Hall of Records

Yet there are those—I among them—who feel the stirrings of personal honor and responsibility in their souls when they are children, who understood—imperfectly, it is true, and without knowing the correct word—the concept of *galan'kaharr*. These few sometimes learn enough of the Discipline to understand that only within its ways can they find true soul-mates, fellows who share their view of the world. These would-be Sky Raiders usually have little choice but to trek to the highlands and locate a trollmoot where Sky Raiders are trained. Then they must find an instructor and impress him with their desire to join the Discipline.

How? Almost invariably by combat, of course.

I myself located my mentor among the members of a moot in the Twilight Peaks. A large and grizzled troll, he was, renowned for his ferocity in combat and his unshakable sense of honor. I told him what I wished from him—indoctrination in the Sky Raider Discipline—and he laughed in my face. So I challenged him to single combat then and there. He refused my challenge! (This was the most insulting action he could possibly have taken, of course.) So I hurled myself at his throat, disdaining the weapons that hung on my belt, and I tried my level best to slay him.

The outcome was preordained, of course. It took me a fortnight to recover from the drubbing I received. Throughout my convalescence, however, I bore my wounds with a stoicism that must have impressed him. When I could walk and wield a weapon again, he came to me and asked me if I would undertake a challenge. I accepted immediately, without asking the nature of that challenge. (I understand now that this was the turning point in our relationship. Had I asked to know the challenge before I accepted, I do not believe he would have offered me training.)

My challenge was to stage a raid—alone!—against a neighboring earthbound clan. I was to assault their moothome and return with a trophy: a weapon taken from the hand of one of the moothome's guards! Only when I returned with that trophy—and return I did, my friend, bloody and scarred but triumphant—did my mentor agree to undertake my training.

Concerning Ongoing Training

In the years since, I have enjoyed the honor of training Sky Raiders of lower Circles than myself. (The greatest honor has come when trolls—not fellow *no'a'ul* like myself—have come to me requesting instruction!) The principle that I have followed—which I learned from my first instructor—is that the responsibility for learning lies with the student, not with the instructor. The student must decide what specific skills and talents she needs to learn, and then the student petitions her instructor for the training she requires. While I may provide guidance if specifically asked, it is not my place to decide how a student's training is to proceed.

I believe wholeheartedly that the greatest service I can provide to a student is to teach by example. When the drakkar on which I serve undertakes a raid, I will invite my student to fight alongside me in the fray. When we labor to maintain the ship, she works alongside me. When my duty leads me to handle the rigging or take the tiller, my student will be beside me there as well. The greatest lesson I can offer her is to show how a true Sky Raider faces the challenges of life.

Not all elders follow this scheme, of course. My friend E'Tal Goldeneye tells me that his first instructor, who recruited him into the Discipline, was the harshest of taskmasters, ordering E'Tal around as though he was a hand servant. This elder constantly set him to undertake menial tasks and exhausting exercises and punished him for even the slightest flaw in his performance. For months E'Tal labored under his harsh discipline, striving to prove himself worthy to be declared a member of the First Circle. On the day that E'Tal finally refused his teacher's orders and declared that this servitude was unacceptable, the elder smiled and said, "You have passed the test. Now you are a true Sky Raider!"

Game Information

Sky Raiders are ruthless pirates forming a potent force in Barsaive. Their drakkars raid all over the province, most frequently targeting Therans or their vassals. Sky Raiders are proud, and show great loyalty to other Sky Raiders—unless that raider belongs to an enemy clan or moot.

Important Attributes: Dexterity, Strength, Toughness

Racial Restrictions: Elf, Obsidiman, Windling

Karma Ritual: To start his Karma ritual, the Sky Raider spends several minutes in silent meditation beneath the open sky. Then he begins to strike his shield with a weapon, slowly at first, perhaps two beats a minute. The striking accelerates until the Sky Raider is beating his shield at a furious rate. The drumming continues for a half hour, then the Sky Raider stops, continuing to meditate while his shield still resonates from the furious bashing. The Karma ritual ends as soon as the sound from the last drumbeat dies away.

Artisan Skills: Bone Carving, Runic Carving, Wood Carving

Sky Raider Abilities

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

First Circle

Talents: Air Sailing[D], Avoid Blow, Battle Shout[D], Fireblood[D], Karma Ritual, Melee Weapons[D]

Second Circle

Talents: Durability (8/6), Great Leap[D], Shield Charge[D]

Third Circle

Talents: Unarmed Combat, Wind Catcher[D]

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Strength-only Tests.

Talents: Swift Kick, Thread Weaving (Sky Weaving)[D]

Fifth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Dexterity-only Tests.

Talents: Battle Bellow[D], Fence, Ritual of the Ghost Master[D]

Sixth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Toughness-only Tests.

Talents: Momentum Attack[D], Steely Stare[D]

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on melee weapon Damage Tests.

Talents: Speak Language, Throwing Weapons

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Talents: Crushing Blow[D], Leadership, Missile Weapons

Ninth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.

Talents: Endure Cold[D], Lion Heart[D], Second Attack[D]

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.

Talents: Shield Beater, Thunder Axe[D]

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical and Spell Defense.

Talents: Defense, Weapon Breaker[D]

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and Spell Defense.

Talents: Critical Hit, Vitality

Thirteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.

Karma: The adept adds +25 to his Maximum Karma Points.

Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.

Talents: Matrix Strike, Quickblade, Talent Pattern

Fourteenth Circle

Ability: By taking 3 permanent Damage Points, the adept gains the **Strength of the Sky** ability. This damage can never be healed. Permanently add +3 to the adept's Strength value, even if it has already been increased by the +5 maximum normally allowed by improving this Attribute (see **Spending Legend Points** in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 420).

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Talents: Howl, Quick Shot

Fifteenth Circle

Ability: By taking 3 permanent Damage Points, the adept gains the **Lightning Song** ability. This damage can never be healed.

For 3 Strain Points of damage, the adept can summon a fierce storm under the following conditions: there must be clouds in the sky, the adept must be on an airship, and he must make a successful Howl (15) Test. The Lightning Song takes 1 hour to sing, during which time the nearest clouds begin to flash with lightning. After successfully finishing the song, the Sky Raider can control when the storm arrives, which must be sometime within the next 24 hours. When the storm arrives, the skies darken within minutes, possibly surprising other airships in the area. This magical storm barely affects the vessel on which the adept rides, but may cause serious damage to other airships in the immediate vicinity. The captain of each nearby airship must make a successful Air Sailing Test against the adept's Howl Test result to avoid harm. If the test fails, the airship takes Step 25 damage from the lightning and wind. An Air Sailing Test must be made at least once per hour while the storm lasts. The effect lasts for a number of hours equal to the adept's Howl rank.

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Talents: Attribute Pattern, Screaming Arrow, Stone Skin [D]

Half-Magic

Sky Raiders may use half-magic for tasks related to the upkeep, repair and building of drakkar-sized airships, knowledge of different airship designs and recognition of different airship types, knowledge of commonly followed flight paths, and identification of crew complements of different sizes according to types of airships. Sky Raiders may also make Dexterity-based Half-Magic Tests in place of Climbing Tests while aboard an airship.

Sky Raiders may also make Perception-based Half-Magic Tests in place of Navigation Tests while aboard an airship (see **Navigation** in the **Skills** chapter, p. 243).

Roleplaying Hints

Responsibility and honor represent a Sky Raider's primary motivation, though each Sky Raider will have their own definitions of these concepts. For many, the concepts are intertwined; a Sky Raider behaves honorably by taking responsibility for his own life and destiny. No Sky Raider willingly does anything that might tarnish his personal definition of honor—though he rarely cares whether others view his actions as honorable or dishonorable. Once a Sky Raider gives his oath on any matter, he will not break it.

Because a Sky Raider often sees honor and responsibility as two sides of the same coin, he rarely shows compassion for the troubles of others unless those others are clearly striving against their misfortunes with all their strength. Those who blame their lot in life on fate or circumstance rather than taking personal responsibility for their condition are dishonorable by definition, and therefore unworthy of sympathy or aid.

Likewise, a Sky Raider will refrain from interfering if his companion seems about to break his own oath. Responsibility is an individual matter, and the companion must choose for himself whether or not to be an "honorless toad." On the other hand, a Sky Raider who sees the "weak" or "underprivileged" fighting to better themselves, or to free themselves from the yoke of an oppressor, may well devote himself wholeheartedly to their cause.

Some Sky Raiders view adepts of other Disciplines with scorn, because in their opinion they have chosen to follow a "lesser" path. Other Sky Raiders offer adepts of other Disciplines an indulgent understanding and sympathy; they may have made a "lesser" choice, but in taking responsibility for their own path they have demonstrated a basic understanding of honor.

Possible Discipline Violations

For many Sky Raiders, personal honor is the focus of their Discipline, and the worst possible violation of personal honor is to break an oath. To do so often triggers a talent crisis, the severity depending on the circumstances under which the act took place. Relinquishing personal responsibility or doing anything to besmirch their honor may also trigger a talent crisis.

Most Sky Raiders can easily think up an appropriate Deed of Atonement; very often they simply do something to fix the problem immediately, and damn the consequences. To make up for turning aside from a challenge, for example, the Sky Raider must track down the challenger and settle the matter. A Sky Raider who relinquishes his personal responsibility must somehow take the reins of his life back into his own hands, and often chooses to do so in a direct, blatant, and violent way.

Rituals of Advancement

Sky Raider rituals almost always involve some type of physical conflict. The adept must acquire some trophy of the battle to prove that he successfully completed the ritual.

Recruitment: Almost all Sky Raiders enter the Discipline through their trollmoot. Very rarely, *newots* will be invited to join the Discipline. Other non-trolls must seek out Sky Raiders for training into that Discipline, because Sky Raiders never recruit among the other Name-giver races.

Novice (2–4): The adept participates in a raid and secures a trophy that earns admiration from an elder.

Journeyman (5–8): When not actively warring on each other, rival troll clans meet in (theoretically) bloodless competitions, matching their strength in wrestling, stick fighting, footraces, and so on. To gain respect from the elders in such a contest or in an actual war with the rival clan, the adept must compete against opponents of an equal or higher Circle.

Warden (9–12): The adept commands a raid against a worthy and well-defended target.

Ghost Master Ritual: The Sky Raider draws a circle on the deck of a docked airship. While seated in this circle, he envisions leading a raid against insurmountable opposition. In his imagination he defeats the enemy, or perhaps dies honorably. After an hour of this positive thinking, the desired ghost master appears and applauds. The ritual continues as normal.

Possible Discipline Combinations

Sky Raiders usually take on additional combat-oriented Disciplines whose precepts dovetail with their active, do-something-now view of the world. Common choices include the Swordmaster, Warrior, or Weaponsmith. Sky Raiders will not usually become Scouts, as the idea of "treading lightly" is alien to a Sky Raider's way of thinking; a Sky Raider usually wants to have an impact on the world around him—and the bigger, the better! Sky Raiders usually don't take up Disciplines that "delegate" their personal responsibility in some way. Beastmasters, Elementalists, Nethermancers, and even Wizards often rely too much on an outside force or agent.

Thieves and Air Sailors are both antithetical to the philosophy of the Sky Raider, and only in exceptional cases will they be taken on as secondary Disciplines. The stealth commonly required by the Thief stands in opposition to the Sky Raider's bold daring, and the Air Sailor's view of Sky Raiders as brutish barbarians is often taken as a slight against the Raider's honor

Ork Sky Raider

"Don't even think about opposing me—I am a Sky Raider! My people have bred powerful warriors for as long as the sun has shone in the sky. The mountaintops are our kingdom and the sky, our ocean.

"Our lives are simple. Today we raid and tomorrow we will raid again, it is the course of things. We merely take what your societies deny us. Your ancestors drove our forefathers high into the mountains, beyond the land that could sustain us. So be it. We raid."

Attributes

Dexterity (13): 6/D10
Strength (16): 7/D12
Toughness (19): 8/2D6
Perception (10): 5/D8
Willpower (11): 5/D8
Charisma (11): 5/D8

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 6
Social Defense: 7
Initiative: 4/D6
Physical Armor: 8
Mystic Armor: 1
Death Rating: 43
Wound Threshold: 12
Recovery Tests: 3
Knockdown: 7/D12*
Unconsciousness Rating: 35

* Character knows the Wound Balance skill.

Combat Movement: 28
Full Movement: 56
Karma Points: 10
Karma Step: 5/D8

Talents

Air Sailing[D] (1): 6/D10
Avoid Blow (1): 7/D12
Battle Shout[D] (2): 7/D12
Fireblood[D] (1): 9/D8+D6
Karma Ritual (1): 1
Melee Weapons[D] (2): 8/2D6

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills

Artisan:
Runic Carving (1): 6/D10
Knowledge:
Military History (Cara Fahd) (1): 6/D10
Ork Lore (1): 6/D10
General:
Read and Write Language (1): 6/D10
—Dwarf (Throalic)
Speak Language (2): 7/D12
—Dwarf (Throalic), *Or'zet*
Tactics (1): 6/D10
Wound Balance (1): 8/2D6

Money

Copper Pieces: 5
Silver Pieces: 3
Gold Pieces: 2

Equipment

Hardened Leather Armor (Phys 5; Init 1)
Footman's Shield (Phys 3; Init 1; Shatter 19)
Flail (Damage 12/2D10)
Sling (Damage 9/D8+D6; Range 20–40–80)
Dagger (Damage 9/D8+D6; Range 9–15–18)
Adventurer's Kit
Carving Tools
Trail Rations (1 week)
Traveler's Garb

Notes

The adept possesses the ork Low-Light Vision and *Gahad* racial abilities.

THE DANCE OF THE SWORDMASTER

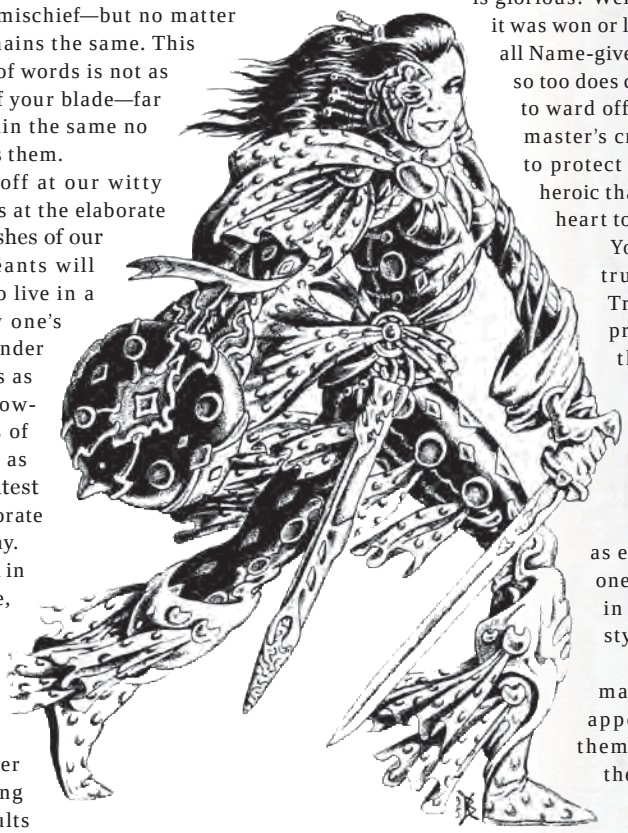
The following entry was supplied by the Swordmaster Elizabetta of Kaer Adelade, who won the bragging rights at the most recent Swordmaster Grand Tourney for her inspired and impeccably timed double-thrust against Kevar the Unimpressed. Her brilliant riposte in response to his cleverly-worded attack against her wit actually threw off Kevar's timing and allowed Elizabetta to cut away the fasteners of his shirt in one clean stroke. The Royal Library was honored by the Swordmaster's cooperation with our project, for she supplied one of the most entertaining and informative treatises we received.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

THE WORLD OF THE SWORDMASTER

It's all part of the dance! Live or die, it's all part of the dance when you're a Swordmaster. That is the first lesson I learned at the knee of my master. Other masters may claim it is all part of the tale, or song, or grand mischief—but no matter the wording, the meaning remains the same. This is not to say that the crafting of words is not as important as the tempering of your blade—far from it! Yet, basic truths remain the same no matter what frippery decorates them.

Jealous Warriors may scoff at our witty repartee and shake their heads at the elaborate spins of our bodies and flourishes of our swords. The besotted miscreants will never understand what it is to live in a world made more vibrant by one's very presence in it! It is no wonder that most Warriors dismiss us as overblown, vain-glorious blowhards. What the rheumy eyes of these lesser creatures perceive as flaws, we know to be the greatest merits of all. Allow me to elaborate for a moment on our philosophy.



For as long as I have danced in the footsteps of the Discipline, I have known that slaying an opponent, whether it be the foulest gore-spattered Horror or merely some back-stabbing rogue in a dark alley, is a necessary evil. You wonder how one who makes his living by the sword can view its results as evil? Ah, but should you ask that question you have missed the point entirely. For though the act of killing may be as base as a one-course meal of birch broth, the act can be elevated to an art by a Swordmaster. We are the chefs of the sword, the iron-wielding elite of the blade! We carefully add our ingredients: a dash of acrobatics, a dollop of wit, a trace of timing, and a pinch of élan, until we have transformed that lowly birch broth into a nine-course feast!

Our swords are extensions of our bodies and our souls, but by themselves they mean little. For competing bravely in a tournament, exchanging witty repartee and pirouetting leaps with one's opponents, is pointless if one hunches silently in the meanest corner of the inn that evening. Battles, as with life itself, only hold meaning when shared with others. Even mean competition can be elevated in the sharing, but what about when the battle itself is glorious? Well, then, such an encounter—whether it was won or lost—adds to the world's glory. Just as all Name-givers create art to ward off Horror-taint, so too does creating glory from a tainted act serve to ward off the evil surrounding us. The Swordmaster's craft is a golden shield we hold forth to protect our world, and what could be more heroic than that? Merely to think on it sets my heart to singing!

You can see that our swords are more truly weapons of wit than of war. The Troubadour practices an honorable profession, but those adepts only tell the tale, whereas we Swordmasters create the tales we tell. And so every situation in the Swordmaster's life is a tableau fraught with possibilities for swashbuckling adventure, torrid romance, and great acts of heroism. Even such a mundane act as entering an inn can be made grand if one possesses style, and no Name-giver in water, earth, or air knows more of style than the Swordmasters.

This love of style makes us Swordmasters continually aware of how we appear to others—from the Passions themselves to the cows chewing cud by the trail. Though each of us cultivates our own unique style (but then, "style is always singular, never plural!" as Lilting Phineous was wont to say), all Swordmasters concern themselves equally with everything from the smallest details of appearance to the largest sweeps of our swords. Clothing, stance, walk, words, gestures, sighs—all are necessary accoutrements to draw to us the eyes of our audience. We must always strive to make the world more glorious, more virtuous, more true, by our presence in it.

This belief also explains why Swordmasters so often allow worthy opponents whom they have fought and bested, even many times over, to live to see another sunrise, to hear another poem, to woo another lover. We trade not in killing, but in theater! We are artists sworn to craft our paintings with our bodies, hearts and minds. We live to create, not to destroy. Though our art may begin with the sword, it does not end there. If this world of ours is to grow ever more glorious in this new time, then we must not fall into the trap of becoming what we fear. We must rise above our own penchant for evil, great and small, while we remain ever vigilant to the multitude of threats to our fair world. It is an existence to be envied, is it not?

Life as a Swordmaster

If life is a dance, then the Swordmaster is most certainly the belle of the ball. Just as our opulent finery and actions draw the attention of others to us, so does the world continually draw our attention to opportunities for saving a life or puncturing the so-called wit of a bore lacking his fair share of manners. Likewise, when faced with a dramatic situation in which our presence might prove invaluable in some way, most Swordmasters find it impossible to keep from interceding.

Many times this need to speak against injustices, to berate the morally bankrupt or leap to the aid of the weak, ends in our employing the skills for which we are named. Yet, on other occasions, we are drawn to less military solutions. I recall the time I first set eyes on young Captain Fettalan, with his dark cloak and iridescent green scales... what adventures can begin with a single sweep of the tail!

But before I get carried away in that Tale of a Tail (and I must admit that Captain Fettalan, who is an excellent Troubadour, tells it far better than I), I should remark that it is a measure of the Swordmaster's perspicacity, our keen perception, that enables us to identify injustices that others might not so easily recognize. True, some disgruntled souls claim that we create dramatic situations from thin air, but they would not—and could not—claim such beliefs if those unfortunate ones could even briefly see the world through our eyes. For those of you who sadly lack the required skills of heart, mind and body to become Swordmasters, let me assure you that we are just as compelled to act once we witness an injustice as we are to recognize such a need in the first place!

Thus, life for a Swordmaster is a series of daring escapades. When we are not throwing ourselves into the midst of adventure, we are girding for our next such encounter, or exchanging stories of previous exploits. Yet throughout all of this, we spend time learning and rehearsing the dance. The physical, mental, and emotional skills required of a Swordmaster are such that daily practice is a necessity we cannot long forego, lest the skills we have fought so long and hard to attain begin to dull.

Elizabetta speaks an important truth here, for the skilled arm of a Swordmaster is like a pot of boiling water. Remove it from the fire of practice and it becomes cold.

—Jontar, Swordmaster of Opar

On Finding One's Path

Swordmasters throughout the ages have woven their threads to many of the legendary swords in our world. Though all magic interests a Swordmaster, most of us wend our ways through life keeping at least half an eye on the quest to find and then bind our patterns to our perfect sword.

I know that many non-Swordmasters find this idea hard to fathom, but most Swordmasters believe that somewhere in the world there exists a magical sword that he alone (at least in this era) was meant to wield. Finding a soul sword and learning all its most intimate secrets—and then working with the weapon to create an even greater legend—is the most important quest of all Swordmasters. You may ask how we can tell that we have found the sword. I have not found mine yet, but I have been told many times that I will recognize it the moment I see it—perhaps even the moment I first hear its Name? It is undeniable that the most famous Swordmasters have been known as much for their swords as for themselves, and that both sword and master together weave themselves into legend.

The importance of a Swordmaster's blade can be stated in the simple words of the ancient maxim 'the sword makes the man.'

—Ruldo of Urupa

On the Art of Training

Long, hard, dusty, sweaty hours of labor are just as much a part of the Swordmaster's life as are velvety words and leaping glory, and very few Name-givers possess the particular combination of skills that makes it possible for them to even consider taking up the sword and following our Discipline. Learning if one's true way lies on the Glorious Road is made doubly difficult by the vast number of youths who dream of joining our ranks.

I can tell you from copious personal experience that an experienced Swordmaster often faces challenges issued by youngsters who believe they have what it takes to become an apprentice. Of course, all too many of these younglings see only the glittering, glib ease and effortlessness with which Swordmasters seem to move through life. They have no idea of the grime behind the glitter, of the constant sacrifices and effort needed to achieve such results. And so dismissing the most callow aspirants seldom requires much effort.

Even the masses of promising hopefuls contain few Swordmasters. This is one of the reasons most Swordmasters require that their apprentices promise to teach at least as many pupils during their lifetimes as years the apprentice spends under his master's training. Swordmasters rarely train more than one pupil at a time, for training an apprentice requires far too much of an instructor's energy and attention to successfully divide the effort between multiple students. Fortunately, once a new Swordmaster reaches the First Circle ("earns his sword," in the vernacular) the frequently held tournaments and contests, as well as his own efforts to train new apprentices, admirably supplement any additional training his master provides.

Taking Up the Gauntlet

What is it that prompts a Swordmaster to take on a particular pupil? It varies from adept to adept, but most aspirants to the Discipline would undoubtedly be surprised to learn that quick wit and a certain feistiness of spirit might be considered of greater importance than raw physical skill. This is not to say that Swordmasters will accept candidates who lack dexterity. Far from it! It is rather to say that the physical skills required in a potential apprentice are more common—and easier to teach—than the vigor, the innate sense of style and imagination that attracts a master's attention.

Such élan is nigh impossible to fake, and it shows itself in different ways with different candidates. This may be why some masters instruct a would-be apprentice to seek out a particular

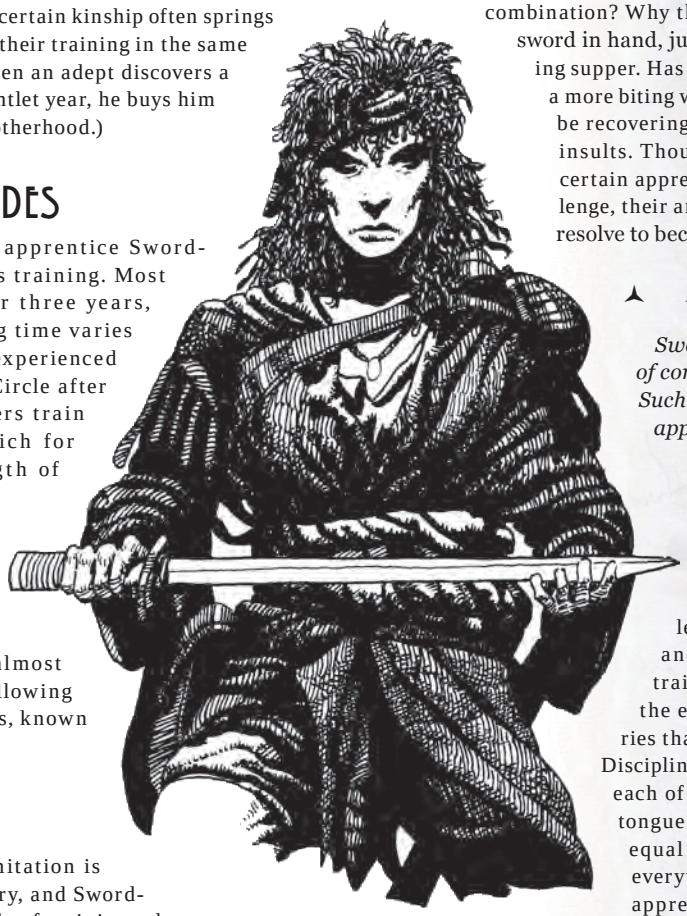
Swordmaster to challenge. We all favor a particular style, and most of us can recognize the true gift even if it runs counter to our own preferences. Thus, though I willingly teach particularly acrobatic youths who are equally eager to enter into a duel of wits as one of many weapons, another master may favor the youth with brilliant sword strokes who continually plays to the audience. Of course, the recruit need not best the Swordmaster in a duel to be accepted as an apprentice, else we would soon have no more Swordmasters!

If the would-be apprentice manages to impress the Swordmaster with his potential, the Swordmaster may "throw down his gauntlet" (a glove or other token) and offer his services as a trainer. By "taking up the gauntlet," the apprentice begins his new life as a swordsman. Older adepts often ask each other when they "took up the gauntlet," and a certain kinship often springs up among those who began their training in the same year. (It is tradition that when an adept discovers a compatriot of the same gauntlet year, he buys him a drink in honor of their brotherhood.)

The Tripled Blades

Once accepted as an apprentice Swordmaster, the recruit begins training. Most achieve First Circle after three years, though this basic training time varies widely. More talented or experienced recruits may reach First Circle after a few months, while others train for up to six years, which for us is the maximum length of apprenticeship.

Different masters favor different training styles. And though every Swordmaster uses unique variations in training his apprentices, almost all fall under one of the following three training philosophies, known as the Tripled Blades.



Flattery

It is often said that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, and Swordmasters who favor this style of training take this saying to heart. An adept trained in this manner learns his Discipline by imitating the verbal and physical stylings of his master. The recruit must learn to successfully imitate everything about his teacher, from how to dress and turn a phrase, to the type of sword and the parry-thrust combinations his master favors. Adepts trained in this manner are often among the most avid tournament goers, as they usually build their own styles by combining skills and ideas learned directly from other Swordmasters.

The Foil

The foil style of training may well be the most common of all forms. Here, recruits are taught to use their budding skills as a foil on which their master can build. The apprentice becomes the master's constant companion and uses his master's verbal cues and physical ripostes as pegs on which to hang his own skills of word and weapon. Likewise, he learns to provide openings that allow his teacher to wield his own skills more admirably. The foil style of training often produces adepts with skills and habits reminiscent of, but still distinct from, their masters'.

Contention

The final approach of the basic training styles is undoubtedly the least common. Swordmasters who favor the contention training style tend to be stern teachers, punishing students who make errors with harsh behavior. Though this style is frowned on by some Swordmasters as stunting the vigor of recruits, it has been known to produce some very impressive young Swordmasters.

In the contention style of training, the master continually challenges his pupil. The Swordmaster goes over a skill a few times or, in some instances, simply tells the recruit to learn it. Just when the apprentice believes he is getting a handle on the skill or idea, the master challenges him in the most brutal way possible. Has the recruit just learned a new leap and parry combination? Why then, the master leaps at the pupil, sword in hand, just as the poor apprentice is finishing supper. Has the recruit recently begun to show a more biting wit? If so, he will undoubtedly soon be recovering from a blazing string of scathing insults. Though this method may seem harsh, certain apprentices thrive on the constant challenge, their anger and fear only tempering their resolve to become full-fledged Swordmasters.

Swordmasters trained in the method of contention are superior to all others. Such challenges temper the skills of an apprentice in a way nothing else can.

—Elvorka of Jerris

Regardless of specific training styles, the apprentice learns much of philosophy, style and etiquette during the course of training—even while slaving away at the exacting dances, thrusts, and parries that are the more blatant tools of the Discipline. Apprentices must learn to wield each of the three blades ("eyes to pierce, tongue to lash and sword to slash") with equal facility. Such skills are practiced everywhere once the recruit begins his apprenticeship, but it is at the tournaments and contests that Swordmasters can truly stretch their budding skills and hone those they have begun to master.

Of Tournaments and Tales

On hills and in dales, along riverbanks and in town commons, Swordmasters regularly hold loosely organized tournaments. (A tournament must have at least nine competitors to qualify as a tournament, and not merely a challenge.) At least a dozen specific tournaments take place each year in Barsaive, the largest and most famous being the Grand Tourney, held at midsummer just outside of Bartertown. Swordmasters from across the continent travel to Bartertown each summer to compete in the various contests held at this most prestigious event.

Tournaments offer Swordmasters a number of different opportunities. Perhaps most importantly, tournaments provide a place where adepts can meet with others who share our unique view of the world. The vast majority of Swordmasters are garrulous, social beings who adore being the center of attention. One must rarely wait more than an hour into a tournament before witnessing the first extravagant stories and daring leaps from

balconies. Tournaments are often spectacular fun for other Namegivers observing the competition, but be warned! It is all too easy to be caught up in any one of a number of unofficial contests of all types which we Swordmasters use to continually test ourselves and each other.

Official events at tournaments usually include a few swordless competitions testing agility (long and high jumps) and wit (challenges of repartee), but most events revolve around sword fights that test all the Swordmasters' skills. These events fulfill the second major purpose of tournaments by enabling Swordmasters to rise through the Circles of the Discipline. Save for those lucky enough to find a ghost master, almost all Swordmaster adepts rise in Circles in this manner.

Rising through the lower ranks of Circles merely requires that the adept display proficiency in the proper skills over the course of the tournament. Reaching the upper Circles requires the adept to overcome far greater difficulties. In these cases, the Swordmaster must prove himself capable of defeating multiple opponents of his current Circle in dramatic combat. Often, the adept begins the contest at some sort of a disadvantage (for example, having one hand tied behind his back) or with an additional task (rescuing a "captive") he must accomplish during the fight. When attempting to attain the very highest Circles, the odds against a single candidate can be truly overwhelming. I had the great good fortune to witness the troll Swordmaster, Aldaric the Unbowed, successfully defeat eighty opponents in the course of a single battle to reach the Ninth Circle. And Aldaric began the competition at the bottom of a well!

Unfortunately for our Discipline, favoritism sometimes creeps into tournaments to give unfair advantage to Swordmasters attempting to reach the higher Circles. Ideally, a Swordmaster of Fifth Circle or higher should be truly brilliant with his weapon, regardless of the other skills he possesses. Still, the more influential masters who decide close matches occasionally allow less physically adept, but more popular, swordsmen to advance to higher Circles without obtaining the proper level of skill. Ah, well, I suppose it is not surprising that such favoritism occurs in a Discipline so full of vainglorious sods as ours.

Bragging Rights

Each tournament has its own peculiar traditions and customs. However, I have never heard of a tournament that does not bestow bragging rights on one of its contestants. Quite simply, whomever the tournament judges deem to have performed the single most memorable accomplishment at the tournament that year wins the tournament's bragging rights. The action need not occur during the course of an official contest, though it most often does. For example, the right witticism delivered with impeccable timing at the inn has been known to win bragging rights for the swordsman who spoke it. A Swordmaster with bragging rights gains a certain amount of esteem from any adepts who participated in the tournament. Additionally, etiquette demands that an adept who holds bragging rights be allowed first stab at a quest or task or in the event that a dispute occurs between two adepts. Bragging rights last until the next time that tournament is held. Of course, the larger and more prestigious the tournament, the greater the honor of possessing its bragging rights. (I might humbly remind the reader that the Grand Tourney is the most prestigious!)

On Specialists

Certain Swordmasters emphasize one or two aspects of the Discipline over all others. These adepts are known as specialists. Though a number of different Swordmaster specialists roam the length of Barsaive, the two most common are undoubtedly the gallant and the bladesman.

On the Gallant

Swordmasters who use our Discipline's particular talents to build romantic, dashing reputations are called gallants. They focus their energies almost exclusively on aiding members of the opposite sex. Such aid might take the form of a quest or defense of another's honor, but some gallants seem even more interested in being admired than admiring. These particular adepts tend toward handsomeness of form and feature, but a surprising number are actually quite plain. In fact, their tremendous charisma serves these adepts far better than their physical appearances.

Even in the thick of the deadliest of battles, the gallant Swordmaster remains acutely aware of his image. When it comes to wit, most gallants excel at flirtatious or amorous banter. I knew one such adept who flattered and cajoled his way straight into the Theran headquarters in Vivane to challenge the current military leader to a duel. In fact, no fewer than eight Theran and several Throalic women are said to have fainted away when the handsome elven gallant, Named Julian, received a scratch on his shoulder.

Bladesmen may achieve admirable prowess with their blades, but they lack the sense of drama, joy, and life a gallant possesses, therefore, they cannot contribute as much to their fellow citizens and will always be inferior to gallants.

—Devereaux of Throal

On the Bladesman

The bladesman specialist is less concerned with words and wit than most Swordmasters. Indeed, some bladesmen can actually be characterized as rather quiet, both in battle and in repose. Bladesmen Swordmasters communicate their intentions with their swords, and the results can be truly breathtaking—even to other Swordmasters. Hour after hour, day after day, the bladesman practices a dizzying array of acrobatic and swashbuckling skills. These Swordmasters are true masters of the dance and devote themselves utterly to it, often at the expense of their relationships

with others of their Discipline. Undoubtedly, this explains the difficulties bladesmen sometimes encounter when attempting to rise to higher Circles. They simply lack the usual political contacts, thus they receive no favors. As a result, most bladesmen Swordmasters must rely exclusively on their fighting skills to reach the higher Circles of the Discipline.

Such chauvinism is typical of that wordy breed known as the gallant swordsman. As all Name-givers rightly know, actions speak louder than words. The most precious, gilded phrases will always pale next to the glorious exploits of a bladesman Swordmaster. For this reason, he will always be more important than his verbose cousin, the gallant Swordmaster.

—B'nar of Bellan

Game Information

Swordmasters are fighters who learn the value of a well-handled weapon, training to demonstrate quickness, flash and panache in a fight. Swordmasters often swagger when they walk.

Important Attributes: Charisma, Dexterity

Racial Restrictions: Obsidiman

Karma Ritual: To perform his Karma ritual, the Swordmaster fences against imaginary opponents. He fights the first few duels as silent, simple exercises. Over the next half hour, the Swordmaster provides sound effects, performs acrobatic moves, and even engages in swashbuckling dialog. The ritual is completed when the last foe falls.

Artisan Skills: Acting, Dancing, Sculpting, Runic Carving

Swordmaster Abilities

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

First Circle

Talents: Avoid Blow[D], Karma Ritual, Maneuver[D], Melee Weapons[D], Taunt, Wound Balance

Second Circle

Talents: Durability (7/6), First Impression, Riposte[D]

Third Circle

Talents: Heartening Laugh, Throwing Weapons

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Dexterity-only Tests.

Talents: Speak Language, Thread Weaving (Weapon Weaving)[D]

Fifth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Charisma-only Tests.

Talents: Ritual of the Ghost Master[D], Second Weapon[D], Winning Smile

Sixth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.

Talents: Disarm[D], Engaging Banter

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on melee weapon Damage Tests.

Talents: Resist Taunt[D], Second Attack[D]

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Talents: Anticipate Blow, Graceful Exit, Leadership

Ninth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.

Talents: Cobra Strike, Impressive Strike[D], Pin[D]

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.

Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.

Talents: Critical Hit[D], Whirlwind[D]

Eleventh Circle

Initiative: The adept adds +1 step to his Initiative step.

Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.

Talents: Quickblade, Shield Beater[D]

Twelfth Circle

Ability: By taking 2 permanent Damage Points, the adept gains the **Keen Blade** ability. This damage can never be healed. By taking 2 additional permanent Damage Points, the adept permanently adds +3 steps to the Damage step of one of his melee weapons. In the event of the weapon being lost or destroyed, the adept can heal the permanent Damage Points lost to that weapon after a year and a day has passed since it left his possession. The adept may apply the Keen Blade ability to additional melee weapons by taking 2 permanent Damage Points for each additional weapon enhanced.

Talents: Defense[D], Life Check

Thirteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and Spell Defense.

Karma: The adept adds +25 to his Maximum Karma Points.

Talents: Champion Challenge[D], Spirit Strike, Talent Pattern

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical and Social Defense.

Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.

Talents: Matrix Strike, Multi-Strike[D]

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +2 to his Social Defense and +1 to his Spell Defense.

Talents: Attribute Pattern, Ethereal Weapon[D], Vital Strike

Half-Magic

Swordmasters may use half-magic to care for their weapons, know the history of legendary weapons, and recognize different types of swords and bladed weapons.

Swordmasters may also use half-magic to identify another Swordmaster's fighting techniques, including which prominent Swordmasters may have shaped the individual's style.

Bragging Rights Bonuses

A Swordmaster who wins bragging rights for a particular tournament may add +1 to his Social Defense when dealing with anyone who attended that tournament. This bonus remains in effect for as long as the Swordmaster maintains his bragging rights, up to a limit of a year and a day.

Bragging rights also give a Swordmaster the right to accept or turn down quests or heroic deeds before the opportunity is offered to any other Swordmasters at that tournament.

Soul Swords

A Swordmaster wielding his soul sword—the sword that is the character's perfect complement—may spend an additional Karma Point each round on any Action Test made using that sword.

The gamemaster and player should keep in mind, however, that finding the soul sword and learning its secrets should only take place as part of an epic quest. Very few Swordmasters ever find their soul swords, let alone rewrite legends with them. Those who do are true heroes.

Specialists

Though not described in the preceding essay, some adepts of the Swordmaster Discipline choose to specialize in a weapon other than the sword. While they are often referred to by their weapon of choice—Axemasters and Staffmasters, for example—they are considered variations on the Swordmaster, rather than unique Disciplines. If the gamemaster wishes to differentiate between the two Swordmaster specialists described earlier in this chapter, he may make the following changes to the base Discipline.

A **gallant** Swordmaster adds +1 to his Social Defense at Eighth Circle, instead of increasing his Spell Defense. A **bladesman** adds +1 to his Physical Defense at Sixth and Eighth Circle, instead of his Social and Spell Defense, respectively. The bladesman also adds +1 to his Social Defense instead of his Physical Defense at Tenth Circle.

Roleplaying Hints

In many ways, Swordmasters resemble the glamorous swashbucklers of song and story. Unlike a Warrior, a Swordmaster does not focus on simply defeating the enemy; it is in the act of fighting that he embodies his Discipline. Killing is not the main goal of battle; it is merely one possible outcome. The Swordmaster need not risk his life foolishly, but should attempt to fight his battles with panache. A Swordmaster who deliberately prolongs a battle in order to make it more exciting and beautiful is acting in accordance with his Discipline. Battle is his art, and he practices it with joy.

The typical Swordmaster is comfortable with both his body and his mind, and he almost never sits quietly in the background. Clever catch phrases, witty insults, and humorous asides are as natural to him as the elegant embellishments of his swordplay. Players who wish to play the glib swashbuckler but have difficulty coming up with the proper "zinger" on the spur of the moment can find inspiration from adventure films of the 1940's and 1950's and any serial or pulp movies. Sitting a little straighter and talking a little louder than usual can also help a player get "in character."

Possible Discipline Violations

Many Name-givers believe the simplest way to get from point A to point B is a straight line, but the Swordmaster adamantly denies this notion. To the Swordmaster, how an action is accomplished is at least as important as the result of that action. Simplicity and straightforwardness are alien values to this Discipline; flair, elegance, and verve should accompany the Swordmaster's every act.

A Swordmaster turns the essentially negative and destructive action of killing an opponent into something glorious. A Swordmaster who fails to take advantage of a slight opening in a difficult battle, or who easily defeats a foe without the slightest attempt to embellish the fight with words or deeds will likely suffer a talent crisis. A Swordmaster who sneaks up on an unarmed opponent and slits his throat will likely face a truly serious crisis, and will need to perform a Deed of Atonement.

Rituals of Advancement

Swordmaster rituals almost always involve flashy displays of fighting prowess, usually one adept against multiple opponents. These rituals often take the form of loosely organized tournaments or contests.

Recruitment: Known or legendary Swordmasters find it a mixed blessing that potential recruits seek them out and challenge them. Of these eager fighters, only those who show unusual skill hear the offer of recruitment into the Swordmaster Discipline. Because even the most brilliant candidate quickly finds a sword at his throat when challenging an adept, reaching First Circle can require months of continuous practice.

Novice (2–4): Swordmasters hold frequent tournaments among themselves. All those who demonstrate mastery of talents of the required Circle during the tournament receive official recognition of their advancement at tournament's end, whether or not they won their battles.

Journeyman (5–8): Adepts advancing through these Circles must also participate in a tournament, but now the adept aspiring to a new Circle must defeat several worthy opponents of his current Circle. The ritual for advancement through these Circles can depend as much on politics as on skill, and this occasionally produces a high-Circle adept who lacks the skill to perform the talents and abilities available to him.

Warden (9–12): The adept stages an exhibition of skill against an almost-overwhelming number of opponents of equal or lesser skill for other, respected Swordmasters.

Ghost Master Ritual: The Swordmaster draws a large circle on the ground around himself, then fences with an imaginary opponent. After an hour the mental image materializes as the desired ghost master, who neatly disarms the Swordmaster. The ritual continues as normal.

Possible Discipline Combinations

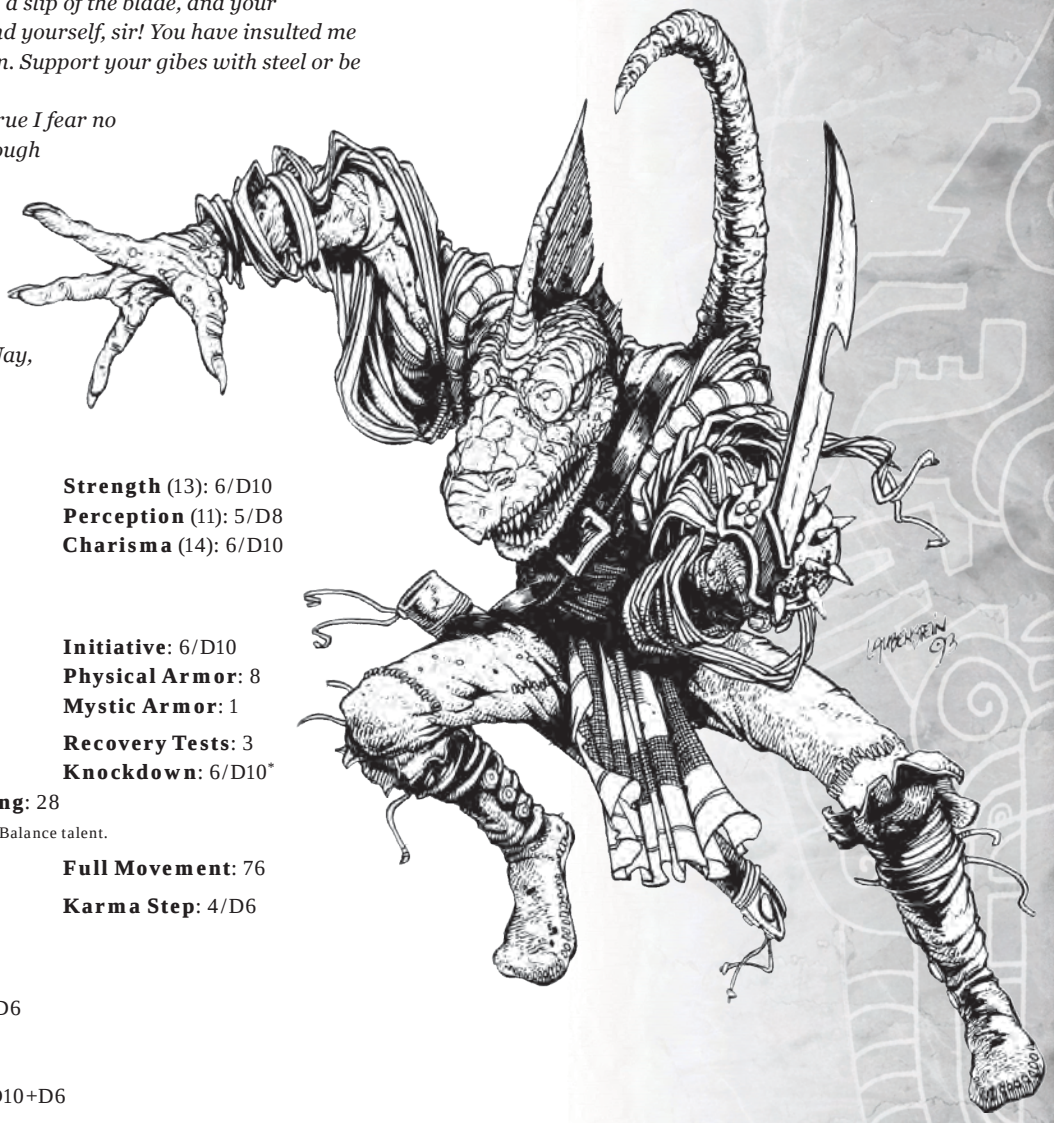
Swordmasters interested in following a second Discipline most often choose the path of the Troubadour or Illusionist. Both of these Disciplines lend themselves to flamboyance and require some degree of public performance. Those who take up the Troubadour Discipline often specialize in dramatic recreations of important battles, including their own, while Illusionists often specialize in illusions that highlight or enhance their own physical abilities and appearance in battle.

Swordmasters tend to avoid the Scout and Thief Disciplines, as their preference for stealth and subtlety often clashes with the typical Swordmaster's desire for attention and acclaim. The Beastmaster Discipline is another rare secondary choice, since animals are seldom impressed by witty banter and flashy displays of skill.

T'skrang Swordmaster

"A twist of the wrist, a slip of the blade, and your posturing is ended! Defend yourself, sir! You have insulted me and I demand satisfaction. Support your gibes with steel or be silent!

"Overconfident? 'Tis true I fear no blade, nor any foolish enough to draw one against me. But I merely display my prowess so that all may save themselves the embarrassment of their own spilled blood. What? Have I ever lost? Nay, sir, I have only learned."



Attributes

Dexterity (19): 8/2D6
Toughness (14): 6/D10
Willpower (11): 5/D8
Strength (13): 6/D10
Perception (11): 5/D8
Charisma (14): 6/D10

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 10
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 8
Initiative: 6/D10
Physical Armor: 8
Mystic Armor: 1
Death Rating: 36
Wound Threshold: 10
Recovery Tests: 3
Knockdown: 6/D10*
Unconsciousness Rating: 28

* Character knows the Wound Balance talent.

Combat Movement: 38
Full Movement: 76
Karma Points: 7
Karma Step: 4/D6

Talents

Avoid Blow[D] (2): 10/D10+D6
Karma Ritual (1): 1
Maneuver[D] (1): 9/D8+D6
Melee Weapons[D] (2): 10/D10+D6
Taunt (1): 7/D12
Wound Balance (1): 7/D12

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills

Artisan:
Dancing (1): 7/D12
Knowledge:
Barsaivian Legends (1): 6/D10
T'skrang Lore (1): 6/D10
General:
Conversation (1): 7/D12
Read and Write Language (1): 6/D10
—Dwarf (Throalic)
Speak Language (2): 7/D12
—Dwarf (Throalic), T'skrang
Unarmed Combat (1): 9/D8+D6

Money

Copper Pieces: 2
Silver Pieces: 9
Gold Pieces: 1

Equipment

Hardened Leather Armor (Phys 5; Init 1)
Footman's Shield (Phys 3; Init 1; Shatter 19)
Broadsword (Damage 11/D10+D8)
Short Sword (Damage 10/D10+D6)
Dagger (Damage 8/2D6; Range 9–15–18)
Adventurer's Kit
Trail Rations (1 week)
Traveler's Garb

Notes

The adept possesses the t'skrang Tail Attack (Damage 6/D10) racial ability.

The Gift of Theft

The following document is a distillation of several interviews held with Kosooti, noted windling Thief. As windlings are unwilling to commit any important thoughts to paper—a most misguided belief, I must say—the interviews were conducted by Obon Awles, an apprentice librarian under my tutelage here at the Hall of Records. Our scribe has endeavored to preserve the distinctive stylings of Kosooti's speech. Incidentally, if any readers happen to have a means of contacting Kosooti, Obon would like it known that he greatly desires the return of a certain medallion, a family heirloom of great sentimental value.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

To steal! This is the greatest thrill in all of existence! To take something that is not meant to be taken, to laugh in the face of foolish rules and laws!—all else pales in comparison. Do not let silly sayings about the virtue of hard work and honesty confuse you. Pilfered fruit tastes the sweetest, and the gem stolen from the turban of an enraged troll merchant shines brighter than one gained through toil and sweat!

The way of the Thief is the original way of the adept. All Disciplines have stolen their ways from the way of the Thief. For is not the way of the adept the way of magically taking from the world abilities that would otherwise be learned only through years of perspiration and effort? We merely pluck these talents from the air, with the swiftness and ease of a stealthy child plucking peaches from the trees of a neighboring village. All of us who tread the Adept's Way are Thieves.

Though some of the others would hotly deny this, they have lost touch with their origins and think they are better than we. Let them believe what they will. Their self-delusion is one property I have no interest in taking from them. But listen up, scribe, and I will give you a gift; the gift of insight.

You look at me with suspicion, stuffy dwarfling. I pick your thoughts as I might pick your pocket. You believe that Thieves do not give, they only take. What you do not understand is that the act of taking is the greatest gift of all.

Allow me to explain.

On the Tyranny of Possession

Look at you, stuffy dwarfling. You sit before me, decked out in what passes for gaudy finery among your dowdy kind—a colorful hat, with dyed peacock feather; a modest yet no doubt expensive tunic of velvet, one that cries out "Quality"; fine leggings, exquisite leather boots; a medallion of rubies and gold that would choke a dragon. Even the pen you write with is of the finest ivory, intricately carved by a master artisan of my people.

Well, mark my words, stuffy one: your finery is not armor—it is a cage. Your possessions trap you, weigh you down, stunt the growth of your soul. You have become your possessions, for every one of your hopes has become wrapped up in what you own.

No! Do not attempt to deny it. There is no shame in this attitude—well, perhaps there is, but it is a shame shared by many denizens of Barsaive. Many Name-givers must claim this common failing; they believe that they are what they own. Goods and possessions are thought to attract lovers, win friends, and prove one's value in the world. What lamentable folly! It is your thoughts, your actions, your dreams, your memories that define you and create true worth.

So when the Thief steals your money, she takes not only your possessions or your coin. She takes your delusion and so gives you truth. Those who do not understand this gift brand us as scoundrels, it is true. Why, some poor benighted souls actually believe that stealing is evil! We who follow the Discipline of the Thief simply shrug at such quaint notions, for a true Thief does not expect gratitude for her gifts. She gives for the joy of it.

Forging Alliances

Because we are misunderstood by so many, false beliefs about Thieves abound in Barsaive. But perhaps the most absurd untruth contends that Thieves lead sad and lonely lives, deprived by their Discipline of the companionship of others. What foolishness! Why, I could stack my friends and allies up against those of any other Name-giver and not come up wanting, I assure you. Yes, it is true that those Thieves who follow the path of selfishness—of which I shall speak more—shield themselves from the love of others and draw strength from their solitude. But many more of

us are as gregarious as a whushah fly in blooming season—and most delightful company, as you surely must agree! We are fully capable of sustaining profitable alliances with others, of keeping our word, and of tying our vital threads to Name-givers we love and esteem. I myself have ritually bound myself to the destiny of an adventuring band known as The Seven Equals. Our number contains exemplars of many different races and Disciplines, and they all trust me with their lives, as I trust them with mine.

Just because a Thief lives to steal, does not mean she must steal from everyone. Myself, I prefer to steal from the too-haughty Therans, from drooling Horrors and their corrupt servants, and from the long dead, who shall scarcely miss their coins and jewels. And, of course, from those in great spiritual need of the gift of theft.

Still, many wrong-thinking Name-givers continue to believe that we Thieves have less self-control than others who walk magical pathways. But I can as easily resist the urge to steal the hard-won silver of my comrades as can a Warrior resist the urge to stab his brother, or a Wizard refrain from casting a mind-ripping hex on his mother. Like other adepts, we choose our targets with care. It would be stupid to betray my fellows through petty theft: together we have done many great deeds, and built a legend greater than any of us could have done alone. Thieves are not stupid. Not the live ones, anyway.

It is true that some adventuring bands are reluctant to recruit Thieves as companions. This is their great loss. For the way of the Thief provides many abilities beyond the mere lifting of purses and pilfering of coppers, abilities that have proved vital to many a legendary endeavor. Think on it. What good is finding a chest inside a deep and musty kaer if there is no one to seduce its lock, to steal into the heart of the mechanism and coax it open? And what adventuring band has never needed someone to stalk soundlessly into an enemy camp for an unnoted reconnoiter? What crime is it to steal from a hidden, ancient blade the secret of its location and spare one's comrades from its thirst for blood? And how often do activities of adventurers lead them into intrigue and the machinations of the powerful? In such situations, can one begrudge the Thief her ability to don the garb of others and rob the foe of treasured confidences? And the usefulness of an unexpected dagger thrust between the shoulder blades of a vengeful Nethermancer should be beyond question to any thinking adventurer. Yes, the Thief is to be coveted as an ally: better to draw us to your bosom than cast us out. Unless, course, you wish us to feel justified in liberating your goods from you.

Likewise, the wise Thief values the abilities of trusted associates more than any purloined bauble. I can swing a scabbard with more than passable facility, but prefer to leave such matters up to the true experts, Warriors and Swordmasters. Likewise, I am glad to have spellcasters to rely upon when magical obstacles obscure my path. This is mere common sense, which all assume any adventurer—save the Thief—possesses as a matter of course. Mere prejudice prevents every Name-giver from seeing that the Thief's sense of reason is no more clouded than that of any other adept.

And so, despite the fact that our actions alone keep this world from sinking into a mire of greed, where only the rich have money and the poor have nothing, Name-givers in many quarters think ill of us. This is inconvenient at times, but it also becomes part of the challenge. And thievery would contain no thrill were it an easy pursuit.

Thrill or no thrill, the suspicion with which others Name-givers greet us can be very saddening at times. Still, their reaction seems natural considering the secrecy and caution we must observe—and so I cannot really fault them for it.

—Klerkonius of Urupa

Finding a Master

How does the young Name-giver who wishes to pursue the path of the Thief find a mentor? Unlike a Weaponsmith or Troubadour, a Thief is not wise to announce her Discipline to all who approach, for outside of Kratas few villages welcome Thieves. And so finding a mentor becomes the first test of the would-be Thief. He must be perceptive enough to spot a true Thief when she passes through his field of vision. He must be stealthy enough to approach her and charming enough to "steal her heart," to convince her that he deserves the ultimate gift. He must show that he is free of greed, that the larceny in his heart is as pure as a Throalic silver ingot.

When a Thief tutors a student, she does not simply reveal the truth. She forces the student to "steal" it from her. She speaks in riddles, offers puzzles, deliberately misleads. Only the novice clever enough to see through the deceptions and discern the secrets of Thiefly talents wins initiation. But the Discipline of the Thief is not a mere intellectual matter, a series of puzzles to be solved in the comfort of one's kitchen. Thievery is a practical craft, one best practiced in the field. And the true initiation of a Thief takes place in the course of a crime: the master sends the student to steal something from a target greatly in need of the gift of theft. If the student is truly Thief material, the vaunted talents of our way manifest themselves as the need for them arises. If the student is not—well, capture is one of the hazards that failed Thieves face.

Many initiates in other Disciplines would quail at the thought of a master who is not reliable. But our masters deceive us so that we may learn to see what is hidden and to reveal to us a higher truth: that we can rely upon no others save ourselves in this world. Our magic does not work without a daring heart and a solitary mind. Picking a pocket is not a team effort, for one cat walks more quietly than many. Though alliances with others are not forbidden to our Discipline, ultimately the Thief is alone, an outsider. There are those, lamentably, who take this concept too far, as I shall explain in a moment. But all Thieves must take this idea to their bosoms in one way or another.

On Stealing Magic from the World

When the student Thief finds the pathway of the Thief, she is stealing the directions to its entrance from her master. Likewise, when she learns a new talent or ascends to a higher Circle, she steals magic from the world. Magic is everywhere around us, but many are blind to it. They cannot see that it is there for the taking. Others see the magic, but lack the boldness to reach out and grab it for themselves. And the act requires boldness, as well as a keen mind. For like any hoarder of goods, the world holds tightly to its magic. The Thief must seduce, trick, and swindle the world into surrendering its glories.

When a Thief wishes to advance to a higher Circle, she must first find another Thief of a higher Circle than herself. This second Thief serves as the tester and sets a task to test the Thief's readiness for advancement. My last advancement was quite an ordeal, yes indeed. My difficulties began as I sought a Thief of greater capability than my own, for few exist. Then I had to persuade that Thief, one Ventioner, not to split me in two with an axe. (This desire of hers stemmed from a minor misunderstanding involving her young husband, a scarf of silk, and a pair of piglets—I won't go into the details here.) At any rate, she assigned me to steal the left upper canine tooth of a Horror known only as the Pulse. This scar that runs down my side, from my neck to below my knee, is the result of that assignment. I understand that a number of Horror-marked Cavalrymen seek the tooth even as we speak. But that is

none of my affair, for tradition demands that the material fruit of the Circle advancement ritual goes to the master who created the assignment. Therefore, the Pulse must deal with Ventioner if it wants its rotting tooth back.

When an adept learns a new talent, the magic of the world becomes the wronged party. One talent of the Thief's way enables us to spot traps. When I wished to learn this talent, I sought out a master familiar with its secret. He told me many contradictory things about the practice of the talent, leaving me to puzzle through the thicket of his words. Then he sent me to the old Festival of Wonders tower outside Bartertown, a structure known for the fiendish traps hidden throughout it. I penetrated the tower and, concentrating on the riddles the master had told me, soon found my mind flooded with new understanding. I stood before a section of wall and suddenly knew it to be a trap. I sent magic swirling through my pattern and snatched that moment in time, permanently stealing it. Now whenever I am near a trap, that magic I have stolen from the world does my bidding and warns me of the danger that I face. Many times before and since I have stolen such insights from the world and added them to my pattern.

On Other Thieves

The path of the Thief I have laid out for you is not the only one. True, most Thieves seek out material treasures—gems, gold coins, rare finery and such. But other types of Thieves seek other booty. The Thief of knowledge, also known as the spy, believes that information is worth more than gold. Curiosity, and the need to throw light on secrets and spread the truth of a situation throughout the world—or at least to well-heeled clients—drives the Thief of knowledge.

The Thief of love, the romancer, uses her talents of disguise and deception to seduce her targets. Instead of a trail of empty vaults, she leaves behind a legion of broken hearts.

▲ ▲ ▲

Though the spy and the romancer set their sights on different prizes, both bestow the gift of theft on other Name-givers. The spy steals secrets, thereby freeing her target from the suspicions and fears that secrets breed. The romancer, meanwhile, steals sentiment rather than love, giving her victim new, clearer insight into his or her own heart and the hearts of others, and teaches the recipient of her gift to protect that most precious possession of all—love.

—Valencias of Iopos

▲ ▲ ▲

On the Way of Selfishness

Still other Thieves follow a dark path, the path of selfishness. They have forgotten the legacy of the first heroes and the true heritage of our path. These Thieves connect their patterns to the tradition of thievery by devoting themselves to pure selfishness. They believe that a Thief can only prosper through suspicion of others and that cooperation and compassion weakens their talents and renders them vulnerable. To me, stealing something the owner values too much is an act of charity, a service not only to its possessor but to the community. But to Thieves who walk the path of selfishness, any care at all for the fate of the victim is a destructive distraction. They can maintain no allies and pledge to truly love none but themselves. Needless to say, Thieves traveling this path are quick to betray one another.

I have met numerous Thieves set upon the path of selfishness in my travels, and though I have no way of knowing for certain, I fear their ranks increase each season. I have attempted to understand these Thieves who shun society, but it is a thankless task. They are reticent in the extreme, unwilling to speak at any length about themselves or their journey in the Discipline. But I spent many coins plying these types with strong drink and eventually gleaned from them their stories.

The things I heard made my hair stand on end! Their masters taught them not through riddles, but through pain! Their initiations were literally by fire, as their masters thrust their arms and legs into open flames. By this, their masters intended to teach them not to trust anyone. Myself, I would have taken this as a lesson in the importance of carefully choosing one's master. A revealing lie is much more appropriate than—but you know my prejudices already, do you not, stuffy dwarf?

I believe that the Thief who walks the selfishness way robs herself most of all. For she can never feel camaraderie with others. She can never relax; she must always fear a knock at the door or a knife in the back. She can never join with others for mutual benefit. I, who walk the way of the gift of theft, form alliances easily. I have been a valued member of many an adventuring troupe in my day. And though I stole a few baubles from them from time to time, these thefts were mere pranks. I would never dream of taking anything truly worthwhile from a companion, such as a magical treasure to which a friend had woven a thread. But the Thief of the selfishness way would do so without hesitation—would fear losing her edge, in fact, if she failed to betray her supposed friends.

The selfishness Thief also feels no need to return her winnings to the world. She loves her loot as fervently as any merchant and keeps it close to her chest. When she loses her treasure or has it stolen from her—and I must confess a particular joy in stealing from my misguided brethren—she mourns for it as anyone else would mourn for a slain comrade. Without true friends, the selfishness Thief pours her love into gold and gemstones. Though booty cannot keep one warm at night or rescue one in times of trouble, these Thieves still prefer booty to the friendship of others—for being a true friend means admitting you need others.

And that is the last thing a selfishness Thief can afford to do.

In my opinion, the Thief on the path of selfishness lives a poor life, but these Thieves with tangled hearts continue to spread their rough and unforgiving vision throughout Barsaive, burning it into the flesh of their initiates. If I could steal from them their confusion, their selfish ways, I would do so. That would truly be a gift, to them and to our land.

The true Thief has no space in his heart for compassion, sentiment, or beautiful-sounding ideals. Such things only blind the mind's eye and slow the hand. This may sound "rough and unforgiving," but such is our world.

—Blagstern of Kratas

Game Information

Thieves learn early to be self-reliant and how to steal. They draw power from their self-confidence and the knowledge that they depend only on themselves. The abundance of rumors governing Thief guilds means such groups may, in fact, exist, but the proof or disproof of their reality remains a secret.

Important Attributes: Dexterity, Perception

Racial Restrictions: Obsidiman, Troll

Karma Ritual: To start his Karma ritual, the Thief sits by himself in a darkened area and concentrates for a half hour on the knowledge that he is alone in the world and can rely, first and foremost, only on himself. With this firmly established in both heart and mind, the Thief then sets out to use one of the following talents: Silent Walk, Lock Pick, Picking Pockets, or Lock Sense. The ritual ends as soon as the Thief successfully uses the talent.

Artisan Skills: Acting, Dancing, Poetry, Sculpting

Thief Abilities

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

First Circle

Talents: Climbing, Karma Ritual, Lock Picking[D], Melee Weapons, Picking Pockets[D], Silent Walk[D]

Second Circle

Talents: Durability (5/4), Lock Sense[D], Surprise Strike[D]

Third Circle

Talents: Avoid Blow[D], Fence[D]

Fourth Circle

Ability: By taking 1 permanent Damage Point, the adept gains the **Thieves' Tongue** ability. This damage can never be healed. For 1 Strain Point of damage, the adept may speak for up to 10 minutes in Thieves' Tongue. While what he says makes perfect sense to Thieves, even if they don't possess this ability, it sounds like lilting gibberish to anyone else. Thieves' Tongue cannot be learned by any other means (such as the Speak Language talent).

Talents: Thread Weaving (Thief Weaving)[D], Trap Initiative[D]

Fifth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Perception-only Tests.

Talents: Detect Trap, Disarm Trap[D], Ritual of the Ghost Master[D]

Sixth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Dexterity-only Tests.

Talents: Disguise Self, Fast Hand[D]

Seventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.

Talents: Detect Weapon, Throwing Weapons[D]

Eighth Circle

Ability: By taking 2 permanent Damage Points, the adept gains the **Evaluate Item** ability. This damage can never be healed. For 2 Strain Points of damage, the Thief makes a Thread Weaving Test against an item's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the approximate worth of the item and its general purpose are revealed to the adept. A Good or better result reveals the same information, but with increasing accuracy for each result level achieved.

Talents: Leadership, Missile Weapons, Slough Blame

Ninth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.

Talents: Conceal Weapon[D], Gold Sense, Sprint

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.

Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.

Talents: Astral Pocket[D], Speak Language

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical and Spell Defense.

Talents: Lip Reading[D], Wound Balance

Twelfth Circle

Ability: By taking 2 permanent Damage Points, the adept gains the **Shadowcloak** ability. This damage can never be healed. For 2 Strain Points of damage the adept becomes virtually invisible in shadows or darkness. The adept adds +4 to the Detection Difficulty of any sight-based Perception Tests made to notice him. If he uses the Silent Walk talent while under the effect of this ability, the talent's Detection Difficulty also applies to any sight-based Perception Tests made to detect him. Though the adept can still be seen normally in light, the presence of light does not end the effect; he can become virtually invisible by simply stepping back into a shadow. The effect lasts for as long as the adept desires, up to 24 hours.

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.

Talents: Quickblade, Sense Poison[D]

Thirteenth Circle

Initiative: The adept adds +1 step to his Initiative step.

Karma: The adept adds +25 to his Maximum Karma Points.

Talents: Chameleon, Talent Pattern, Warning Shot

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +2 to his Physical Defense and +1 to his Spell Defense.

Talents: Bank Shot, Defense

Fifteenth Circle

Ability: By taking 3 permanent Damage Points, the adept gains the **Shadow Heal** ability. This damage can never be healed. The

adept must be wearing a Shadowcloak before he can use this ability to heal himself. The Shadow Heal ability allows the adept to spend as many Karma Points as he wishes on his next Recovery Test. He must choose how many Karma Points he will spend before rolling any Action dice, however. Damage is healed by the results of the Recovery Test as normal. The shadows that make up his cloak are used to heal the adept; the effect of the Shadowcloak ability ends after he makes his Recovery Test.

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.

Talents: Attribute Pattern, Gain Surprise[D], True Sight

Half-Magic

Thieves may use half-magic to build and/or bypass security measures intended to prevent theft, and to recognize different types of locking mechanisms. Thieves may also make Half-Magic Tests in place of Perception Tests when looking for traps and/or secret doors.

Roleplaying Hints

The Thief see the world as a ripe target for robbery, but different types of Thieves see their stealing in different lights.

Many see their Discipline as heroic. They remember that the first heroes of the Name-giver races were Thieves who taught the Passions a lesson in compassion. Thieves who see their Discipline this way are followers of the trickster's path. Trickster Thieves can work easily in groups such as the typical party of player characters. Like all Thieves, they rely on their own abilities before depending on other people, but they do not feel that self-reliance precludes cooperation with others.

Trickster Thief characters probably had reputations as rebels, pranksters, or charming ne'er-do-wells even in childhood. Though the average trickster Thief has gotten into trouble constantly from a very early age, he causes the kind of spectacular but largely harmless trouble that others find forgivable. A trickster Thief is usually a charming rogue, envied for his ability to flout the rules most citizens dare not break. Though trickster Thieves are as stealthy as any other Thief when necessary, they enjoy drawing attention to themselves when not at work.

The solitary Thief, on the other hand, cares little for mythology or metaphor. He tends to see the world in personal terms—both his mark and his enemy. In order to prosper, the solitary Thief rejects even the appearance of dependence on others and draws strength and solace from himself alone. This attitude makes it difficult for a solitary Thief to fit in with the average adventuring band. Solitary Thieves generally want loot, and lots of it. They often judge their own value by the amount of money they've stolen; unlike tricksters, solitary Thieves usually hold tight to their ill-gotten gains.

Most solitary Thieves had troubled childhoods, and may have been shunned from a young age. They probably courted grave trouble as youngsters by getting into serious fights and committing vandalism and serious thefts. Often sullen, distant and disaffected, many a solitary Thief has burned his bridges back home and is no longer welcome in the community that raised him. He presents a truculent and threatening face to the world, often using body language alone to warn other people off. Others fade into a crowd, appearing nondescript to evade notice.

Possible Discipline Violations

A trickster Thief is traditionally taught that the act of stealing matters more than the stolen item, and may face a talent crisis when seized by greed or the desire to hoard ill-gotten gains. He may also face a talent crisis if he obeys a stupid law, turns down the opportunity to perform a spectacular heist, or remains silent when given an opportunity to brag about past deeds.

In contrast, a selfish Thief may violate his Discipline by performing a compassionate act, becoming dependent on another person, or doubting his own ability. The selfish Thief also tends to place more importance on the prizes from his heists, and may suffer a talent crisis if those items are lost or stolen. Recovering those lost or stolen items may form a perverse Deed of Atonement.

Rituals of Advancement

Thieves do not observe formal advancement rituals. Often, a Thief will make it known that he is planning a theft that will demonstrate his skill. Success at the crime serves as proof of his advancement. In other cases, an "elder" Thief will challenge his trainee to steal something based on his level of experience. A novice thief may be tasked with stealing a silver spoon from a city councilor's home, while one seeking warden status may need to steal an earring from a high-Circle Nethermancer—while the magician is still wearing it.

Recruitment: Recruitment for Thieves is a haphazard, nebulous procedure. If a Thief notices a potential student, he often sets some sort of challenge to test the recruit's potential. Some ordinary Name-givers who find themselves in extraordinary circumstances undergo "spontaneous initiation" into the Discipline.

Ghost Master Ritual: The Thief must steal the orichalcum coin required for the ritual, then infiltrate a forbidden area in which to perform the ritual.

Possible Discipline Combinations

The additional Disciplines attractive to Thieves depend on the type of Thief in question. Trickster Thieves tend to be drawn to the Illusionist, Swordmaster and Troubadour Disciplines because all three offer skills Thieves find useful and emphasize either illusion or performance.

Thieves consider Illusionists to be the ultimate tricksters by altering the appearance of reality; their spells can add a touch of the outrageous to any high-profile heist. The Swordmaster's talents give the Thief impressive combat ability with a flamboyance the trickster finds extremely attractive. The Troubadour Discipline offers social skills useful for running cons and swindles, and also allows the trickster to spread his own legend in a memorable way.

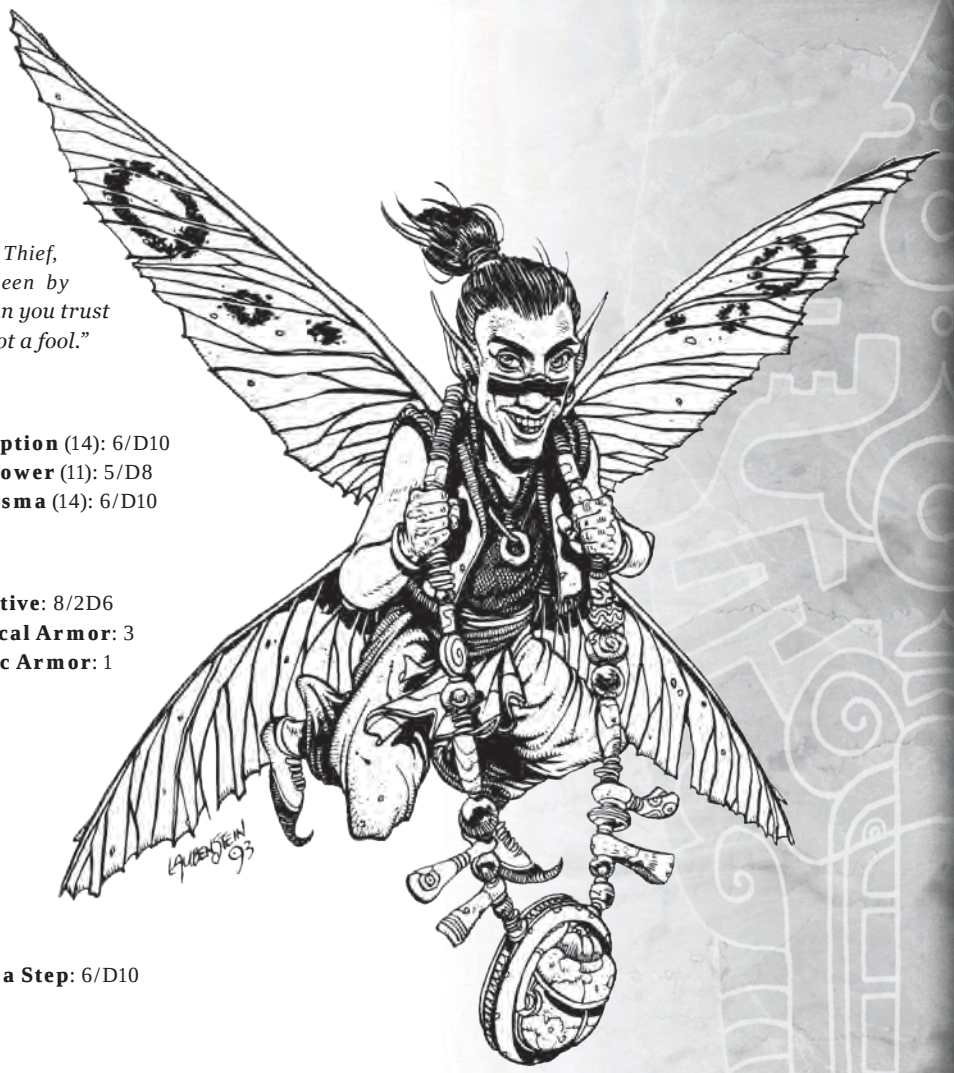
Solitary Thieves most often take up the Archer, Nethermancer or Warrior Disciplines as a second adept's way. The way of the Warrior appeals to these Thieves as the simplest way to beef up their fighting prowess. The Archer Discipline also gives them fighting ability, though solitary Thieves who become Archers often turn to the sniper's path (see the **On the Path of the Archer** chapter, p. 76). Seeing the world as their enemy, they give in to the lure of the sniper's arrow and become the brigands and roadway ambushers who pick off targets from a distance and then loot the corpses. The solitary Thief often feels a strong kinship with the Nethermancer's way because practitioners of both Disciplines are seen by others (and often themselves) as dark and dangerous outcasts. Also, Nethermancers break the taboos surrounding death and the Horrors just as Thieves break more ordinary laws.

Thieves of any type rarely become Beastmasters or Cavalrymen because both of those Disciplines require a dedication to and an understanding of another being that Thieves find hard to achieve.

Windling Thief

"No, it is you *who needs* me. *My skills are invaluable. Would you know a dart trap if you saw one? Certainly you could muscle your way through a door, but would it give before the Horror ate your head? Scoff at my skills and that's the chance you take.*

"Some call me secretive, but I am a Thief, am I not? I must move undetected, unseen by prying eyes, and so I need solitude. Can you trust me? Of course you can. I am a Thief, not a fool."



Attributes

Dexterity (19): 8/2D6
Strength (7): 4/D6
Toughness (11): 5/D8
Perception (14): 6/D10
Willpower (11): 5/D8
Charisma (14): 6/D10

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 12
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 8
Initiative: 8/2D6
Physical Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 1

Recovery Tests: 2
Knockdown: 4/D6
Death Rating: 32
Wound Threshold: 8
Unconsciousness Rating: 24

Combat Movement: 22/43✦
Full Movement: 44/86✦

✦ The second value is the character's flying Movement rate.

Karma Points: 15
Karma Step: 6/D10

Talents

Climbing (1): 9/D8+D6
Karma Ritual (1): 1
Lock Picking[D] (2): 10/D10+D6
Melee Weapons (1): 9/D8+D6
Picking Pockets[D] (1): 9/D8+D6
Silent Walk[D] (2): 10/D10+D6

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills

Artisan:
Poetry (1): 7/D12
Knowledge:
Throalic Law (1): 7/D12
Windling Lore (1): 7/D12
General:
Streetwise (1): 7/D12
Forgery (1): 9/D8+D6
Read and Write Language (1): 7/D12
—Dwarf (Throalic)
Speak Language (2): 8/2D6
—Dwarf (Throalic), Windling

Money

Copper Pieces: 2
Silver Pieces: 4
Gold Pieces: 4

Equipment

Leather Armor (Phys 3)
Windling Two-Handed Sword (Damage 7/D12)
Windling Broadsword (Damage 6/D10)
Sap (Damage 5/D8)
Adventurer's Kit
Windling Trail Rations (1 week)
Traveler's Garb
Leather Gloves
Booster Potion

Notes

The adept possesses the windling Astral-Sensitive Sight, Flight, and Increased Physical Defense racial abilities.

Why the Troubadour Sings

This manuscript was written by one Vaerin Morningstar, an elven Troubadour who hails from Jerris. How it found a home in our library remains a puzzle to me, but that small concern is not sufficient to prevent me from including the essay in this book, as it captures the essence of the Troubadour Discipline in a way few other works do.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

Of Our Place in the World

Storytellers, singers, joyfellows, entertainers, dispellers of gloom, dispensers of glee, members of the "liar's trade," quick with a quip and yarn; song-spinners, always distracted from the serious aspects of life by an unfinished rhyme or a recalcitrant melody—this is how many view our Discipline. How little they know! But listen to my tale, that you might see the truth.

A Troubadour was singing in the common room of an inn when a dusty Warrior entered. Exhausted from an adventure, the Warrior held his peace while he quaffed an ale or five, listening to the light and joyful ditties of the Troubadour. Finally, emboldened by drink, he strode up to the storyteller and laughed in her face.

"You think yourself so grand and important, don't you, my pretty?" he slurred. "You put on such airs. Yet what do you do that has import in the grand scheme of things? You sing."

The Troubadour set aside her lute, and nodded agreement.

"Yes, my large-thewed friend, that I do. I sing. And you?"

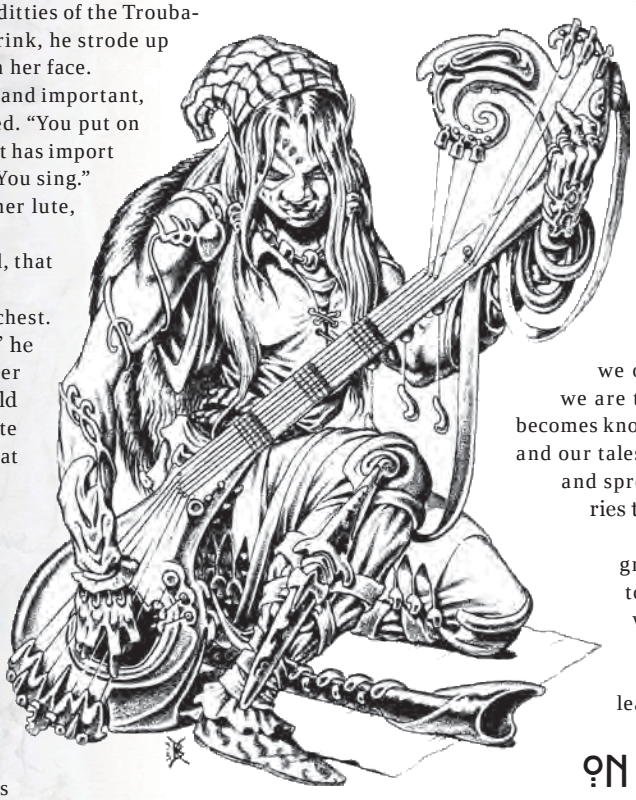
The Warrior puffed out his chest. "I fight for a cause I believe in," he boasted. "I fight for the greater glory of Barsaive. I fight to rebuild her to her past glory, to eradicate the stain of the Scourge. And what do you do? You sing."

"That I do," the Troubadour agreed, her smile unfaded. "And you—you have sworn to clear the whole of Barsaive of the Scourge's taint single-handedly? A mighty task you've set yourself."

"Not single-handedly," the Warrior corrected scornfully. "I am a hero. I will inspire others to follow in my footsteps, and the Passions will render the actions of those who follow me to my account as well. And what do you do? You sing. How can there be anything of less account than that?"

"Let me weave you a tale," the Troubadour said, her smile unfaded. She picked up her lute and began to sing. And such a tale she told, of bravery and valor and sacrifice and honor. And it was only as she drew to a close that the Warrior realized she told his tale.

And then the Troubadour cocked her head to one side, and her smile faded. And she said to the Warrior, "On reflection, I see you are right. My words are of no account."



On the Importance of Tales

Do you take my meaning, my friends? We of the word and the melody are an integral part of the rebuilding of Barsaive—and, for that matter, a part of anything that is considered noteworthy in our world. The Warrior in my little tale was right to some degree, of course. The value of a hero is not measured solely by his own feats and achievements. Important though they may be, they are perforce limited, for even the greatest hero can be in only one place at a time. So how else do we mark the measure of a hero? By his effect on others—on those who follow him and strive to mimic the ideal he represents. Some of those who follow in the hero's footsteps may become heroes in their own right, and others will follow them in turn. And so the effects of the hero's deeds spread, like the branching boughs of a great tree. And from the seed of the hero's deeds, an entire forest may spring.

And where is our place in this, we of the word and the melody? Why, we are the means by which a hero's name becomes known throughout the world. Our songs and our tales expand a hero's fame. We nurture and spread his legend, just as the wind carries the seeds of the thundra flower.

A hero on his own may perform great deeds. But unless his legend is told and retold, those deeds will die with him. If Troubadours tell and retell that legend, those deeds will live forever. Is that of no account? I leave it for you to decide.

On Entertainment

There are two facets to the Discipline of the Troubadour—apparently distinct, yet interconnected. The first facet is the face we most often show to the world—the face of the entertainer. In this guise, we offer diversion. We help people forget their troubles and bring joy, relief and release. Living in our world is hard, both on the body and on the soul. And just as the body needs rest after a day of work, so does the soul need relief.

That relief can be found in a light tale, a bawdy song, a ditty of nonsense words that brings a smile and a laugh to those who hear it. Many ordinary folk consider this relief the greatest gift

that those of my Discipline can bestow. My fellow Troubadours and I know differently, for entertainment is more than laughter. Relief and release for the soul can be found in emotions other than joy and lightheartedness. That is why we of the word and the melody recall dark tales as well, tales that evoke sadness, fear, anger. These other emotions we deliver, as we deliver joy. There is heart-ease in laughter, but also in tears. And heart-ease is the goal of entertainment, whether that entertainment be tragedy or comedy.

I have heard it argued that, when the world turns dark and doom stalks our footsteps, entertainment is valueless, frivolous. Only those actions that contribute directly to survival are important. But can anyone argue thus who has actually faced disaster? In such situations, despair is the greatest enemy of all—and the enemy that the Troubadour fights the hardest. We provide hope, we of the word and the melody. Or, more correctly, with our tales and songs we remind those around us of the value of hope. We inspire them with tales of past victories. We give them courage with tales of people who, beset by gloom, remained defiant and undismayed. We sing of sun on the grass, the laughter of children, the whispering of the winds through the forests, the dance of a stream that flows down from the mountains, the touch of parent or child or lover. Why? To remind people that life is worth living, a truth that is easily forgotten under the shadow of danger.

This facet of our art underwent its greatest trial during the Scourge, before the kaers were opened once more to the sun and the sky. How easy it would have been for the Name-giver races to have abandoned hope! Whole generations were born within the wombs of stone, knowing they would live and die without walking free under the endless sky. Whole generations knew that they, and their children, and even their children's children, would be confined—imprisoned!—within cells of rock.

With our songs and tales and quips and jests, we kept alive the knowledge that an entire world existed beyond the walls and wards of the kaer. We kept alive the knowledge that this outside world was good. Children who had never seen a tree—and never would!—still sang old songs like *The Bough and the Leaf.* Through songs and tales, they knew the brilliant green of ironbough leaves, they knew the heart-stopping gold of the flaxflower, they heard in their souls the song of nesting warblers and skywings. They knew they would have only those songs and tales, and knew the same was true for their children. Yet they knew that someday, children of their blood would walk again beneath the skies and among the trees. And that knowledge filled them with hope and enabled them to endure. Such is the value of entertainment!

This knowledge—that thoughts of better times to come ease days of sorrow—is not the sole province of the Troubadours. How often do we hear ordinary farmers and herdsmen singing songs of Spring and Summer around the fire while the storms of Winter batter at the door?

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

Dear Merrox, you miss the true importance of the soul-soothing balm called entertainment. Stories and songs may help us to forget our troubles—and to forget the snow falling. But the most important stories and songs enable us to laugh at and speak of those things that would be too painful for us to acknowledge otherwise.

—Vinslo of Araden

On the Persistence of Memory

In the second facet of our Discipline, we Troubadours serve as the memory and the conscience of our kaers, towns, villages—our society. We are repositories of wisdom. We recall the twists and turns of the past, from which the course of the future may sometimes be plotted. To a certain degree, Troubadours become the soul of our society, its very identity.

How can I make this claim? Think on it, my friends. Whence does your sense of self spring, your sense of identity? It arises from the pattern of your days, does it not? You remember your thoughts and actions, your hopes and fears of yesterday, and you feel confident that tomorrow you will recall your thoughts and actions of today. If each day were distinct in and of itself, with no connection to the past or the future, if you could not remember your actions of yesterday and knew that tomorrow you would not recall your actions of today—what of your sense of self? Would you have a sense of identity? Would you know who you are? I think not.

And thus with a society. We Troubadours recall the thoughts and actions of yesteryear. We are society's memory, we ensure that the pattern of its days continues. Let us approach this another way. Adepts of other Disciplines—Weaponsmiths, as an example—conserve the knowledge and skills needed to create weapons by remembering and passing on the traditions and talents of their Discipline. We Troubadours conserve the knowledge of a society's identity. We preserve self-knowledge for a society, as memory does for an individual. We are a society's memory, my fellows and I.

Be aware that this arrangement contains weaknesses as well as strengths, for whoever controls the Troubadours controls the memory of society. Whoever controls the Troubadours controls the truth and holds in his hands the very identity and soul of that society. This is why those of the word and the melody so often seem aloof from the societies we serve. We must remain independent of petty political concerns, just as an individual's conscience must remain untainted by his will and his fears.

Vaerin Morningstar does not stress this point enough. Though the art of letters is more widespread now than it was before the Scourge, many in Throal cannot so much as write their own Names. Yet, thanks to the Troubadours, these illiterates know of their origins and the birth of their land. The importance of this knowledge cannot be overstated. Only our memories of the past will inspire us to remain free of the Theran yoke. And who, were it not for the Troubadours, would be trustees of that knowledge?

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

THE JOY OF THE TROUBADOUR

Heavy is our responsibility, and great our importance in society. Yet do I not think that this weight of import makes our day-to-day life joyless and burdensome. Quite the contrary, my friend! For magic flows through us. It lifts us above the petty concerns of the world and ennobles us.

Consider, if you would, the expression "weaving a tale." This is more than a figure of speech. For a Troubadour feels the magic that surrounds him as threads, as the warp and the weft in woven fabric. Those threads connect her to the people who hear her songs and tales. As we work our art, those threads are woven together into the great tapestry that is society. We feel our part in this great tapestry. We feel our influence spreading out from us, as the threads of our words connect more and more people to each other. When we weave a tale, we are greater than ourselves. We are limited not by our physical dimensions, but only by the bounds of the tapestry itself. How can I convey the wonder to one who has not experienced it?

Perhaps this example will serve. Have you, esteemed reader, ever been in a crowd—a crowd that suddenly became a mob, inflamed with a single intent? Did you not feel that you were part of something larger than yourself, something greater than the sum of the individuals who made up the mob? If so, then you have felt a dark reflection of what a Troubadour experiences when she tells a tale or sings a song. (Intoxicating, was it not? Intoxicating and, to a degree, addictive. A Troubadour often must struggle to maintain her sense of self in the tapestry she weaves.)

TROUBADOURS AND THE PASSIONS

Troubadours revere two Passions above all: Astendar and Mynbruje. We honor Astendar in her guise as the Passion of Music. We believe that inspiration for new songs and melodies springs from the heart and soul of Astendar. Our ability to create and channel emotions with our music is but a pale reflection of Astendar's powers. As we honor Astendar for her patronage of entertainment, so we revere Mynbruje as patron of Knowledge and Truth. We serve as the repositories of wisdom among the Name-givers, as Mynbruje serves among the Passions.

ON TRAINING

Troubadours must master two distinct skills that form the center of our Discipline. In only one of these does magic play a significant role. (I understand that this is true for other Disciplines as well, now that I think on it.) Consider the last time you saw a Troubadour perform, esteemed reader. No doubt she recited tales and performed songs, some of which you remembered as traditional stories of your childhood, and some of which were completely new to you. Even when she was reciting a poem you knew word for word as a child, did she not infuse it with a fresh spirit, with the energy and enthusiasm that mark the work of a good Troubadour? Of course! And when she retold one of the ancient odes—*Jaron and the Sphinx*, perhaps, or the *Ballad of Nioku*—did she not match word for word every other performance you have heard of the piece, reciting every line of the one hundred score written? Again, of course!

And therein are reflected the two types of skill required of a Troubadour: the talent for performance, and the aptitude for simple learning. Both are essential for a true Troubadour. Anyone with tenacity and keenness of memory could learn *Jaron and the Sphinx*, but if told without the talent for performance, who would listen? Similarly, someone who does not follow the way of the Troubadour could conceivably entertain and amuse with his performance, but without the knowledge of the ancient odes and songs he could never be more than a clever tale-spinner.

Simple learning must be practiced and perfected alone (or, at the very most, in the presence of a single instructor), but performing can only be practiced in the presence of others outside the Discipline (in other words, an audience). My training, by way of example, began with the former. I had the fortune of being able to read and write, so my instructor began my indoctrination by banishing me to a room with a written copy of the ballad called *Bellae, the Minstrel's Daughter*. He told me that he would undertake my training as a Troubadour only if I proved my dedication to my supposed calling by memorizing the entire ballad—its entire twenty score and eight lines—word for word. Only when I could recite it to him without a single error would he consider beginning my training.

I did not realize it at the time, but memorizing the ballad constituted the beginning of my training. *Bellae, the Minstrel's Daughter* is a staple of the repertoire of any true Troubadour.

In the regions where Vaerin was trained, perhaps. Among more civilized peoples, only the basest of joyfellows would waste time memorizing doggerel like Bellae, the Minstrel's Daughter.

—Gelteraine of Throal

Only after I had memorized the ballad to my instructor's satisfaction did he deign to teach me the techniques of performance. For that, of course, we needed an audience, which we found at a nearby wine house. My instructor began the evening by reciting in their entirety *Follow the Plow* and *The Farmer's Wife is Milking*, much to the amusement of the wine-house patrons. He had instructed me to pay close attention to the techniques he used—the vocal stylings, the rhythmic patterns, the emphasis applied to the verse meter. When it came time for me to perform *Bellae*, I was to experiment with those techniques myself, while staying ever mindful of the audience's reaction to my offering. It was then, at that simple wine house, that I first truly felt the magic that is the way of the Troubadour. All my subsequent training has followed the same pattern. When my instructor decided that I was ready to advance to the next Circle of the Discipline, he would send me away with another staple of the Troubadour's art: the *Ballad of Nioku*, perhaps, or the epic *Battle of Sky Point*. Once I had learned the material, he would have me recite it for others under his watchful eye.

Though it is a great advantage, one may lack the ability to read and write and still become a Troubadour. Because the art of the Troubadour is, by and large, an oral tradition, learning material from the written page provides little benefit—other than freeing the instructor for other activities!

—Beldeaux of Ar Kham

On Specialists

I have limited my discourse to what I consider the true art of the Troubadour. But there are some who claim membership in the Discipline who practice what I judge to be a degraded form of the art. Though I consider them less worthy than my true fellows, any discussion of the Discipline would be incomplete without at least a mention of these adepts.

An interestingly self-centered and limiting interpretation. The reader is advised to keep Vaerin's prejudices in mind when reading the following passages. Most people outside the Discipline—and many within it, for that matter—consider sages and map makers "true" Troubadours—and rightly so!

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

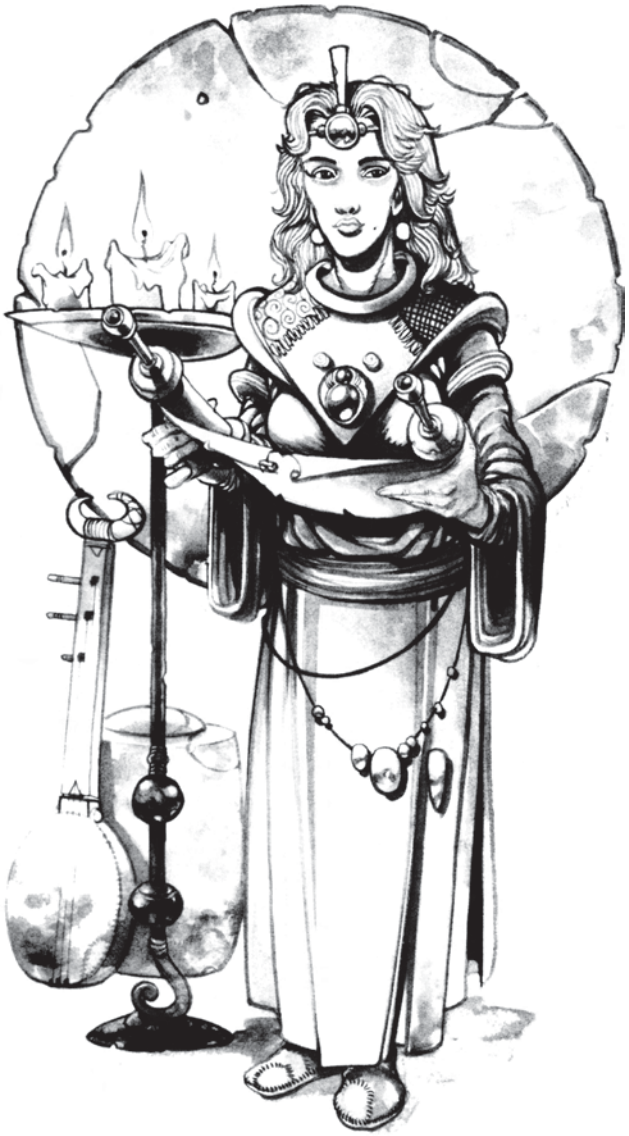
To my mind—and those of my instructor and mentors in the art, of course—the Discipline of the Troubadour contains two facets: knowledge and performance. The true art of the Troubadour involves both. How, then, is one to view the sage? Some among those considered wise classify sages as a kind of "specialty" within the Discipline of Troubadour. Granted, a sage has the same factual knowledge as a true Troubadour. A sage knows the correct wording of epics such as the *Battle of Sky Point*, and she understands the historical subtext and poetic allusions it contains. Thus, one could argue that sages serve as repositories of knowledge. Yet to my mind, the fact that they do not perform the odes they know places them outside the definition of the Troubadour. Sages are scholars, after all, and the art of the Troubadour encompasses more than simple scholarship.

Mapmakers represent an even more doubtful case. Again, they are scholars first and foremost, concentrating on the physical landscape as I and my fellows concentrate on the landscape of the mind and the heart. Though the mapmaker exhibits skill beyond simple scholarship, he exercises his practice in solitude in the same way as does the Weaponsmith. This also sets the mapmaker apart from the true Troubadour.

Therein, in essence, lies the distinction between the true Troubadour and the Discipline's lesser reflections. A Troubadour without an audience is not a true Troubadour.

I feel obliged to make reference to the legendary Troubadour Shantaya Nightstar at this point. Shantaya followed the map maker specialty and was an outstanding example of what I would call a true Troubadour. As for her audience, I would argue that all of Barsaive was hers to entertain and inspire.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records



Game Information

Troubadours serve as entertainers, storytellers, actors, and songsmiths. As such, they represent the closest thing to a historian or scholar that common people usually see.

Important Attributes: Charisma, Dexterity, Perception

Racial Restrictions: None

Karma Ritual: To perform his Karma ritual, the Troubadour must perform a ballad or skit before an audience of at least two others. He can juggle, joke, tell tall tales, or sing serious legends. A half hour after he starts, the Troubadour finishes the performance with a short story, ending the tale with the phrase, "And there it ends, for such is the truth of the thing." This completes the ritual.

Artisan Skills: Juggling, Musician, Singing, Storytelling

Troubadour Abilities

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

First Circle

Talents: Disguise Self[D], Emotion Song[D], First Impression, Karma Ritual, Melee Weapons, Mimic Voice[D]

Second Circle

Talents: Durability (6/5), Item History, Speak Language[D]

Third Circle

Talents: Empathic Sense[D], Read and Write Language[D]

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Dexterity-only Tests.

Talents: Taunt, Thread Weaving (Story Weaving)[D]

Fifth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Perception-only Tests.

Talents: Engaging Banter[D], Ritual of the Ghost Master[D], Throwing Weapons

Sixth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Charisma-only Tests.

Talents: Haggle, Resist Taunt[D]

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on another person's social action test. Using Karma in this way counts as the adept's Standard action that round. The adept must speak on behalf of the other party or take some other action that justifies spending the Karma Point.

Talents: Incite Mob[D], Missile Weapons

Eighth Circle

Ability: By taking 1 permanent Damage Point the adept gains the **Kiss** ability. This damage can never be healed. For 1 Strain Point the adept can deliver a most passionate kiss to a member of his preferred sex. The adept gains a +3 bonus to any Interaction Tests he employs against the person kissed within 10 minutes of the kiss ending.

Talents: Graceful Exit, Hypnotize, Leadership

Ninth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.

Talents: Bardic Voice[D], Blade Juggle, True Sight

Tenth Circle

Ability: By taking 2 permanent Damage Points, the adept gains the **Tale** ability. This damage can never be healed. For 2 Strain Points of damage, the adept gains a +3 bonus to the next Interaction Test he makes for an act of Deception against those he is telling the tale to. (The adept looks so trustworthy, how could he possibly be lying?) The Tale ability may be used in combination with the Kiss ability, thus combining the bonuses.

Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.

Talents: Multi-Tongue, Slough Blame[D]

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical and Social Defense.

Talents: Impressive Shot, Song of Deflection[D]

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and Spell Defense.

Talents: Thought Link, Truth Skit[D]

Thirteenth Circle

Ability: By taking 3 permanent Damage Points, the adept gains the **Ghost Song** ability. This damage can never be healed. The adept uses this ability to write a song. When the adept dies, his spirit wanders the earth singing or reciting the song. The adept may use the song to suggest an action that would put his spirit to rest. The spirit travels to its final resting place if a living Name-giver fulfills the conditions of the song.

Karma: The adept adds +25 to his Maximum Karma Points.

Talents: Blood Guilt Weapon, Detect Influence[D], Talent Pattern

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical and Spell Defense.

Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.

Talents: Life Check, Spirit Talk

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense and +2 to his Spell Defense.

Talents: Attribute Pattern, Aura Armor, Confront Horror[D]

HALF-MAGIC

Troubadours may make Half-Magic Tests whenever they perform for audiences, and also for knowledge of legends, myths, and folklore of their home province's lands and people.

Specialist Troubadours (see below) may make Half-Magic Tests when drawing maps (mapmakers) or scribing books (sages).

SPECIALISTS

The two specialists described in the fictional essay—the **sage** and the **mapmaker**—have different talents, Karma Rituals, and Rituals of Advancement than the basic Troubadour Discipline.

At First Circle, the sage acquires the Read and Write Language talent in place of Disguise Self, and Speak Language in place of Emotion Song. At Second Circle, Emotion Song replaces Speak Language. At Third Circle, Book Memory and Book Recall replace Read and Write Language and Empathic Sense. A sage performs his Karma Ritual by writing out or reciting to himself the entire text of a historical ode or saga that has some relevance to where he is at the moment or to events occurring around him. This connection reminds the sage that the present is grounded in the past. The ritual takes half an hour.

Mapmaker specialists acquire the Read and Write Language and Speak Language talents instead of Emotion Song and Mimic Voice at First Circle. Emotion Song becomes available at Second Circle, and Mimic Voice at Third Circle—replacing the Language talents respectively. A mapmaker's Karma Ritual may involve drawing a detailed map of the area around his present location, including all major landmarks. This half-hour ritual reminds the mapmaker that he must know where he is before he can know where he is going.

ROLEPLAYING HINTS

Most Troubadours feel an irresistible urge to entertain; few Troubadours worthy of the name will turn aside from a chance to perform. The typical Troubadour loves being the center of attention; his performances delight the audience, stroke his often-healthy ego, and let him feel the exhilarating flow of magic when he "weaves" a song or tale.

Most Troubadours also feel an insatiable curiosity about the world and an intense desire to share what he has learned with those around him. It is a rare Troubadour that passes up a chance to learn a new tale or song. Upon arriving in a new town, many Troubadours seek out the tales and songs native to the area. Many ambitious Troubadours like to tell tales no one has heard before, and often seek out travelers or adventurers to learn the stories of their exploits.

Most Troubadours recognize their own significant role in the spreading of legends and take great pride in that role. As they travel across Barsaive, Troubadours carry with them the knowledge of different peoples and places. By spreading such knowledge, they "weave" the scattered peoples of Barsaive together into a single, unified tapestry.

Possible Discipline Violations

A Troubadour's duty to conserve knowledge and share it through entertainment lies at the heart of the Discipline, and nearly every Troubadour understands his role as a weaver of life's tapestry. A Troubadour may violate his Discipline by turning aside from that role; the guilt he feels in letting down not only himself, but all of Barsaive, erodes the edge of his concentration and triggers a talent crisis.

Appropriate Deeds of Atonement for Troubadours usually involve somehow "mending the tear in the tapestry of society" caused by his irresponsibility.

Rituals of Advancement

Troubadour rituals always require a performance of some kind, which may include participation in a play, a dramatic reading, singing, or even storytelling.

Recruitment: A Troubadour may observe that her performance truly enthralls one observer. After the show the Troubadour may engage the observer in conversation, then begin a story or ballad. Breaking off partway through, the Troubadour asks, "And what do you suppose happened next?" If the candidate answers entertainingly, the Troubadour may offer apprenticeship. After months of training, the Troubadour initiates the apprentice into the Discipline's First Circle.

Novice (2–4): The adept helps an elder of Circle 5 or higher to stage a performance, providing accompaniment or moving equipment as asked. During the performance, the elder grants the adept three minutes alone on stage. The adept should spend Karma, then take this opportunity to demonstrate a talent from the new Circle. The elder acknowledges the adept's new Circle following the performance.

Journeyman (5–8): The adept recounts his most recent adventure to a large audience that includes an elder of Ninth Circle or higher. The account should include use of appropriate talents and Karma. The elder acknowledges the adept's advancement following the performance.

Warden (9–12): The adept hosts a banquet and invites every Troubadour in the area. The adept's performance marks the party's climax. When all Troubadours in the audience rise in a standing ovation, the ritual is complete.

Ghost Master Ritual: The adept impersonates the desired ghost master to entertain an audience, performing an hour of the master's repertoire. During the performance, the adept develops a supernatural resemblance to the master. As soon as the audience leaves, the ghost master ritual proceeds as normal.

Specialists and Advancement Rituals

Because their approaches to the Discipline place less importance on performance, sages and map-makers have different rituals of recruitment and advancement, as described below.

Recruitment Rituals: Both sages and mapmakers recruit new adepts privately, identifying likely candidates and either reciting to them long passages from obscure sagas or odes (sages) or asking them to draw from memory a detailed map of their home and its environs (mapmakers). Those candidates who successfully repeat substantial portions of these passages to the sage, or draw a sufficiently detailed and accurate map, may be invited to join the Discipline. Both types of candidates often undergo years of training before reaching First Circle.

Novice (2–4): The sage adept memorizes the entire text of a historically significant song or epic and recites it in the presence of his instructor. The mapmaker adept studies an existing map for as long as he thinks necessary, then draws it from memory in the presence of his instructor. At higher Circles, the map used for the ritual becomes more and more detailed.

Journeyman (5–8): The sage adept composes a new ode or saga in the style of an existing ode selected by his instructor. At higher Circles, the "model" ode selected becomes more obscure. The mapmaker adept goes on a two-day journey; when he returns, he must draw a detailed map of the journey in the presence of his instructor.

Warden (9–12): The sage adept analyses the composition of a historically significant ode or saga to discover the author's specific influences, then defends his analysis against rigorous peer review. The mapmaker adept must read or listen to a historical ode or saga, then in the presence of his instructor create a detailed map of the region in which the saga took place.

Ghost Master Ritual: The sage adept meditates over an original copy of a work created by his desired ghost master. He memorizes the entire text and recites it word for word. At the end of the recitation, the ghost master appears and the ritual continues as normal. The mapmaker adept draws from memory a detailed map of an area that had some significance in the life of his desired ghost master (his place of birth, for example, or the region where he first became famous). At some point in the process, the ghost master guides the adept's hand to include details of which the adept was unaware. The ghost master appears when the map is complete, and the ritual continues as normal.

Possible Discipline Combinations

Troubadours are usually drawn toward Disciplines that revere or preserve knowledge, like the Wizard, or Disciplines that have an affinity for performance. The Illusionist is a popular choice, because their abilities can greatly enhance a Troubadour's performance.

Because many Troubadours prefer an audience, solitary Disciplines like the Thief or Archer don't generally appeal as a secondary Discipline. The Sky Raider Discipline generally promotes bold action at the expense of introspection, and also rarely appeals to Troubadours.

The Weaponsmith Discipline holds an interesting position in relation to the Troubadour. Weaponsmiths traditionally have strong ties to the community, and also value knowledge, which appeals to some Troubadours. Others feel that the Weaponsmith is too insular, spending too much time in his forge instead of out among the people.

Elf Troubadour

"Tell me your tale, good friend, and I will share one of mine. Stories are meant for telling, after all. What good do they serve if they are held inside to wither, unused, and slowly die as they fade from memory? Yes, of your tale speak, brave adventurer, that it may nourish your legend as the spring rains nourish the fields.

"Old is the world, and much of it lost. What little of our past that remains lies hidden in the tales told by our grandfathers, tales passed down through the years by Troubadours long dead. Through those stories their voices reach us from across the gulf of time, speaking of things gone and nearly forgotten, of splendors waiting to be re-discovered. Hear my songs of brave heroes who fight to regain the glories of the past and create the wondrous future, for these men and women are the legends of tomorrow."

Attributes

Dexterity (13): 6/D10
Strength (11): 5/D8
Toughness (11): 5/D8
Perception (16): 7/D12
Willpower (11): 5/D8
Charisma (19): 8/2D6

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 10
Initiative: 5/D8
Physical Armor: 4
Mystic Armor: 3
Death Rating: 32
Wound Threshold: 8
Recovery Tests: 2
Knockdown: 5/D8
Unconsciousness Rating: 24
Combat Movement: 28
Full Movement: 56
Karma Points: 6
Karma Step: 4/D6

Talents

Disguise Self[D] (1): 8/2D6
Emotion Song[D] (2): 10/D10+D6
First Impression (2): 10/D10+D6
Karma Ritual (1): 1
Melee Weapons (1): 7/D12
Mimic Voice[D] (1): 8/2D6

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills

Artisan:
Music (1): 9/D8+D6
Knowledge:
Elven Lore (1): 8/2D6
Legends and Heroes (1): 8/2D6
General:
Etiquette (1): 9/D8+D6
Read and Write Language (1): 8/2D6
—Dwarf (Throalic)
Speak Language (2): 9/D8+D6
—Dwarf (Throalic), *Sperethiel*
Streetwise (1): 8/2D6

Money

Copper Pieces: 1
Silver Pieces: 8
Gold Pieces: 1

Equipment

Leather Armor (Phys 3)
Ferndask Shield (Phys 1; Myst 2; Init 1; Shatter 16)
Short Sword (Damage 9/D8+D6)
Bola (Damage 8/2D6; Range 12–20–24; Entangle 9)
2 × Daggers (Damage 7/D12; Range 9–15–18)
Knife (Damage 6/D10)
Adventurer's Kit
Musical Instrument
Trail Rations (1 week)
Wealthy Traveler's Garb
Waterskin

Notes

The adept possesses the elf Low-Light Vision racial ability.

THE BATTLEFIELD PATH

The author of the following document is Bola, the obsidiman Warrior who recently led a successful mission against the Howling Scarf slaver band on behalf of the Kingdom of Throal. Bola's late arrival delayed the completion of this compendium—obsidimen rush for no one—but the account provides valuable insight into the way of the Warrior. To truly understand this account, you must also note what Bola chooses not to say.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •

Words. You ask me to explain the way of the Warrior in words. I say this is not possible, for the way of the Warrior is the way of action. It is bringing your sword down on the enemy's shield. It is raising your own shield to meet the enemy's thrust. The way of the Warrior is not a way of thinking. It is not a way of talking. It is a way of action.

THE BATTLEFIELD

Life is a battlefield. At any moment, countless wars are waged. Some of these wars have yet to come to physical blows. All of them will. For today's Barsaive is a place where the sword and the battle-axe eventually solve all arguments. And so I shall speak of actions. I shall tell you of the great Warrior of my people: Berahnt, of the Age of Legends.

Berahnt had won renown for his deeds. But one day Berahnt grew weary. He had seen too much blood spilled. He no longer thirsted for victory. He wanted only rest. And so Berahnt left his old comrades, left the battlefields and journeyed to a place known as the Land of Green in search of peace.

Now the Land of Green was inhabited by tribes of humans. Unknown to Berahnt, these humans were at war with one another, struggling for control of a watering hole known as Garlen's Bounty. The watering hole was large and provided more than enough water for both tribes. But each fought to possess it entirely, for neither could bear to see the other prosper. However, Garlen's Bounty was easy to overrun and nearly impossible to defend. And so neither side could hold the site.

Berahnt sought only to while away his final days in solitude and contemplation, and so he built himself a hut far from the watering hole. But soon humans of the first tribe, the Sadar, came upon his hut. Though he did them no harm, they attacked him. He easily defeated them, severely injuring their soldiers and driving them off. The wounded Sadar returned to their elders and told their tale. The Sadar elders were clever. Instead of seeking vengeance, they decided to win Berahnt to their side. For the Land of Green was so isolated that the way of the Warrior had not yet reached them, and they wished Berahnt to initiate their soldiers into the Discipline and lead them to victory against their foes, the Radas.

Meanwhile, the Radas too stumbled upon Berahnt's hut and set upon the Warrior without cause. And like their enemies, they learned a painful lesson and were driven off. Then they reported to their elders, who came to the same conclusion as those of the Sadar village.

As the Passions would have it, ambassadors from both the Sadar and Radas appeared before Berahnt at the same time. Both petitioned for the knowledge that would enable them to destroy their foes forever. Berahnt refused both requests. Instead, he attempted to broker a peace between the two tribes, but they would have none of it. Both ambassadors left, swearing vengeance upon Berahnt.

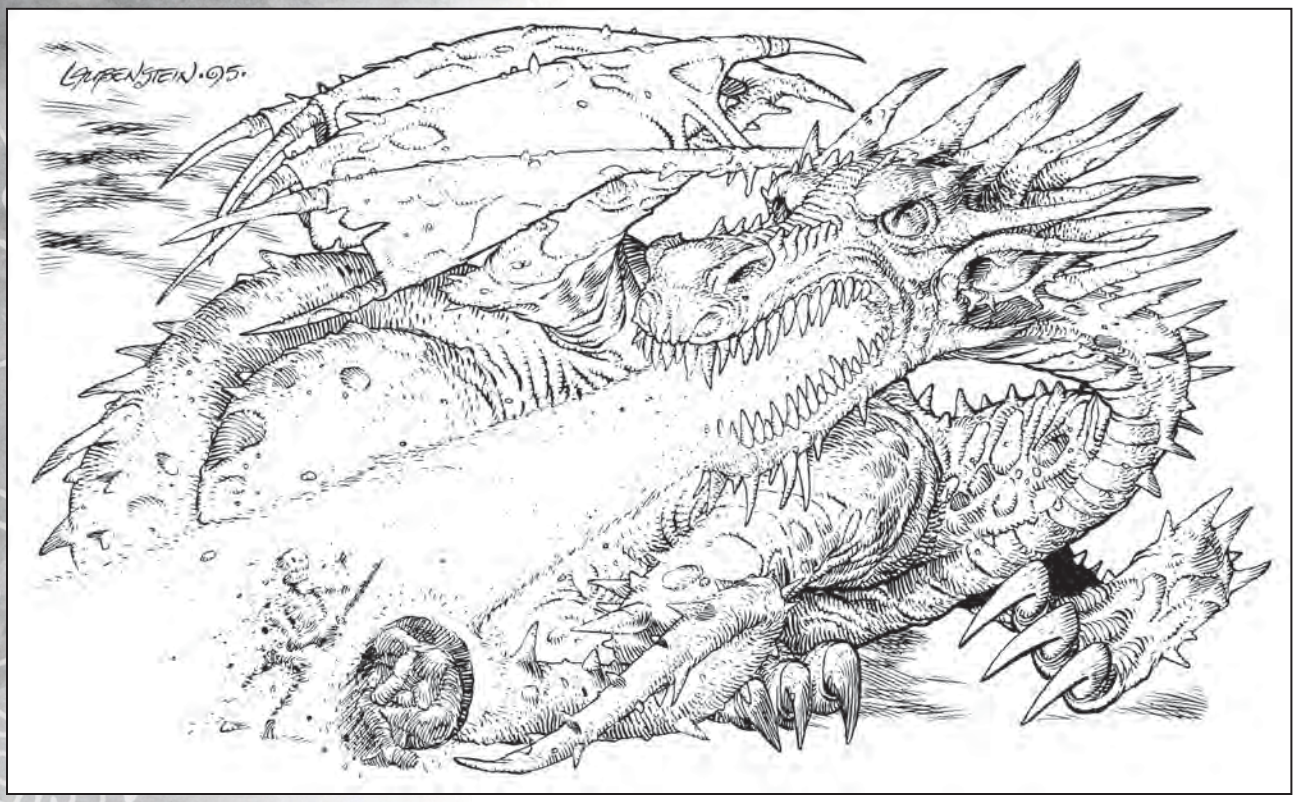
In the months that followed, Radas and Sadar raiding parties came to bring Berahnt to heel, destroying his peace again and again. Each time Berahnt drove them off, and each time he hoped that they would cease their pointless assaults against him. But finally he realized they would never yield.

So Berahnt went to Garlen's Bounty, which was then possessed by the Radas. He killed each and every Radas there. The Sadar then rejoiced and attacked Berahnt, believing they would finally win their goal. But Berahnt slew each and every Sadar as well, and Garlen's Bounty ran red with the blood of the slain. Sickened, Berahnt returned to his hut, where he whiled away the rest of his days in peace.

The lesson of this story should be obvious. But for those who are not Warriors, it is this. No one despises battle more than the Warrior, who has done his share of fighting and smelled the stink of death in his nose too many times. But too many times the only solution to a problem is war, for too often Name-givers thirst for violence instead of reason. And when those times come, it is the Warrior who prevails.

The story also contains another important lesson—the Warrior never provokes a battle, but the Warrior always finishes one.

—Mot of Haven



The Shield

Two tools are of paramount importance to any Warrior. These are the shield and the sword. All Warriors must know how to use them and must respect their importance. The following story, from the Age of Dragons, teaches this.

Once there lived two comrades-in-arms—a cavalier of a rich dwarf kingdom and her squire, an ork Warrior. The dwarf, a Swordmaster called Avani, had once held the ork, Kodan, as a slave. But the dwarf had freed him many years before, for Kodan had saved his mistress' life on more than one occasion. Together they walked the way of the hero.

As their legend reached its greatest height, their path took them, bound and shackled as prisoners, to the court of the dragon known as All-Wings. For it was a time when dragons ruled the land, and other Name-givers built legends at their peril. The mighty All-Wings reared up above the two prisoners and announced that they must die for their crimes against dragonkind. The Swordmaster attempted to mollify All-Wings with silky words. The Warrior remained silent. The dragon let the Swordmaster talk until she was exhausted and could speak no more. Then All-Wings smiled. It is not good when a dragon smiles.

"I have decided, in my unquestioned mercy, to make a gesture to the unscaled peoples," All-Wings said. "I shall slay only one of you. I shall permit the other to return to your lands to warn of the dangers of such effrontery as you have shown."

Avani and Kodan looked at one another with dismay. They had pledged their loyalty to one another, and neither wished to live at the other's expense.

The dragon observed this and said, "You seem disappointed. To further show my beneficence, I shall award the survivor a great treasure. In fact, your choice of treasure shall determine who shall live and who shall die. Which of you will make the correct choice?

"I offer to one of you a shield—a shield I shall peel from my own back," the dragon said. "It shall be called All-Protector."

And All-Wings pulled a gigantic scale from his shoulder and tossed it on the ground in front of the Swordmaster and the Warrior, where it lay dripping with ichor.

"And I offer the other a mighty sword, plucked from my own mouth," All-Wings said. "It shall be called All-Biter.

Which of you wishes which prize? Whoever chooses wisely shall live."

And All-Wings drew from her mouth one of her vast and rotting incisors, which pulsed with a great magical aura. Kodan nodded to Avani. He would allow her to make the choice, for he felt he owed her his life.

"As a Swordmaster, the choice is obvious," Avani said. "I shall take All-Biter."

"It is foolish to take a sword when you can take a shield," the dragon said. "If one lunges and misses, one is not harmed. But if one is struck and has no shield, one is doomed."

And with that, All-Wings blew her gross and corrupt breath upon Avani, and the breath tore the meat from the dwarf's bones. Then All-Wings ordered Kodan's bonds removed so he could step forward and claim his prize, the shield All-Protector.

"As we agreed, you shall now go forth and warn the world of my wrath,' the dragon said.

"I made no such agreement," the Warrior replied. And Kodan stepped forward, seizing both All-Protector and All-Biter. The dragon blew its foul breath upon Kodan, but All-Protector absorbed and deflected it. Kodan plunged All-Biter deep into All-Wings' left eye, and the great dragon was slain. Kodan himself was killed as well, crushed beneath the foul lizard's horrendous bulk.

This story teaches wisdom and honor. It teaches wisdom because, indeed, it is better to avoid a strike than to strike. The sword takes life, but the shield preserves it. Thus the shield is of greater importance than the sword. It teaches honor because Kodan's pledge of loyalty was worth more to him than his own life. No Warrior wishes to die. But if one has a choice between losing life and losing honor, the Warrior chooses to keep his honor. For the time all of us have upon this world, even we obsidimen, is short compared to the length of legend. It is better to be remembered as honorable than to be forgotten as a coward.

But do not mistake foolishness for bravery. A Warrior must know which battles his honor depends on, and which it does not. Most battles are foolish and without meaning. These include battles over coin, battles that arise from hot tempers, and battles

fueled by a desire to prove prowess. Those who die in foolish battles die foolishly and are remembered as fools. But when a battle holds true meaning, when the stakes are heroic, retreat is not a choice. The true Warrior knows this and is prepared always to face the consequences.

For a man of action, Bola seems quite verbose. A Warrior need only remember this ancient proverb. A hero who dies for a foolish cause dies a fool. A fool who does for a heroic cause dies a hero.

—Elgor of Throal

The Sword

When a Warrior speaks of the shield and the sword, he speaks of symbols. In this case, the word "sword" is a symbol for all weapons, be they spear, axe, dagger, spear, club or hammer. Here is a story of the importance of the sword, or the weapon, to the Warrior.

On the deck of the sky ship Darting Moon, the elven Warrior Uvenia faced Haracha, the brigand queen. Uvenia had been hired by the merchants of the Kingdom of Cara Fahd to harass and bedevil the unruly Sky Raiders whenever they raided the kingdom. Uvenia's forces had done much harm to the Sky Raiders, and now the brigands reveled in their opportunity for vengeance. The Warrior stood on the ship's deck, disarmed, stripped of her armor, shackled at the ankles. Blood ran down her forehead and into her eyes. Haracha laughed and unsheathed her cutlass.

"You do not laugh at us now, do you, elf?" the massive troll sneered.

"I do not laugh at my enemies, for laughter implies overconfidence," Uvenia replied.

"You certainly have no need to be confident now," laughed Haracha, "for I have a blade, and you have none." Uvenia readied herself for death. For while Sky Raiders may show loyalty to their own kind, they do not love honor as we do. But Haracha surprised her.

"But I will show you my queenly mercy and give you a weapon," Haracha said. "Which weapon do you choose?" Uvenia replied that she would have the same weapon that Haracha intended to use.

"Ah, but a cutlass is a weapon for a real fighter, for a Sky Raider," scoffed Haracha. "I am afraid that a mere Warrior would cut herself on it. No, it would not be safe for you."

Uvenia looked about the deck at the brigands. She spotted a cudgel and asked for that. Haracha refused. She asked for a dagger. Haracha refused. She asked for a staff. Haracha refused. Uvenia realized the pirate was merely toying with her, seeking to draw out her humiliation.

Finally Uvenia said, "I request as my weapon the pearled pin that holds your hair in place."

The brigands laughed. Haracha, laughing, pulled the hairpin from her hair. "Yes, this puny weapon is the most that a mere Warrior can handle."

In that moment, as Haracha's unbraided hair obscured her vision, Uvenia threw herself forward and knocked the brigand queen to the deck. She seized the hairpin and held it over Haracha's right eye.

"Unlock these shackles," Uvenia commanded.

In the end, with Haracha's life still in her hands, she forced the Sky Raiders to agree to never again set foot within the bounds of Cara Fahd.

This story teaches us that the Warrior must not forget that she, herself, is her best weapon. This is why the Warrior attaches no special significance to any single sword or axe or spear. For we Warriors cannot depend on objects for our victories. We must depend on ourselves. If a sword is dropped on the battlefield, pick up another and go on. If an axe is shattered, mourn it not. If no proper weapon is available, use a chair or a flagon or a rock. The Warrior assesses the situation and adapts to it. The Warrior needs no flying ship, no charging mount, no particular blade. For weapons do not make the Warrior. The Warrior makes a weapon of whatever is at hand.

This is the first lesson I learned, and the first I teach to all who would seek to become a Warrior. The Warrior's wits are his greatest weapon. Learn this lesson, and none will ever defeat you.

—Val of the Serpent

The Enemy

The Warrior's path commands him to battle others and defeat them. Many times this means slaying the enemy. But the Warrior has no love of bloodshed. If the Warrior can win without killing, he will do so. But victory without death is often difficult. For in battle, the Warrior must put the enemy down and defeat him. And many enemies will not surrender as long as life flows through them. And so the Warrior must not hesitate to kill when victory demands it. Anyone foolish enough to oppose a Warrior assumes the risks of battle. They may well die beneath our blades. But the Warrior does not slay unless forced to. A Warrior will not stoop to deliver a killing blow to an unconscious foe, especially when other enemies remain standing. We Warriors are fighters, not butchers. Generals may order the slaughter of the fallen, but they are unwise if they expect Warriors to take part.

The Warrior does not harbor hate in his heart. The Warrior has honor in his heart. Hate may propel the inferior Name-giver into battle against the foe. But hate is a dangerous distraction to the Warrior. When we strike, we do so with efficiency and caution. Our minds must remain clear.

When we are paid to battle an enemy, we do so—and we prevail. But the Warrior bears no grudges. The enemy of the moment is the Warrior's only concern. Last week's enemy is a diversion; next week's enemy is a diversion. Only the enemy of the moment matters. I shall tell a tale to drive home my point.

In the aftermath of the Orichalcum Wars, a great force of mounted raiders known as the Green Horse Riders roamed the land. Made up of remnants of the many armies shattered by the Theran Navy in the last days of that conflict, the Riders had gathered together under the leadership of the dwarf Chesero and resorted to brigandage. The Kingdom of Throal hired the mercenary order known as the Down-Striped Band to break the Green Horse Riders and end their unlawful actions against traveling caravans. The Warrior Burnica led the Down-Striped Band.

Now, Burnica happened to be the younger half-brother of Chesero. Chesero had left home many years before, soon after the mysterious death of his stepfather—Burnica's father. Therefore, many suspected Chesero of the crime. As a young dwarf, Burnica had sworn cruel vengeance upon his half-brother. But his initiation into the way of the Warrior required him to surrender all of his old hatreds. These went into the fire to make way for the clarity of mind and purpose of the true Warrior. Many years passed, and Burnica distinguished himself as a leader and a true traveler upon our battlefield path.

But now fate, acting through the Kingdom of Throal, made Chesero his foe once more. And so Burnica undertook his Karma rituals with renewed purpose, hoping to prevent his old feelings from clouding his mind. For Chesero was not the traitorous kin,

not the slayer of Burnica's father. He was simply the enemy.

Three battles the Down-Striped Band fought with the Green Horse Raiders. The Down-Striped Band tasted defeat in the first two engagements, for the maneuverability and speed of the Cavalrymen proved decisive. Finally, during the third battle, the Warriors boxed the Raiders inside a canyon. After the Warriors decimated the front ranks of the riders, the Green Horse Raiders began to surrender. Soon Chesero replaced his banner with the white flag of surrender.

Chesero rode forth, humbled. Burnica prepared for his half-brother to lay his spear at his feet in a gesture of submission. Instead, Chesero threw an axe at Burnica and broke through the ranks of the Down-Striped Band to escape through the canyon mouth. His threats against Burnica hung in the air behind him as he vanished in the distance.

Seven years later, Burnica found himself leading a small band of fighters in the place now called the Badlands. He was charged with the task of finding and destroying a nest of Horrors. As the fighters drew nearer to the nest, they spotted another small group beset by the creatures. Most of these fighters had been slain already. And so Burnica and his band moved into to relieve them, even after he saw that their leader was Chesero.

Finally, the Horrors were slain, and Chesero, weary and wounded, collapsed against a rocky cliff face.

"Ah, my half-brother, you have come to slay me at last," Chesero said when he recognized Burnica. "Perhaps it is fitting. For I did indeed slay your father, for what now seems to have been a trivial slight. I have no wish to die, but I have no breath left and cannot defend myself. Stab me square in the heart, so I shall expire quickly."

To this Burnica replied, "I shall not slay you, for you are not my enemy. Fate may once again will that you be my enemy. If that day comes, I shall slay you without hesitation. But today, Chesero, you are not my foe."

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This "enemy of the moment" gibberish is all very fine, but I have heard of many Warriors who bore grudges long after battle. In the Caucavic Mountains, in fact, Warriors often battle one another to avenge losses suffered by their sires, grandsires, and even great grandsires.

—Damris the Unforgiving

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Loyalty

To a Warrior, loyalty is as valuable as honor. Indeed, loyalty and honor cannot be separated. Some Warriors serve as soldiers in standing armies, such as those of Throal and Thera. Such Warriors pledge their loyalties to the monarch they serve. They believe in the aims and ideals of the kingdoms they protect. To betray those ideals is to betray themselves and the Warrior's way.

Many more Warriors serve in mercenary companies, traveling throughout Barsaive in search of work. Others wait for employers to seek them out. The mercenary Warrior pledges his loyalty to the employer who pays him best. Once purchased, the mercenary Warrior's loyalty is as unswerving as that of any other Warrior. The mercenary Warrior will never break a signed contract, for he views the contract as a sacred trust. However, the mercenary Warrior knows the pitfalls of the poorly drafted contract. He relies on the well-crafted contract, which enables a Warrior to refuse orders that force him to act dishonorably. And should the employer fail to uphold his side of the bargain, the loyalty he purchased is no longer due. Only a fool would breach a contract with a mercenary Warrior, for a mercenary quickly will turn all of his attention to the recovery of moneys owed to him. History is full of petty rulers deposed by mercenary Warriors they sought to cheat.

Still other Warriors join small adventuring bands. Whether fighting or searching for treasure, the Warrior can prove a valuable comrade. The Warrior is adaptable; his abilities serve him as well in a ruined kaer as on the battlefield.

Whatever version of the path the Warrior treads, his loyalty to his comrades in arms must be unquestioned. The debt of obligation to them overrides any other duty. But if betrayed, the Warrior must avenge his honor. The Warrior does not hate the traitor, for no crime justifies poisoning the heart with rancor. Nevertheless, the Warrior must hunt down the traitor and end his life. For a traitor continues to betray others until brought to heel. When betrayed, a Warrior has a duty to the world to remove the transgressor from its bosom.

Training

Advancement on the battlefield path is not a matter of books or libraries. It is learned through action. It is learned in the sinews and marrow of the body. The aptitude of the true Warrior reveals itself only through the rehearsal of the arts of war. Few youngsters in our violent world do not learn to play with toy shields and swords. The potential Warrior soon feels the pull of the weapon and shield in her hands, even when they are but playthings. One day, the youngster simply knows that she is a Warrior. Then it is only a matter of time.

Typically the Warrior-to-be seeks out an "order" of Warriors, whether it be a mercenary order or a standing army. She applies

as a squire. Masters of the order, instructed in the rudiments of each beginning talent, test the squire. Those who truly have the aptitude are sent out to drill in these procedures. And drill, and drill. Typically, the student drills for many months before achieving her goal: an abrupt flash of understanding that is the soldier's initiation. For some, this point never comes; they are not cut out for the Warrior path. Others progress and continue to learn new talents as they build their legends. Each time, they must seek a master of the talent, who explains the talent's fundamentals. Then the Warrior goes to the drilling ground and attempts to put these fundamentals into practice. Training becomes simply a matter of doing, and doing, and doing, until the Warrior's pattern connects to the pattern of the talent. Then the Warrior has mastered it, and that is that.

It is as the great Warrior Kwai the Potent once said: only after one has swung a sword a thousand times does one begin to learn how to swing a sword.

—Trebor of the Dragon Mountains

Game Information

Warriors are fighters and soldiers trained to use magic to enhance their combat techniques. They often join other Warriors in groups called orders, living in seclusion in self-sufficient settlements similar to monastic orders.

Important Attributes: Dexterity, Strength, Willpower

Racial Restrictions: None

Karma Ritual: To perform his Karma ritual, a Warrior sits cross-legged, holding a weapon above his knees. After a few minutes of meditation he levitates, as if using the Air Dance talent; the ritual use of this talent does not cause him any Strain damage. The Warrior then performs a series of four exercises: the earth defense, the water defense, the fire attack, and the air attack. The ritual ends a half hour later, as soon as the Warrior completes the final move of the air attack.

Artisan Skills: Sculpting, Runic Carving, Wood Carving

Warrior Abilities

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

First Circle

Talents: Acrobatic Strike, Air Dance, Karma Ritual, Melee Weapons[D], Unarmed Combat[D], Wood Skin[D]

Second Circle

Talents: Anticipate Blow[D], Durability (9/7), Throwing Weapons

Third Circle

Talents: Avoid Blow[D], Tiger Spring

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Willpower-only Tests.

Talents: Down Strike[D], Thread Weaving (War Weaving)[D]

Fifth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Dexterity-only Tests.

Talents: Gliding Stride, Ritual of the Ghost Master[D], Swift Kick[D]

Sixth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Strength-only Tests.

Talents: Life Check[D], Missile Weapons

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on melee weapon Damage Tests.

Talents: Earth Skin, Second Attack

Eighth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on unarmed Damage Tests.

Talents: Cobra Strike[D], Leadership, Spirit Strike[D]

Ninth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.

Talents: Cat's Paw, Missile Twister, Second Weapon[D]

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.

Talents: Body Blade[D], Matrix Strike

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical and Social Defense.

Talents: Spot Armor Flaw, Vitality

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Initiative: The adept adds +1 step to his Initiative step.

Talents: Chameleon, Unmount[D]

Thirteenth Circle

Ability: By taking 3 permanent Damage Points, the adept gains the **Resurrect Self** ability. This damage can never be healed. When the adept makes a Life Check Test, but before any dice are rolled, the player may declare that the adept is resurrecting himself. This ability allows the adept to spend as many Karma Points as he wishes on his Life Check Test. He must choose how many Karma Points he will spend before rolling any dice, however. Damage is healed by the results of the Life Check Test as normal. The Karma Points spent when using this ability are permanently lost; the adept reduces his Maximum Karma Points total by the number of Karma Points spent on the Life Check Test. Additionally, the adept cannot use the Resurrect Self ability again until he takes another 2 permanent Damage Points to regain it. This additional damage can never be healed.

Karma: The adept adds +25 to his Maximum Karma Points.

Talents: Safe Path, Stone Skin[D], Talent Pattern

Fourteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical, Social and Spell Defense.

Talents: Second Chance, Vital Strike

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +2 to his Physical Defense.

Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.

Talents: Attribute Pattern, Aura Armor, Multi-Strike[D]

Half-Magic

Warriors can use half-magic when caring for or repairing their weapons and armor, knowledge of military tactics and strategy (recognizing the safest approach to a target when planning a battle, for instance) and to recall events of Barsaive's military history.

Roleplaying Hints

A Warrior tends to be honest, taciturn, and occasionally impatient. He usually speaks plainly and openly, and expects others to do the same. He admires doers and regards with suspicion those who talk too much. He often tries getting things done in the simplest, most straightforward manner possible. Though an expert in the art of war, the average Warrior does not love combat; rather, he sees fighting as a nasty job that needs doing and takes pride in his ability to do it well. To many Warriors, bloodthirsty thoughts or behavior are improper; the true Warrior views his enemy dispassionately and fights with his mind unclouded by rage or hatred.

Unlike adepts of other Disciplines, who usually seek out people different from them, many Warriors would like nothing more than to spend their time in the company of other Warriors. Some even choose to live apart from the rest of society in small "soldier" orders composed entirely of adepts and structured like a military unit. Roving mercenary bands may also call their groupings "orders," even if they have no permanent settlements. The tight discipline and camaraderie of all these orders makes them feared opponents on the battlefield.

Nearly all Warriors value loyalty, whether to comrades or employers. Many mercenary orders are known for loyalty to their employers—unless an employer is foolish enough to cheat them of pay or treat them badly. Mercenary orders will almost always retaliate if ill-used. Soldiers value loyalty as much as their mercenary cousins, but tend to give it to the kingdom or empire they serve. They are more likely to put up with poor conditions or pay shortages if they can be convinced that their suffering is temporary and serving a greater cause. A soldier's sense of honor often means that he will die defending his nation's interests, but few true Warriors will stupidly sacrifice themselves to avenge a slight or insult to that nation or kingdom. Warrior characters in adventuring bands tend to feel loyalty toward members of their group, even members they may personally dislike.

Possible Discipline Violations

Many different actions may violate the Warrior Discipline and provoke a talent crisis. A Warrior who betrays the interests of his group or creates disunity within it; who acts out of personal vengeance or hatred instead of against the current enemy of his group; who reneges on a promise sworn to on his Warrior's honor or on a signed contract; who becomes paralyzed by indecision; or who cold-bloodedly murders a defenseless opponent may suffer a talent crisis. A Warrior who fails to eliminate a traitor to his group has almost certainly committed a Discipline violation. Taking down the traitor would be an appropriate Deed of Atonement.

Rituals of Advancement

Like Cavalrymen, Warriors frequently belong to organized orders that offer standard promotions and appropriate ceremonies. Player character Warriors generally avoid or eventually leave these orders and develop unique advancement rituals.

Recruitment: Organized Warrior groups continuously tour Barsaive, visiting small villages and isolated kaers and painting rosy pictures of the excitement of military life. Their tales and impressive uniforms lure young men and women to enlist in their ranks. (Few orders mix genders in their ranks, though all mix races.) Reaching First Circle can require years of practice and study.

Novice (2–4): Adepts engage in regular contests of skill against their peers. Companies stage these privately, but independent Warriors often stage them at public festivals. Elders supervise all contests, and afterward acknowledge those adepts who demonstrated mastery of the talents required to rise to the next Circle, whether or not the adepts won their contests.

Journeyman (5–8): The adept must win a contest of skill against an opponent of equal abilities, fought on unusually demanding terrain. This may include battling atop an array of tall pillars, barefoot amid broken glass, in the deepest reaches of a deserted kaer, and so on. Note: Though rituals of advancement should be restricted to the roleplaying of a significant event, the gamemaster may declare that the adept loses the contest and must try again after a week of practice. This may serve many ends in pursuit of a good story.

Warden (9–12): Choosing one or several types of difficult terrain, the adept stages an exhibition of physical skill (either armed or unarmed) against an almost-overwhelming number of opponents of equal or lesser skill. A panel of respected Warriors must observe this exhibition.

Ghost Master Ritual: Like a Swordmaster, the Warrior summons a ghost master by mentally fighting that master within a circle. After an hour of unarmed combat, the mental image materializes as the master, who handily defeats the Warrior. The ritual proceeds as normal.

Possible Discipline Combinations

The Weaponsmith is the most natural second Discipline for Warriors because their practical minds recognize the opportunity that Discipline gives them to improve the lethality of their weapons.

Most Warriors find it surprisingly difficult, however, to take up additional fighting Disciplines as a way of enhancing their prowess in combat. The superior attitude most Warriors hold toward the other combat Disciplines gets in their way; they tend to see the Swordmaster as unnecessarily flashy and prone to take foolish risks, the Sky Raider and occasionally the Cavalryman as a bloodthirsty brigand who enjoys killing for its own sake, and the Archer as too inclined toward mysticism. On the whole, though, the Archer and Cavalryman Disciplines appeal more to Warriors than Sky Raiders or Swordmasters. Some famous mercenary orders include crack cavalry or archery units, and though tensions exist between the Warriors and the Archers and Cavalrymen, those tensions usually manifest as a friendly rivalry.

Many Warriors turn toward the Nethermancer Discipline late in life, after having dispatched great numbers of enemies on the battlefield. The Warrior's need to fight without hatred predisposes him to regret the killing that he must do more than followers of the other fighting Disciplines, and may seek the Nethermancer's path to find solace in the idea that death is not a final end, but a beginning. Warriors may also be drawn to the Elementalist's way; because many Warrior rituals ground the Warrior in the elements, the spells of the Elementalist Discipline come naturally to the Warrior.

Warriors have a particularly hard time adopting the Illusionist, Thief and Troubadour Disciplines. The Illusionist and Thief both rely on deception, which the Warrior usually regards as anathema, and the Troubadour Discipline requires a love of performance that most Warriors do not share.

Obsidiman Warrior

"I am a Warrior, pure and simple. I need no fancy theories or exotic weapons to fight. I need only myself and my skill, for my ways follow the forces of nature. I draw my abilities from the natural order, and I need nothing else.

"I have honed my skill through years of training and study. I know my enemies. I study their strengths and weaknesses, and I know how to defeat them. I am a Warrior. My word is my honor and my cause true and just. I am a Warrior. I am a hero."

Attributes

Dexterity (11): 5/D8
Strength (21): 8/2D6
Toughness (19): 8/2D6
Perception (11): 5/D8
Willpower (13): 6/D10
Charisma (10): 5/D8

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 6
Initiative: 3/D4
Physical Armor: 8
Mystic Armor: 1
Death Rating: 43
Wound Threshold: 15
Recovery Tests: 3
Knockdown: 8/2D6
Unconsciousness Rating: 35
Combat Movement: 16
Full Movement: 32
Karma Points: 5
Karma Step: 3/D4

Talents

Acrobatic Strike (1): 6/D10
Air Dance (1): 6/D10 (4/D6)*
Karma Ritual (1): 1
Melee Weapons[D] (2): 7/D12
Unarmed Combat[D] (2): 7/D12
Wood Skin[D] (1): 9/D8+D6

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

* The shield's Initiative Penalty reduces this step number, as shown in parentheses ( ).

Skills

Artisan:
Stone Carving (1): 6/D10
Knowledge:
Ancient Weapons (1): 6/D10
Military History (1): 6/D10
General:
Disarm (1): 6/D10
Read and Write Language (1): 6/D10
—Dwarf (Throalic)
Riposte (1): 6/D10
Speak Language (2): 7/D12
—Dwarf (Throalic), Obsidiman

Money

Copper Pieces: 0
Silver Pieces: 7
Gold Pieces: 1

Equipment

Body Shield (Phys 5; Init 2; Shatter 21)
Battle-Axe (Damage 14/D20+D4)
2 × Spears (Damage 12/2D10; Range 18–30–36)
Adventurer's Kit
Carving Tools
Trail Rations (1 week)
Traveler's Garb

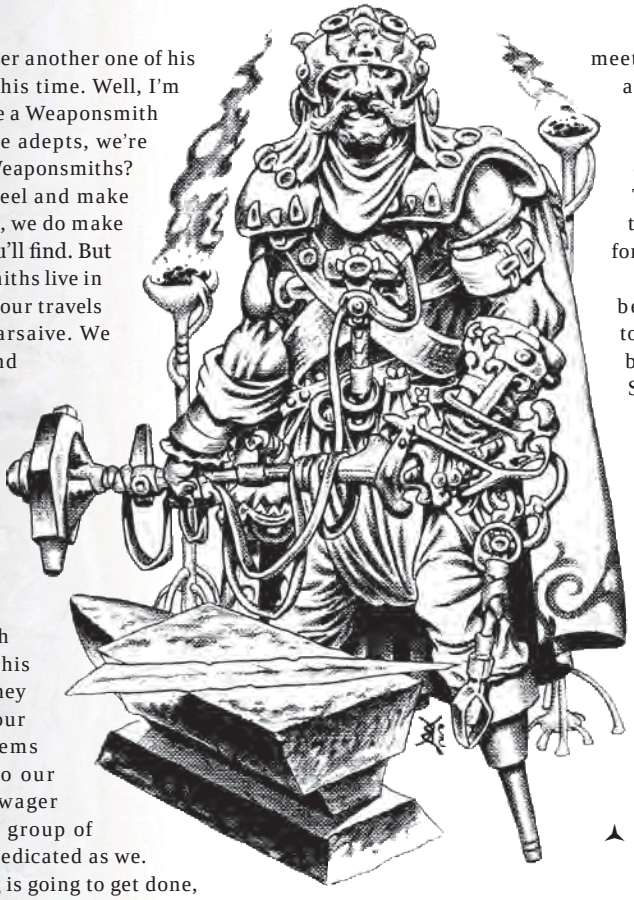
Notes

The adept possesses the obsidiman Increased Wound Threshold and Natural Armor racial abilities.

THE VALUE OF STRONG ARMS AND STRONGER MINDS

The following text was prepared by Dermatt of Haven, a well-known and highly respected Weaponsmith. His account is one of the most straightforward, informative pieces I received for the book and provides an excellent introduction to the way of the Weaponsmith. Dermatt also requested I extend an invitation to all readers to stop by his Forge when in Haven.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •



So, Merrox is putting together another one of his books, is he? All about adepts this time. Well, I'm glad to see you've decided to give a Weaponsmith a chance to speak up. Of all the adepts, we're probably the least understood. Weaponsmiths? Oh, those fellows that pound steel and make weapons and armor, right? Well, we do make weapons and armor, the best you'll find. But we do so much more. Weaponsmiths live in the world, not just on it. During our travels we speak with the people of Barsaive. We learn of their hopes, dreams and disappointments.

We Weaponsmiths stick together like adepts of no other Discipline, for the bonds of our Forges are as strong as those of any family. Weaponsmiths are a tightly knit group, able to rely on each other for damn near anything. If a Weaponsmith shows up at his Forge in need, his fellow adepts will do whatever they can to help him out. Much of our camaraderie and closeness stems from our shared dedication to our work. Just look around—I'll wager a week's work you can't find a group of adepts who, as a whole, are as dedicated as we. A Weaponsmith says something is going to get done, it gets done. Take my word for it.

You seek proof? Look at this. It's called a heartblade. I've been working on mine for near to six years now and haven't come close to finishing it. Everything I am—heart, soul and mind—has gone into making this. At some point in his life, just about every Weaponsmith gets the desire to make a heartblade. It represents the ultimate combination of art and technique, for a heartblade is as individual as its maker and as important to the Weaponsmith as his eyes or hands. Heartblades are proof of what we are, of the strength of our Discipline.

The same dedication that makes us single-minded enough to create heartblades also provided us with the strength to resist the bane of our time. Horrors hate Weaponsmiths, because we know better than any other adepts how to strengthen our resolve against them. So if you go after Horrors, you best bring a few of us along with you.

But dedication is only one of the unique characteristics of Weaponsmiths. We're also close to the people. Our Forges serve as meeting places, schools for apprentices, and common areas for people of all types. They come in, talk to us while we work, watch us shape metal into objects both lethal and beautiful. They tell us things, sometimes ask us to deliver messages to other people, for some of us travel quite a bit.

In these ways, Weaponsmiths become the ties that bind people together. Perhaps this is why ours has become the most enduring Discipline. Some even claim the way of the Weaponsmith was the first Discipline, and that all the other Disciplines grew from it. That may be—seems like every Discipline comes back to us, at any rate.

So remember that. Any group of adepts that heads off looking for legend better bring a Weaponsmith along just in case you need a weapon identified, or a blade fixed, or something remembered, or a Horror faced down—because nobody's better at any of that than a Weaponsmith.

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Though I do not wish to contradict the esteemed author of this text, I feel I must. To imply that Weaponsmiths alone bear the dedication needed to fight off the Horrors is simply absurd.

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

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ON BECOMING A WEAPONSMITH

We Weaponsmiths form guilds known as Forges. Our Forges provide us with places to meet and work and also a steady supply of new recruits. Unlike the Disciplines of the Swordmaster or Warrior, you won't find too many young ones that want to run

off and become Weaponsmiths. More often than not, they sort of slide into the Discipline. Usually, candidates start off working for us to make a little spending money. Some discover they enjoy the labor and stay for a while. Those who don't sometimes go off to become adepts of other Disciplines or find work more suited to them—work a little easier on the back and arms, usually.

Those who stay at the Forge, though, are rewarded handsomely. For Weaponsmiths watch over all who work for them, and anyone who stays at the Forge for more than a few months is recognized as adept material. These we introduce to more advanced forms of metalworking, watching as they work the iron to see whether or not they fall in tune with the metal. If they do, some member of the Forge "adopts" the worker and begins his apprenticeship.

Apprenticeship to a Weaponsmith is long and hard. The apprentice spends his days laboring at the bellows and anvil, hammering out horseshoes, shovel blades and other simple pieces of ironwork. The mentor watches every step of the apprentice's work, quick to criticize but slow to praise. An apprentice may spend a week learning how to form nails, constantly banging on tiny pieces of metal until they all come out just the right shape and size, with as little metal wasted as possible. Such tiring and tedious chores strengthen the resolve and attentiveness of the would-be adept, forging the dedication and iron will for which Weaponsmiths are known. Such training may seem harsh, but it is our way. The working of metal is a learned gift, not a birthright, and poorly done work insults both the metal itself and the mentor who trains the apprentice.

Such practice speaks well of the pragmatism and selflessness the way of the Weaponsmith instills in its followers. The problem of an ill-matched student and teacher is rarely overcome so easily in other Disciplines.

—Dorbulius of Throal

While the apprentice spends his days laboring over the forge and anvil, he spends his nights in deep study. The Weaponsmith must be well versed in all aspects of metalwork, including the history of the art. Apprentices study Weaponsmiths of the distant past, as well as the weapons those adepts created and the methods they used. This study forms the seed from which the Weaponsmith's well of knowledge will one day spring, the index of a mental encyclopedia. This is why I can say, without fear of boasting, that Weaponsmiths know more about weapon history than anyone else. If it can be known, a Weaponsmith somewhere knows it. Mark my words on this.

A Weaponsmith's apprenticeship lasts from six to eight months, depending on the aptitude of the apprentice and that of his master. In cases where apprentice and mentor are ill-suited to one another, the training can take much longer. If such an ill match forms, other members of the Forge may step in and assign the mentor a new apprentice and the apprentice a new mentor. There is no shame in this: talent has little to do with personality, which can play a major role in the instruction of apprentices. I myself have had more than one apprentice with whom I could not work. All were reassigned to different mentors, and all have turned out to be fine Weaponsmiths. I'm as proud of them as I would have been had I trained them myself.

After an apprentice has learned the requirements of the First Circle, he appears before the Forge elders. The elders make all major decisions concerning the Forge and are responsible for judging new recruits and approving the advancement of the Forge's members. The elders are elected by all at the Forge, who usually base their votes on the Circles and level-headedness of the elders. Most Weaponsmiths are considered elder material after reaching Tenth Circle, though some are chosen sooner or later. (I was chosen as an elder at Eighth Circle, which has earned me no end of honor.) Anyway, the apprentice must present the elders with a weapon he has forged himself. Typically, apprentices keep this simple, hammering out a nice little dagger or some such piece.

As I said before, though, the way of the Weaponsmith involves much more than pounding on iron and shaping blades. Apprentices also must display something else they've learned, perhaps by reciting the history of an ancient weapon or demonstrating some proficiency in wielding the weapon the apprentice has forged. Smiths need to be well-rounded, and no one becomes an adept without showing he can make his way in the world if he must.

Advancing through the Circles of the Weaponsmith Discipline can be a grueling task, even for those with iron wills. Every time one of our Discipline wishes to advance to the next Circle, he must first travel to a Forge and prove that he is worthy. Those wishing to advance spend a week at the Forge, studying under the more experienced Weaponsmiths. At the end of their study, they go before the Forge elders and demonstrate at least three talents they know. If the candidate's proficiency satisfies the elders, they teach the Weaponsmith the secrets of the next Circle and send him back out into the world.

When an adept comes to a Forge seeking admittance to the Fifth Circle of our Discipline, the elders test the adept's mental acuity and grasp of history as much as his physical abilities and knowledge of metalworking. Beginning with the Fifth Circle, the focus of testing shifts from the working of metal to the knowledge that must accompany that ability. For example, the elders begin testing the adept's knowledge of weapon history, often basing the test on one of the weapons each Forge keeps in its safe house. The Forge usually holds some knowledge of these weapons, having catalogued and documented a few of their pertinent facts through their own talents and the labor of various adepts testing for Fifth Circle, but all still keep some secrets. During advancement testing, Forge elders offer one such weapon to candidates and instruct them to study the weapon for a specific period—usually a week to a month, depending on the Circle the adept wishes to achieve and the complexity of the weapon being examined. At the end of the time allotted, the candidate must return to the elders and relate his findings. The elders then decide whether the candidate displays sufficient knowledge for advancement. Adepts attempting to attain the Ninth Circle of the Discipline must undertake a most daunting task. Each Forge keeps a list of weapons lost before or during the Scourge. The advancement candidate undergoes forty hours of training at the Forge and then sets out to rediscover one of these weapons. Often, the weapon is related to a weapon that the adept has studied before, providing the Weaponsmith a good idea of where to start his search. Once the adept finds the weapon, he must restore it to its former glory and present the weapon to the Forge elders.

Weaponsmiths rarely search out ghost masters to continue their training, for most of us feel uneasy seeking from the dead the knowledge those who have passed on gained during life. But in times of need, Weaponsmiths will summon ghost masters. Generally, the ritual of the ghost master is only available to adepts of Fifth Circle and higher, and then only to those in genuine need of such extreme measures. Those Weaponsmiths who may be traveling far from a Forge will often be taught the ritual as well, so that they may continue to advance in Circles despite their distance from their Forge. In all instances, ghost masters train adepts using the methods and trials of advancement of living Weaponsmith mentors.

The Weaponsmith Dermatt's confessed aversion to dealing with the dead stems from ignorance. Thank the Passions not all members of the Discipline suffer from such shortsightedness.

—D'elko, Nethermancer of Kratas

Being a Weaponsmith

Few things in life provide more gratification than helping others. And helping others is one of the things that Weaponsmiths do best. No, we don't heal wounds or cure infection or ease the pain of child birth and death for our fellow Name-givers, but we do make their daily lives simpler and more comfortable by employing our talents. Oh, other Disciplines might claim that they do the same, but I can't say as they'd be telling the whole truth. When was the last time that the average man in a village needed the services of a Swordmaster or the spells of a mage? Not often I'd wager, but every time I go into a village I can be sure that someone is going to need a little of my time and help. It may be hard to explain to a young would-be Archer or Sky Raider, but sometimes digging in and helping out the common folk scrabbling to make a living on the surface of Barsaive can be infinitely more important than running off to kill Horrors. This desire to help our fellow Name-givers inspires many of our Discipline to wander far and wide. We go where we are needed, traveling from village to city to village again, always looking to bring our talents where they can do the most good.

Weaponsmiths have stood in front of barred city gates, staring down ork scorchers thinking to plunder the shops within. Weaponsmiths have traveled to isolated towns to destroy Horrors that nested among the helpless. And still other smiths have spent days riding just to fix a wheel of a wagon that provides one family's livelihood.

This is not to say that we Weaponsmiths spend all of our time pursuing opportunities to practice charity. We must earn a living, and so we do charge for our services when those that we help can afford to pay. And we love knowledge, so we spend some time looking for items of legend and digging around for secret writings that might shed light on the nature of our world.

So you can say that Weaponsmiths combine in perfect balance the common decency of the people of Barsaive and the iron determination that saved us from the Scourge. We're the backbone of the world, and we travel far and wide spreading our strength.

Dermatt's words ring true. If only more adepts were more concerned with aiding their fellow Name-givers than performing glorious deeds, our world would be a much better place.

—Stokila of Vivane

The Heartblade

Crafting a heartblade is arguably the single most important task any Weaponsmith ever sets for himself. The heartblade represents the fusion of a Weaponsmith with his Discipline, the culmination of his learning. In the heartblade, the Weaponsmith creates a powerful pattern item of his own.

Weaponsmiths spend many, many years working on their heartblades, striving to make them as perfect as possible. A Weaponsmith may begin crafting his heartblade only when given permission to do so by his elders. This permission is only granted to those who perform exceptionally well in their advancement trials. As soon as an adept shows above-average skill during his testing to attain a new Circle, the elders choose an instructor to guide the Weaponsmith through the three weeks of training necessary to learn the basics of forging the heartblade. From then on, whenever the adept trains for successive advancements, he spends another three weeks learning more about forging the heartblade.

Creating a heartblade involves eight distinct phases. First, the Weaponsmith must craft the hilt, a lengthy process during which the adept must imagine how the blade will fit the grip and how all the pieces of the blade will work together. Next, the Weaponsmith embellishes the pommel, beginning by finding just the right item to install in the pommel. The item must represent the Weaponsmith and his art. Gems are a common choice, as are small iron ornaments the Weaponsmith crafts himself. The adept affixes the item to the end of the hilt and fashions the pommel around it.

In the third phase, the Weaponsmith creates the guard. The guard may be simple or ornate, though Weaponsmiths usually give their heartblades complex guards, with quillons curving out every which way from the hilt of the weapon. The fourth phase is finding the ore for the blade, which must come from within a lost kaer. Generally, Weaponsmiths take the material from ancient weapons.

Purifying the metal for the blade is the fifth phase. This time-consuming process is also the most crucial, for if the Weaponsmith fails during this phase, the heartblade is ruined and he must begin the process anew. For the sixth phase, the adept forges the blade. Most Weaponsmiths consider this phase the simplest in the creation process, as they have nearly achieved mastery of blade forging by the time they craft their heartblade.

In the seventh phase, the adept joins the blade to the hilt and performs any necessary re-balancing. During the eighth and final phase, the Weaponsmith sharpens the blade and adds any final decorations. Then he performs a blood magic ritual to tie the item's pattern to his own. The Weaponsmith must repeat this ritual every year in order to keep the weapon attached to his pattern.

As soon as the heartblade is completed, the Weaponsmith achieves a deeper understanding of his art and himself. It is said that Weaponsmiths carrying heartblades are among the greatest adepts to walk the earth.

The Forge

Every major city of Barsaive contains at least one Forge, and all but the most minor or distant villages count Weaponsmiths among their number. Forges consist of no fewer than five Weaponsmiths, with two elders for every five members. Thus, a Forge of ten members would include six adepts and four elders. An elder must have reached at least the Eighth Circle of his Discipline and is responsible for training adepts, recruiting new apprentices and managing the daily operations of the Forge. Unlike most adepts, Weaponsmiths understand the business applications of their skills; most Forges make a profit from the talents of their members.

Forges generally try not to compete with each other, though in the larger cities with more than a single Forge, this can be a difficult task. To avoid fighting for patrons, Forges near other Forges specialize in the creation, repair and enhancement of specific weapon types or other items.

Any Weaponsmith can expect to receive free room and board at a Forge for as long as he chooses to stay, but is expected to work for at least a few hours each day to help offset the cost of his keep.

Weaponsmiths need not belong to a Forge, but most are members of the Forge where they served their apprenticeships. Joining a Forge has its benefits, most notably a 30 percent discount on any goods purchased from the Forge, but it also demands a price. Members are expected to deposit no less than 5 percent of their yearly earnings into the Forge's coffers. Though a Forge does not offer discounted training costs for members of the Forge, members do receive priority treatment and will receive training ahead of those who are not members of the Forge.

Weaponsmiths and other adepts

I'll not waste your time here. No prattling gossip or mudslinging about how all the other Disciplines are pale imitations of my own—I'm sure you've heard more than enough such drivel from the other adepts you've talked to. No, I get on all right with most other adepts.

Warriors are generally civil enough, though they sometimes seem a bit full of themselves, looking down their noses at us and such. At least until we start pointing out all the little flaws in their armor and fix them up a bit, or until a sword is broken. Then they show up all smiles and flowers and praise just flows out of their mouth like water from a spring.

Wizards, Elementalists, Illusionists and Nethermancers are a different bunch. They show some of the dedication of the Weaponsmith, but at the same time they're a bit in the clouds if you take my meaning. Lots of book learning, but most of them lack what I'd call "dirt under the nails." Oh, you'll find a few willing to get into the thick of things, but most spellslingers would just as soon stand at a distance and toss spells at the baddies, safely out of sword's reach. Not a bad way to handle things, really, but it lacks a personal touch. The Nethermancers are a pretty good lot, even if they've gotten a bit of a bad reputation from all the time they spend mucking about with dead things. In fact, the way I see it, one must be damned dedicated to be a Nethermancer, what with all the persecution they have to endure. And if there's one thing Weaponsmiths respect, it's determination.

Troubadours have a lot more in common with Weaponsmiths than they'd like to admit, as adepts of both Disciplines spend a lot of time carrying information from one place to another and telling stories to the people of Barsaive. Still, many differences separate us as well. Most Troubadours don't have our resolve, for one. Then again, who does?

I find Thieves a hard lot to stomach, sometimes. They don't share the Weaponsmith's sense of community, and they certainly don't respect good honest labor. No, they'd rather run around snatching goodies from everyone else and feeding off the work of others. Still, I've met some good ones, and more than once a Thief has saved my hide when I couldn't get around a trap or out of a fix. Quick hands, but no real strength—moral or physical. Keep the Thief where you can see him, and you should be fine.

So that's about it. Now maybe people will understand us a little better and we'll get the respect we deserve. Who knows, maybe in the next couple of years we'll even see a rise in the number of Weaponsmiths and a drop in the number of Swordmasters.

Game information

A Weaponsmith trains to gain an iron will and a highly critical eye. Weaponsmiths help identify and create legendary weapons. To this end, the Discipline borrows abilities from both Elementalism and Wizardry. Nearly every community places great value on their Weaponsmiths.

Important Attributes: Dexterity, Perception, Willpower

Racial Restrictions: None

Karma Ritual: To perform his Karma ritual, the Weaponsmith heats a thin strip of metal in a hot fire or forge. Over the next half hour, he fashions the metal into a blade, arrowhead, or spear-tip, but instead of forging an effective item, he intentionally tempers the metal too soon, making it brittle. The Weaponsmith then shatters the defective piece of metalwork. The ritual ends the instant the item breaks.

Artisan Skills: Runic Carving, Wood Carving

Weaponsmith abilities

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

First Circle

Talents: Avoid Blow, Forge Blade [D], Karma Ritual, Melee Weapons, Steel Thought [D], Weapon History [D]

Second Circle

Talents: Durability (6/5), Haggle [D], Read and Write Language

Third Circle

Talents: Abate Curse [D], Detect Weapon [D]

Fourth Circle

Ability: By taking 1 permanent Damage Point, the adept gains the **Evaluate Weapon** ability. This damage can never be healed. For 1 Strain Point of damage, the Weaponsmith makes a Forge Blade Test against a weapon's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the approximate worth of the weapon and how well it is made is revealed to the adept. A Good or better result reveals the same information, but with increasing accuracy for each result level achieved.

Talents: Speak Language, Thread Weaving (Thread Smithing) [D]

Fifth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Dexterity-only Tests.

Talents: Ritual of the Ghost Master [D], Temper Self [D], Warp Missile [D]

Sixth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Perception-only Tests.

Talents: Conceal Weapon, Spot Armor Flaw [D]

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Willpower-only Tests.

Talents: Disarm, Temper Other [D]

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Talents: Improve Blade [D], Leadership, Read and Write Magic

Ninth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.

Talents: Enhanced Matrix, Spellcasting, Thread Weaving (Elementalism)

Tenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.

Initiative: The adept adds +1 step to his Initiative step.

Talents: Metal Ward, Sense Magic Weapon [D]

Eleventh Circle

Ability: By taking 2 permanent Damage Points, the adept gains the **Blood Edge** ability. This damage can never be healed. By losing 1 additional permanent Damage Point, the adept permanently increases the Damage step of one weapon of any type by 2 steps (3 steps if the weapon is used to attack an opponent in astral space). In the event of this weapon being lost or destroyed, the adept can heal the permanent Damage Point lost on that weapon after a year and a day has passed since the weapon left his possession. The adept may apply the Blood Edge ability to more weapons by taking 1 additional permanent Damage Point per weapon so enhanced.

Talents: Fireblood, Forge Armor [D]

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical and Spell Defense.

Talents: Show Armor Flaw [D], Soften Blade [D]

Thirteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.

Karma: The adept adds +25 to his Maximum Karma Points.

Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.

Talents: Critical Hit, Improve Armor [D], Talent Pattern

Fourteenth Circle

Ability: By taking 3 permanent Damage Points, the adept gains the **Create Orichalcum** ability. This damage can never be healed. Using blood magic and the proper mix of the five elements—air, earth, fire, water, and wood—the adept can create orichalcum. Each attempt costs the adept 1 additional permanent Damage Point, which can never be healed regardless of success or failure. The combined value of the elements used must equal or exceed the value of the orichalcum to be created. The adept spends a week preparing the ritual and makes a Perception-based Half-Magic Test against a Difficulty Number equal to the value of the orichalcum in thousands of silver pieces +15, to create the magic metal. For example, creating 5,000 silver pieces worth of orichalcum requires a successful Perception-based Half-Magic (20) Test. If the test succeeds, the orichalcum is created. Regardless of the result, the elements used for the test are consumed.

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Talents: Armored Matrix, First Ring of Perfection [D]

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense and +2 to his Spell Defense.

Talents: Attribute Pattern, Second Chance, Shared Matrix

Half-Magic

Weaponsmiths may use half-magic when caring for weapons and armor and to recognize different types of weapons and armor used or worn by different Name-giver races. They may also make Dexterity-based Half-Magic Tests in place of Craftsman Tests when making or repairing forged metal items, such as horse shoes, barrel stays, and the like.

Craft Armor

Weaponsmiths may make Perception-based Half-Magic Tests in place of Craft Armor Tests to create new armor and shields. This ability does not allow improvements, like use of the Forge Armor or Improve Armor talents allows. The Weaponsmith may spend 1 Karma Point on each Craft Armor Test he makes.

Using half-magic, the Weaponsmith may create armor or shields with an average Physical and Mystic Armor rating no greater than his Discipline Circle. The procedure for creating armor is otherwise the same as that given for the Craft Armor skill in the **Skills** chapter, p. 237.

At Fifth Circle, Weaponsmiths learn how to create living armor, such as blood pebble, fernweave and living crystal armor (see the **Enchanting** chapter, p. 277, for details). Only those Weaponsmiths who no longer care to function within the confines of Barsaive's society practice the complexities of creating obsidiman-skin armor.

Repairing Armor

Weaponsmiths may make Perception-based Half-Magic Tests to repair armor and shields, against a Difficulty Number equal to that required to create the item. A separate Half-Magic Test is required for each point of Physical or Mystic Armor rating repaired. This takes the Weaponsmith one day per Half-Magic Test, assuming he has access to the appropriate tools.

Craft Weapon

Weaponsmiths may make Perception-based Half-Magic Tests in place of Craft Weapon Tests to create new weapons. This ability does not allow improvements, like use of the Forge Blade or Improve Blade talents allows. The Weaponsmith may spend a Karma Point on each Craft Weapon Test he makes.

Using half-magic, the Weaponsmith may create weapons of a Size no greater than his Discipline Circle. The procedure for creating weapons is otherwise the same as that given for the Craft Weapon skill in the **Skills** chapter, p. 238.

Repairing Weapons

Weaponsmiths may make Perception-based Half-Magic Tests to repair weapons, against a Difficulty Number equal to that required to create the item. A separate Half-Magic Test is required for each Damage step repaired. This takes the Weaponsmith one day per Half-Magic Test, assuming he has access to the appropriate tools.

Forging the Heartblade

A heartblade provides numerous advantages when complete, but requires several years of hard work to craft. Each of the eight distinct phases of creating the heartblade must be performed in its proper order, and the Weaponsmith may only perform one phase per Circle. A character who begins creating his heartblade at Second Circle will not normally finish it until he has reached at least Tenth Circle, and possibly a good deal later.

Each time a character who has begun creating his heartblade advances a Circle, he can make a Forge Blade (10) Test, but only if he has spent at least one hour each day working on the blade while at his current Circle. If the test fails, the adept must advance to the next Circle in the Weaponsmith Discipline before trying again, spending the remaining time on his current Circle preparing for another attempt. Only after an adept has made a successful test for the current phase of the heartblade's creation may he begin the next phase. Note that working on the blade does not necessarily mean pounding steel over an anvil. The adept needs to take time to think about each phase, make notes and sketches, and prepare test pieces, before he works on the weapon itself.

If the adept manages to complete all eight phases, he may perform a blood ritual to tie the blade's pattern to his own for all time. At this time, the Weaponsmith may add a +1 rank bonus to up to eight of his talents, one of which must be Forge Blade. This bonus is permanent, but for each talent enhanced the adept takes 1 permanent Damage Point, which can never be healed. If the Weaponsmith does not enhance his Forge Blade talent, the weapon is not a heartblade and must be destroyed. The adept must then begin the entire process again if he wants to create a new heartblade (for many Weaponsmiths, this failure means they will never create a heartblade). The rank bonuses gained do not count toward Discipline or talent advancement.

Once the blood ritual is complete, the heartblade becomes a Core pattern item for the Weaponsmith, with all the advantages and disadvantages that entails (see the **Thread Magic** chapter, p. 268). Note that the creation of a heartblade is an exception to the normal rules for pattern items. **Weaponsmiths are incredibly careful with their heartblades, for if they fall into the wrong hands, they can serve as a channel for terrible magic directed at the adept.**

Roleplaying Hints

No matter what their individual idiosyncrasies, Weaponsmiths are committed to everything they do. From Steel Thought to Weapon History to Show Armor Flaw, a Weaponsmith's talents show his determination to accomplish the task he has set himself. Most Weaponsmiths do not understand failure; if a Weaponsmith says he will do something, he will do it however he can. If he cannot accomplish the task one way, he tries another, and another, and another until he succeeds. A Weaponsmith may request aid if he feels he needs it; he will do everything in his power to carry out his intentions.

"The word of a Weaponsmith" is proverbial in Barsaive, because a Weaponsmith's word is so rarely broken. Weaponsmiths often make their promises in Forges, and such promises are as important to the Weaponsmith as a blood promise would be to anyone else in Barsaive. Though a Weaponsmith suffers no loss of health and does not earn permanent Wounds should he break his oath (as with a blood promise; see **Blood Magic** in the **Workings of Magic** chapter, p. 259), any Weaponsmith who betrays his oath risks being turned out of his Forge until he proves himself worthy.

Possible Discipline Violations

A Weaponsmith may suffer a talent crisis if he violates the trust he feels the Discipline holds. For some, this may be as trivial as lying to an acquaintance or withholding information from a friend. A Weaponsmith may also suffer a talent crisis if he is rude to his elders, or those to whom he owes hospitality.

More common violations include intentionally destroying another's work, neglecting or improperly using a weapon, or taking unfair advantage of his position in a community. Weaponsmiths who place importance on knowledge may suffer a talent crisis if they fail to share information with members of their Forge.

Nearly all Weaponsmiths suffer a talent crisis if they break their sworn word, betray their Forge to enemies, or destroy a weapon of legendary quality or pre-Scourge importance.

Rituals of Advancement

Most cities in Barsaive support a Forge, and sometimes two or three engage in competition for business and membership. Like guilds but less restricted, Forges give adepts a forum in which to exchange trade tips, find and take on apprentices, and gossip. The Forge is, in many ways, the center of Weaponsmith life, and nearly all Weaponsmith rituals involve the Forge in some way.

Recruitment: Weaponsmiths often teach their children their Discipline, but Forges provide standard channels for finding new apprentices.

Novice (2–4): The adept crafts or reworks a weapon and presents it to an elder or a panel of elders for inspection. The weapon's Damage step should exceed the new Circle by at least 2. For example, an adept aspiring to Fourth Circle should create or refashion a weapon with at least Damage step 6.

Journeyman (5–8): An elder or panel of elders presents to the adept several weapons of obscure origin. The adept may study the weapons for up to a week, then must identify for the panel the weapons' makers, histories, and other distinguishing features. This ritual of advancement may serve as the springboard for an adventure to investigate the clues revealed. Traditionally, the panel offers the adept the first opportunity to pursue the adventure.

Warden (9–12): The adept must find and take possession of a weapon lost before the Scourge, restore it to good condition, then display it to an assembled Forge.

Ghost Master Ritual: The Weaponsmith draws the usual circle, then mentally executes all the steps required to create the finest weapon ever made by the ghost master he wishes to summon. After one hour, the ghost master appears and corrects the adept's errors. The ritual continues as normal.

Possible Discipline Combinations

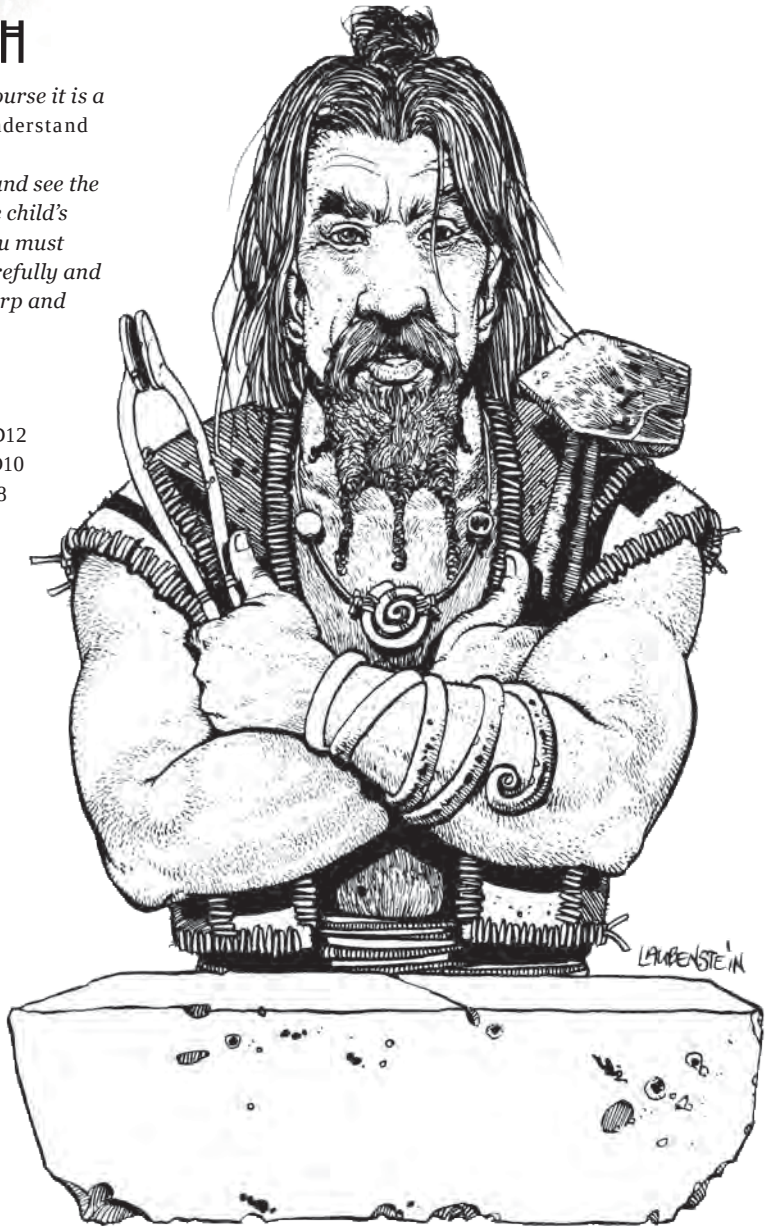
The Weaponsmith Discipline blends well with the Warrior and the Archer; Warriors often share the Weaponsmith's practical and determined approach to the world, and Archers share the Weaponsmith's devotion to his art. Less common, but still workable, is the Weaponsmith/Nethermancer combination. Many Weaponsmiths admire the Nethermancer's determination in the face of persecution by those ignorant of his Discipline, and this admiration has sent more than one Weaponsmith in search of a Nethermancer master.

The powerful spells of the Wizard and Illusionist Disciplines may attract the Weaponsmith as ways to supplement his spell resistance (primarily through Steel Thought). However, Weaponsmiths learn many Elementalist talents at the higher Circles of their own Discipline, and therefore rarely choose to take on the Elementalist's way. Very few Weaponsmiths take up the Swordmaster or Thief Disciplines, as they dislike what they see as the Swordmaster's excessive showiness and the Thief's laziness.

Dwarf Weaponsmith

"Do you know what it is that you carry? Of course it is a weapon, that is obvious. But do you see it? Do you understand *it? Can you call up its power?*

"I understand weapons. I can feel their patterns and see the truths of their existence. Sharpening an edge is mere child's play compared to calling forth a weapon's power. You must coax a weapon's secrets from it, bring them forth carefully and slowly. Then and only then will its blade be truly sharp and its full power revealed."



Attributes

Dexterity (11): 5/D8
Strength (13): 6/D10
Toughness (16): 7/D12
Perception (16): 7/D12
Willpower (15): 6/D10
Charisma (10): 5/D8

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 7
Initiative: 5/D8
Physical Armor: 4
Mystic Armor: 2
Death Rating: 39
Wound Threshold: 11
Unconsciousness Rating: 31
Recovery Tests: 3
Knockdown: 6/D10
Combat Movement: 18
Full Movement: 36
Karma Points: 7
Karma Step: 4/D6

Talents

Avoid Blow (1): 6/D10
Forge Blade[D] (2): 9/D8+D6
Karma Ritual (1): 1
Melee Weapons (1): 6/D10
Steel Thought[D] (1): 7/D12
Weapon History[D] (2): 9/D8+D6

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills

Artisan:
Runic Carving (2): 7/D12
Knowledge:
Ancient Weapons (1): 8/2D6
Throal History (1): 8/2D6
General:
Bribery (1): 6/D10
Read and Write Language (1): 8/2D6
—Dwarf (Throalic)
Speak Language (1): 8/2D6
—Dwarf (Throalic)
Streetwise (1): 8/2D6

Money

Copper Pieces: 1
Silver Pieces: 6
Gold Pieces: 3

Equipment

Padded Leather Armor (Phys 4)
Broadsword (Damage 11/D10+D8)
Hand-Axe (Damage 10/D10+D6)
2 × Daggers (Damage 8/2D6; Range 9–15–18)
Knife (Damage 7/D12)
Adventurer's Kit
Carving Tools
Forge Tools
Trail Rations (1 week)
Traveler's Garb
Tent

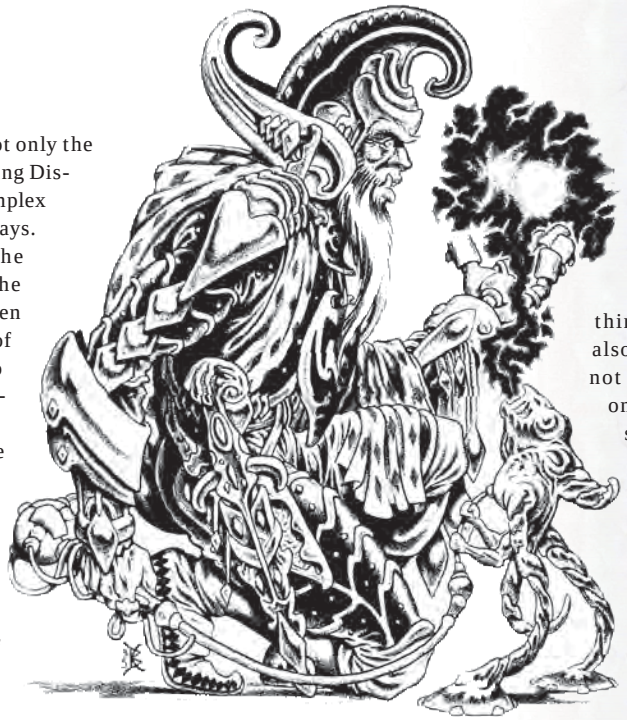
Notes

The adept possesses the dwarf Heat Sight racial ability.

THE WAY OF MIND AND SYMBOL

In its original form, the following document was an address to the Throalic Court, delivered in 1504 TH by the ork Wizard Ajmar the Admirable as part of his application for the post of Court Spellcaster. For this anthology, I asked Ajmar to expand his presentation wherever he felt additional text would clarify his comments.

• Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH •



The way of the Wizard is not only the most advanced of the spellcasting Disciplines, it is by far the most complex and subtle of all the Adept's Ways. The wise monarch seeking the counsel of a practitioner of the arcane arts should therefore listen first and longest to a walker of the Wizard's path. In order to master the Discipline of Wizardry, an adept must develop a superior intellect and acute powers of analysis. Clearly, these faculties also make a Wizard—such as my humble self—eminently suitable for the post of adviser. Indeed, a Wizard's mental acuity makes him a fit purveyor of advice on every topic imaginable. For it is the Wizard's task to understand all things in the world, to fit them into categories, and rank them in a system of correspondences. From these correspondences flow not only the magical powers on which the Wizard draws, but a complete vision of the Universe by which to comprehend people, creatures and objects of all sorts.

If I may beg the Court's indulgence, I shall now develop my argument to support what I have said, providing evidence to establish the truth of my claims.

ON SYMBOLS AND SPELLCASTING

The Wizard-in-training must first understand that things in this world are more than they seem. Every word, every action, everything that can be observed with the Name-giver's eye, these things all have higher meanings. The Wizard learns to perform wondrous supernatural acts by discerning these higher meanings. Acquiring this understanding is known among teachers and students of the Wizardly way as the process of symbolization.

Let us use as an example the chair you sit upon, Your Majesty. "Chair" seems utterly the wrong word for that object, even as the word leaves my lips. The word "chair" drops to the floor, flopping about like a fish out of water, refusing to enter your ears. That is because the proper word for the thing upon which you sit is "throne." A "throne" is no mere chair; it is a symbol. It represents kingship. Your throne is an example of an object that carries a Great Meaning. A chair means nothing; a throne means something. Likewise, Your Serene Majesty is also a symbol. The name "Varulus" does not refer merely to a dwarf. It refers to one who symbolizes kingship, and also symbolizes all dwarfs.

Symbols have power because they are connected to the Realm of Ideas, upon which I shall expound further in a moment. Because it is a symbol, Your Majesty's throne has more magical power than a mere chair. You have more magical power than an ordinary dwarf. The Wizard's art lies in tapping these powers; a Wizard gains power by learning to mystically manipulate these symbols. Any thing important enough to stand as a symbol holds power that can be reached and used by the talents and spells of the Wizard.

Unlike other Disciplines, whose adherents feel the tenets of their crafts in their bones, the Discipline of the Wizard requires the adept to clearly understand the principles of his way in his mind. He must be a thinker, with a brain as sharp and cutting as a knife. He must learn to separate truth from falsehood, importance from triviality. The mind is the most important gift given to we Name-givers by the Passions; the Wizard takes this extraordinarily valuable tool and uses it to its fullest. With his mind, he remakes the world.

Most Name-givers use a mere fraction of the mind's abilities. To become a Wizard, a student must awaken his sleeping intellect until it is afire with the stunning possibilities of thought, the limitless vistas of the imagination. For practitioners of the lesser Disciplines, the first moments of initiation may come in a sudden flash of mystical awareness. Our way is not so easy. Only the trained mind is prepared for the ultimate insights of the Wizardly path. The prospective Wizard must build a mental foundation for the profound perceptions to come. Achieving this requires extensive study. The Wizard therefore spends the early years of his life wrestling with dusty tome after dusty tome, immersing himself in the works of the great Wizards of Barsaive's past.

[Author's note: I used the word "tomes" here as a symbol for all transmitted learning. Many young Wizards, particularly in Barsaive's misbegotten hinterlands, are nowadays forced to

learn the great works as part of an oral tradition. Books require the painstaking labor of large numbers of scribes. Because they are expensive and time-consuming to produce, they are rare at the best of times. The Scourge has made them even harder to find, and so many small villages cannot lay hands on anything close to the entire corpus of texts necessary for the Wizard-in-training. To compensate for this dreadful lack, tutors of the Wizardly arts have taken to memorizing vast portions of the books missing from their own collections and then reciting them to their students. Though this way of teaching is unfortunately necessary, I fear that many subtle but essential points are lost by its practice. The hinterlands of Barsaive continue to produce large numbers of half-taught, bumpkin mages who learn by hearsay rather than by reading the eminent works of the past for themselves. While this kind of slow erosion is perhaps acceptable for Nethermancers, Elementalists and Illusionists, it is most regrettable that the noble tradition of the Wizard should be degraded in this manner.]

I shall not tire the Court with the complete list of these basic texts, particularly since Wizards often disagree as to which are truly essential. I would say a dozen plus one books are essential to the learning of the Wizard, including Thystrio's *Elucidations of Metaphor and Meaning*, Comborian's *Pathways to Profundity*, Clessio and Tornovir's *Categories of Ritual and Thinking*, and *The Substance of Desire* by the Countess of Nevermore.

On the Idea and its Meaning

Though these profound manuscripts teach their lessons from different perspectives, all speak of the importance of the Idea. In order to understand how the Wizard remakes reality according to his desires, one must understand this concept. All things in this world are connected to an Idea. Your walking stick, Your Majesty, shares the Idea of the walking stick in common with all other walking sticks. Your throne shares the Idea of the throne with all the thrones of all the monarchs that have ever existed or will exist. But where do these Ideas come from? The Wizard knows that the Idea of the throne, the Idea of the walking stick, was not created by Name-givers. There is a place, a real place deep in the heart of astral space, a place that even the Horrors cannot reach, in which all Ideas exist. Were it possible to travel to this Realm of Ideas, one would find there The Walking Stick—the original, mystical emanation upon which all walking sticks in our own reality are modeled. Anything you can think of has such a model in the Realm of Ideas. If it did not, you would not be able to think of it. Whenever a new object or being is created in this world, that creation merely reflects events in the Realm of Ideas, which on occasion spontaneously generates new things. (I have chosen the term "thing" specifically for its vagueness; an Idea might be a type of being, an object, or even an abstract concept.) When the t'skrang race developed—with the Passion Upandal's aid—the peculiar engine that propels their riverboats, their actions reflected the appearance of a new thing called The Engine in the Realm of Ideas. If The Engine had not appeared there, the t'skrang would not have thought to try to make such objects here in this world. The Idea must exist first.

Are the Passions subservient to the Realm of Ideas? This question has puzzled Wizards for centuries. I conclude that the Passions are themselves Ideas, the exemplars of our primal emotions. They are special examples of—

[Author's Note: At this point in my discourse, it became evident that my untutored audience was no longer devoting their full attention to me. To attract their wandering gazes, I was forced to resort to a visually spectacular parlor trick. That particular and satisfying combination of spells will illustrate for the reader what may seem to be an abstract point.

His majesty's court jester, a prancing and drooling ork of the type that brings discredit to our race, had begun capering about the hall, distracting those I sought to address. Not unprepared for such an eventuality, I reached into one of my matrices and cast a Wall Walker spell on the idiot. He looked at me questioningly; no obvious effect had occurred. I then fired a Flame Flash at his feet. Startled and fearful, he did what I had hoped he would; he instinctively jumped for the wall, which he climbed with the bug-like scrabble of a long-legged spider. Further startled, he then pushed himself off of the wall he had climbed, landing on his generous posterior with a wail of protest.

I then extemporized in the following vein:]

What you have just seen, Your Majesty and notables of the Court, serves as a practical example of the manipulation of Ideas. In this instance, I used my intellect and the talents of spellcasting to draw upon the power of the Idea of the Spider. According to chapter seven of Alloron's *Correspondence and Continuum*, one of the primary things the spider symbolizes is the act of climbing. I used magic to bring that manifestation of the Idea of the Spider into this world, loaning to our dear jester an essential characteristic of the spider.

Then I drew power from the Idea of the Flame, specifically the destruction it symbolizes. By weaving threads to it, I turned a symbol in my thoughts into physical reality, producing the jet of fiery matter that impelled our jester to participate in my humble demonstration.

This incident affords me an excellent opportunity to distinguish between the symbol and the Idea. The Idea is perfect, ultimate, untouchable. We cannot directly perceive an Idea, for we cannot travel to the Realm of Ideas. The best we can do is to think of an Idea. The thought that thereby appears in our minds is the symbol. The symbol is the connection between our lowly, imperfect selves, and the primacy of the Idea. The symbol is what the Idea means to us. In this case, the spider meant climbing to

me, and therefore served as a symbol of climbing. Flame meant destruction for my purposes, and therefore became destruction's symbol. I cannot master the Idea, but I can use the symbol to borrow a fraction of its power. Through the symbol, I can conjure up the ability to climb, or foster destruction.

Such spells as I have just cast are but minor manifestations of the Wizard's capabilities. He conquers reality by understanding it, and then gives his desires form and solidity. It is our world he changes, not the Realm of Ideas.

Of course, I realize that the vaunted post of Court Spellcaster to the Royal Family of Throal is not to be won by the mere vulgar display of magical power. Incidentally, I shall be more than happy to repay the treasury for the cost of replacing that scorched tile.

I feel it necessary to remind the reader that the theory of the Realm of Ideas has, in the past, been subject to much conjecture. Many magicians, my fellow Wizards among them, have criticized the theory as nothing more than a simple way of explaining the nature of magic, which no one truly understands.

—Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane

Understanding Through Ideas and Symbols

[Author's Note: Having gained their attention once more, I returned to the matter of my prepared speech.]

The adviser you seek, Your Majesty, must be able to do more than cast simple spells. He must be able to look at a complex matter and divine from it its core elements. As a Wizard, my training prepares me eminently for such reasoning. Once the Wizard learns that any situation can be reduced to the connection between symbols and Ideas, he can look beyond the surface confusion to detect the order beneath.

The Wizard builds his perceptions on the wise words of his predecessors in the Discipline. He looks to history, to precedent. This is why a Wizard must never stop learning, must never tire in his quest to unearth the buried knowledge of the past. With the correct background knowledge and a solid grasp of the catalogue of symbols, the Wizard can look at any event or potential event and choose the correct course of—

[Author's Note: At this point, His Most Benevolent Highness interrupted me and asked me to address my powers of critical reflection to a particular practical matter. I dare not paraphrase my liege's most incisive words, but in short he demanded that I advise him on the status of Bartertown. He said that there was great debate among his chamberlains as to the fate of this scruffy urchin of a city, huddled impertinently outside the gates of his great kingdom. He said that he had already taken a decision on it, but wished me to express my views in order to determine if they were congruent with his. After several moments of intense rumination, this is what I said:]

Let us look at Bartertown, Your Highness, and divine which symbols and Ideas are involved in this matter. Only when we know these things can we make an informed decision.

First of all, Bartertown is a manifestation of the Idea of the City. What is a city? First of all, it is a coming together of Name-givers for a common purpose and a collective livelihood. Therefore, the City symbolizes Unity and Cooperation. These are positive symbols, I am sure you will agree. But not all cities are good places. Kratas, for example, combines the Idea of the City with the Idea of the Thief, and this latter Idea exerts a baleful influence over the first. Kratas is a gathering-together like any city, but for the purposes of conspiracy. If Kratas was on your doorstep, I would recommend that you attempt to extinguish it.

But Bartertown bears its second symbol in its name: barter. Bartertown is therefore connected to the Idea of Trade. What is trade? It is exchange, the free transfer of goods from one willing partner to the next. Trade is another form of cooperation, and thus Bartertown is doubly woven to the Idea of Cooperation.

This symbol augurs extremely well for your own aims, Your Majesty. For is not the Kingdom of Throal also a symbol of Unity and Cooperation? You seek to bring our province together, to unite it under the rule of justice and compassion. Bartertown may seem untidy and unruly; it may offend the sense of order that your dwarf heritage leads you to value; but in truth, Bartertown is a manifestation of the highest order. It can be a tool by which you may bind our land in your benevolent compact. Bartertown can aid you in this by adding to Unity and Cooperation a third and most vital Idea: Freedom.

Know this, Your Majesty: Unity without Freedom is the yoke of oppression. To avoid the tragic folly of the Therans who once ruled here, you must always take care that your decisions connect to the Idea of Freedom as well as to the Idea of Unity. Bartertown means freedom. It has sprouted unbidden from the soil of our new Barsaive, but it is a wildflower rather than a weed. To limit its growth is to doom your own noble vision—the very vision that brought me to this Court to offer you my service. As long as you are connected to the Ideas of Freedom, Cooperation, and Unity, I shall bind myself to you should you have me.

[Author's Note: At this point King Varulus announced that I might consider myself the official Court Spellcaster of Throal. His words seemed to take many of his courtiers by surprise; one of them began to choke and required the attention of the Court Healer. In the ensuing confusion, the rest of my discourse was forgotten. I present the remainder of it here, for the first time.]

On Correspondences and Antipathies

Few Wizards travel without at least an abridged copy of Vomon's *Concordance of Correspondences* or M'chuda's *Encyclopedia of Symbology*. These basic texts contain lists of the most commonly encountered Ideas and the symbols that relate to them. Most Wizards have committed many of these to memory, but there are always moments when the ability to connect with an obscure Idea is a matter of life and death. My own well-thumbed copy of Vomon's text has helped me make decisions time after time that have saved not only my own life, but the lives of others.

The following tale will serve as an example of how Correspondences and Antipathies work in the world. Some years ago, I was trapped with my adventuring companions in a small village kaer in the lowlands south of Lake Vors. Moments after we entered the kaer, I saw that the Idea of the Kaer had been connected to another, very strange Idea. The kaer's walls were of worked and polished metal. The design of the place was maze-like. And when the last of our party had stepped inside the kaer, a mammoth door of stone slammed down behind us, blocking our exit. With no choice but to go further into this oddly altered place, we soon found ourselves in a trap sickening in its depravity.

First, another stone door sealed all of us in another, inner chamber of worked and polished metal. Then a trap door opened beneath our Beastmaster and sucked her out of sight with a hideous whooshing sound. We pounded furiously on the floor in an attempt to reopen the trap door and follow her. We had threaded

ourselves together in a group pattern in order to symbolize our unity, and we had sworn never to allow our party to become separated. But this terrible trap-kaer set all our efforts at naught. We could not reopen the trap door, and our Beastmaster seemed lost to us.

As we pounded and shouted, one of the metal walls began to sink into the floor. Behind it was yet another wall, of a mysterious clear substance that I have yet to match to a governing Idea. Through that clear wall we could see our comrade, sitting in a daze in a chamber much like the one we were in. Seeing us, she rushed over to the wall. We hammered at it from both sides, to no avail. Clearly one of the symbols of the clear wall was Invulnerability.

Portions of the walls in the Beastmaster's room then shifted, revealing an array of spouts that gushed forth streams of water. The second chamber was a drowning trap, fiendishly made so that we could only look on helplessly as our comrade met a slow and awful death. Our Archer made a quick mathematical determination, and told us that it would take but three minutes for the chamber to fill entirely with water. After that, our Beastmaster had only as much life as she had lung power.

I immediately went to work, rifling through my sack for the notes I had taken some weeks earlier in the course of a rare opportunity to consult the dread book titled Horrors, a volume reluctantly compiled and jealously guarded by the librarians of the Great Library of Throal. Something about the nature of this place rang a faint bell in my memory. Lo and behold, I found—after much page-shuffling—my notes on an entry regarding the Great Horror named Artificer. Reading quickly, I learned that Artificer travels throughout Barsaive, searching out places likely to attract adventurers. It then remakes these places, filling them with deadly traps of devious construction. I knew that this trap-kaer was connected not only to the Idea of the Kaer, but to the Idea of the Horror, and through it to the Idea of the Machine.

I concentrated fully on my task, blocking out the horrified shrieks of my companions as the water rose higher and higher in the other chamber. I grabbed my copy of Vomon and riffled to the entry on the Idea of the Machine. Vomon lists symbols that relate to an Idea—called Correspondences—and also Ideas and Symbols that are the opposites of these Correspondences. The latter are called Antipathies.

One of the Antipathies for the Machine was the Idea of Air. The text explained that one of the symbols of Air is Rust, which is the enemy of Metal, and therefore of the Machine. Air, I thought frantically, Air! How can I connect to this symbol for Air?

By this time, the water had reached the top of the chamber. My companions were either weeping or screaming in despair. The Beastmaster had filled her lungs with air and was now gazing sadly at us, waiting for the inevitable moment when her lips would burst open and let the brine come rushing in.

I was already hard at work, reattuning my matrix to insert the spell I needed. With no time to spare as the moments slipped past, I wove the threads and cast a Compression Bubble spell around my dear companion. (Compression Bubble usually harms the target, but I knew that any damage to my durable colleague would be minor compared to drowning.) A large bubble of air appeared around her, allowing her to breathe.

My companions exulted, shouting in delight at this victory. And as their tears turned from sorrowful drops to joyous ones, the waters began to recede—as I knew they would.

The text on Artificer revealed that it derived its mystical power from the suffering caused by its traps. From this, I deduced that the traps themselves were triggered by negative emotions, such as trepidation and despair. My Compression Bubble spell bought our dying Beastmaster a momentary respite, which boosted my companions' flagging morale. Their sudden, intense joy canceled out the emotional energy powering the trap, thus saving our partner.

The rest of our escape from Artificer's kaer is a tale for another day. You can see from my story, though, how the Wizard solves problems. First, he consults all of his texts at hand. Then he seeks Correspondences and Antipathies. Finally, he uses his powers of deduction to arrive at the correct conclusion, and takes the appropriate action.

Like many of my kind, I also use these means for petty matters, such as deciding which type of rope to purchase or what kind of breakfast to order at a tavern. From the simple to the dramatic, symbols and Ideas govern every aspect of a Wizard's life.

On Branches from the Path

[Author's Note: The following is condensed from a longer closing address, which of course was made redundant by my liege's immediate acceptance of my application. Please excuse its sudden ending.]

I assure you that I follow the approved and accredited Wizard's way. In the wake of the Scourge, several new and questionable approaches to the Discipline have unfortunately arisen out of a deplorable drop in standards.

Of late, I have encountered many who claim to be so-called instinctive Wizards. These scruffy excuses for spellcasters would not be caught dead with a collection of books on hand. They learned their talents and spells by word of mouth, from other hedge Wizards. Though they carry in their heads badly jumbled memories of the system of Ideas and symbols, and a wholly inadequate list of Correspondences and Antipathies, they claim they can nonetheless achieve true mastery of the Wizard's Discipline through experience. They simply invent their own Correspondences and Antipathies based on the skimpy evidence of their own lives! It is a wonder to me that any of them survive past the First Circle, but somehow they do. These "instinctive" Wizards often display a frank and earthy sensibility that lacks in the dignity with which a Wizard should carry himself.

There are also those who follow the path of mastery, which in my view goes beyond dignity into a dangerous kind of pride.

These Wizards see themselves as more than borrowers of the power of Ideas; they believe they can control and dominate emanations from the Realm of Ideas. They believe the world is theirs to manipulate as they will, and see Wizardry as no more than a route to power. Theran Wizards often choose this path; in the days before the Scourge, they planted this lamentable tradition in our own fair province, and it plagues us to this day. The Wizard who desires mastery holds himself above all persons and all things. He uses his overweening confidence to force symbols to do his will. This path is a hazardous one, for Ideas are more powerful than individuals. The so-called mastery Wizard should fear the day when Ideas will have the last laugh.

Game Information

Wizards are spellcasters well-trained in the theoretical aspects of magic. Those who follow other spellcasting Disciplines sometimes disparage Wizards as being simple "book magicians," but it is interesting to note that very few have the guts to call a Wizard that to his face.

Important Attributes: Perception, Willpower

Racial Restrictions: None

Karma Ritual: To perform his Karma ritual, the Wizard draws a circle at least two yards in diameter, then inscribes a triangle within the circle. Making any corrections necessary for accuracy in drawing the circle, the Wizard then draws another circle inside the triangle. Then a triangle within that circle, and so on. Soon the Wizard will be forced to create figures smaller than hand and stylus can possibly draw. He must use the power of magic to continue to draw, even when the results become too small to be seen with the naked eye. The half hour long sequence ends with a triangle, and the ritual is complete once the final triangle is drawn.

Artisan Skills: Robe Embroidery

Wizard Abilities

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

First Circle

Talents: Karma Ritual, Read and Write Language[D], Read and Write Magic[D], Spellcasting[D], Spell Matrix, Spell Matrix, Thread Weaving (Wizardry)[D]

Second Circle

Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.

Talents: Durability (4/3), Evidence Analysis[D], Spell Matrix

Third Circle

Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.

Talents: Arcane Mutterings[D], Book Memory[D]

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Perception-only Tests.

Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.

Talents: Astral Sight[D], Book Recall[D]

Fifth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Willpower-only Tests.

Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.

Talents: Lip Reading, Ritual of the Ghost Master[D], Willforce

Sixth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Talents: Enhanced Matrix, Speak Language[D]

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on spell Effect Tests.

Talents: Hold Thread[D], Lifesight[D]

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.

Talents: Enhanced Matrix, Leadership, Resist Taunt

Ninth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery Tests.

Talents: Armored Matrix, Matrix Strike[D], Range Pattern[D]

Tenth Circle

Ability: By taking 2 permanent Damage Points, the adept gains the **Matrix Split** ability. This damage can never be healed. For 2 Strain Points of damage, the adept can divide one of his spell matrices (Spell, Enhanced or Armored Matrix) in two. A split matrix can hold two spells, rather than the normal one. The combined Circles of the spells cannot exceed the rank of the split matrix. Note that a split Enhanced or Armored Matrix cannot also hold threads—holding two spells in a matrix is complex enough. Each use of the Matrix Split ability lasts for 24 hours. A single matrix can only be split once, but the ability may be used on each of the adept's spell matrices. Once the duration ends the matrix returns to normal and is wiped clean of any spells it contained.

Talents: Life Check, Spirit Strike[D]

Eleventh Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social and Spell Defense.

Talents: Armored Matrix, Casting Pattern[D]

Twelfth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical and Spell Defense.

Talents: Armored Matrix, Wound Transfer[D]

Thirteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.

Karma: The adept adds +25 to his Maximum Karma Points.

Talents: Shared Matrix, Talent Pattern, True Sight

Fourteenth Circle

Ability: By taking 3 permanent Damage Points, the adept gains the **Casting Triangle** ability. This damage can never be healed. For 3 Strain Points of damage, the adept can create a Casting Triangle, spending 1 round conjuring a luminescent triangle around himself, each side no greater than 2 yards long. The triangle only affects the adept who created it, who gains a +5 bonus to his Spellcasting and Thread Weaving Tests while casting spells from within its confines. The Casting Triangle remains effective until the adept leaves it.

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Talents: Orbiting Spy[D], Shared Matrix

Fifteenth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Recovery: The adept adds +1 Recovery Test per day.

Initiative: The adept adds +1 step to his Initiative step.

Talents: Attribute Pattern, Effect Pattern[D], Shared Matrix

Half-Magic

Wizards may use half-magic to recognize different types of magic use, identify specific uses of Wizardry, and for knowledge of magical rituals.

Roleplaying Hints

Ajmar the Admirable, whose account of the Wizard's way is described in this chapter, exemplifies the aspect of the Wizard's Discipline known as the way of the mind. Players wishing to play such Wizards can emulate some of Ajmar's character traits: wordiness, pomposity and a tendency to quote inscrutable occult classics. Mind Wizards trust the written word over oral tradition, and feel insecure without a couple of books in their backpacks. They tend to take the concepts of Idea and symbol literally, and many of them have memorized large chunks of books central to that tradition.

Before making decisions, most mind Wizards will consult their concordances for references to the Ideas involved, and philosophize about their ultimate meanings. They generally value thought and reflection over all other things, and believe that the superior intellect always wins in the end. Though humble mind Wizards do exist, many of them believe their Discipline is superior to all others and act accordingly. Most mind Wizards are smart enough to underplay this belief in the presence of practitioners of other Disciplines, but they often have more trouble concealing their contempt for other types of Wizards.

Some Wizards, particularly those in the hinterlands, learn the Wizard Discipline based on the knowledge their master possesses, rather than from tomes and texts. Idea and symbol still tend to be a part of their way of thinking about magic, but they rely more on their own experiences than on the writings of others. These "instinctive" Wizards learn to work magic by deciding what each idea and symbol means to them personally. They tend to think and act with less arrogance than mind Wizards; many of them have a wry sense of humor and feel humbled in the face of the wonders of the world. They often speak with rustic accents and act with solid rural common sense. Proverbs and other bits of folk wisdom pepper their conversations. They can be quick to dismiss the benefits of book learning, or may display a reverse snobbery toward city folk.

Mastery Wizards resemble mind Wizards, except that they believe they can also dominate the world of Ideas and symbols. This type of Wizard is more suitable for gamemaster characters, because mastery Wizards make loathsome, yet enjoyable enemies. A mastery Wizard's attitude toward the world usually goes well beyond pride into sheer megalomania. They believe that with the right knowledge, they can control any situation. They see nearly everyone they meet as either a potential follower or a potential enemy, and usually show equal contempt for both.

Possible Discipline Violations

A mind Wizard may violate his Discipline if he does something blatantly stupid, or suffers some slight to his dignity. For some mind Wizards, any kind of extreme emotional response may provoke a talent crisis.

Instinctive Wizards rely more on personal experience, and may suffer a talent crisis in an unfamiliar situation, especially one where they cannot draw parallels to their traditionally rural roots, like a high society party or other big city event. Mastery Wizards most commonly suffer from a talent crisis when their plans go awry, or when they lose control of a situation.

Rituals of Advancement

Wizard rituals usually consist of brilliant displays of magical skill and ability, especially spellcasting, thread weaving, matrix construction, and spell design.

Recruitment: Wizards recruit new adepts privately. Wizards identify likely candidates, then try to fluster them by reciting a long passage in an obscure language and commanding the candidate to repeat it. Those candidates who succeed in repeating at least part of the passage may be asked to follow the Discipline.

Novice (2–4): The adept casts a spell of the new Circle in the presence of an elder.

Journeyman (5–8): The adept studies the work of a legendary Wizard, assesses the merits and drawbacks of the subject's style, discusses mysteries clouding the subject's past, and circulates her conclusions to interested Wizards and scholars. A particularly skillful analysis may reveal new clues best investigated by adventuring.

Warden (9–12): The adept researches and demonstrates for other Wizards a new spell of the new Circle, then defends her research methods against rigorous peer review.

Ghost Master Ritual: Wizards use a variant of the Nethermancer's Ritual of the Ghost Master. The Wizard spends the entire hour of summoning meticulously drawing the circle to the most exacting specifications, at the same time reciting a memorized litany. On completion of the circle, the ghost master appears and the ritual proceeds as normal.

Possible Discipline Combinations

Many Wizards, particularly those of the mind or mastery paths, believe that their knowledge of Idea and symbol makes it easy for them to acquire any secondary Discipline they choose. In truth, Wizards often have the most difficult time acquiring a second Discipline—an initiate must set aside preconceptions and open his mind to a new way of seeing, and Wizards are often too stubbornly absorbed in their preconceptions to make the necessary breakthrough.

Wizards are most commonly drawn to other spellcasting Disciplines as a secondary choice, but their primary Discipline is actually a disadvantage. Wizards are notorious for holding other magical paths as inferior, and a Wizard is likely to have a difficult time convincing a master to train him—regardless of whether the individual Wizard shares that belief or not.

The Disciplines that best suit the average Wizard's temperament are the Archer, Troubadour, and Weaponsmith. The Archer's tendency to view everything as symbolic missiles and targets meshes well with the Wizard's way of looking for symbols everywhere. Troubadours and Weaponsmiths are both keepers of lore, an aspect that also blends well with the mind Wizard's intellectual bent.

Obsidiman Wizard

"Adepts may be very good at what they do, but they do not understand *what they do. They act and react based on instinct and intuition, but their lack of knowledge forever denies them true power.*

"Only those who understand how and why things work can truly comprehend the world. Understanding, then, is the province of the Wizard. And only through learning and discipline does that understanding come. Yet gladly does a Wizard endure, for understanding is the purpose of his life."

Attributes

Dexterity (10): 5/D8
Strength (21): 8/2D6
Toughness (14): 6/D10
Perception (16): 7/D12
Willpower (13): 6/D10
Charisma (10): 5/D8

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 6
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 6
Initiative: 5/D8
Physical Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 1
Death Rating: 36
Wound Threshold: 13
Unconsciousness Rating: 28
Recovery Tests: 3
Knockdown: 8/2D6
Combat Movement: 14
Full Movement: 28
Karma Points: 5
Karma Step: 3/D4

Talents

Karma Ritual (1): 1
Read and Write Language[D] (1): 8/2D6
—Obsidiman
Read and Write Magic[D] (1): 8/2D6
Spellcasting[D] (2): 9/D8+D6
Spell Matrix (1): 1
Spell Matrix (1): 1
Thread Weaving (Wizardry)[D] (1): 8/2D6

[D] Indicates a Discipline talent.

Skills

Artisan:
Robe Embroidery (1): 6/D10
Knowledge:
Creature Lore (1): 8/2D6
Magical Lore (1): 8/2D6
General:
Physician (1): 8/2D6
Research (1): 8/2D6
Read and Write Language (1): 8/2D6
—Dwarf (Throalic)
Speak Language (2): 9/D8+D6
—Dwarf (Throalic), Obsidiman

Money

Copper Pieces: 0
Silver Pieces: 2
Gold Pieces: 0

Wizardry Spells

First Circle: Astral Sense, Crushing Will, Dispel Magic, Divine Aura, Ignite, Iron Hand, Mind Dagger

Equipment

Mace (Damage 12/2D10)
Troll Sling (Damage 12/2D10; Range 30–60–120)
2 × Spears (Damage 12/2D10; Range 18–30–36)
Adventurer's Kit
Embroidery Kit
Grimoire
Embroidered Robe
Wealthy Traveler's Garb
Trail Rations (1 week)

Notes

The adept possesses the obsidiman Increased Wound Threshold and Natural Armor racial abilities.

TALENTS

Magic is the source from which adepts draw their power, but talents are the tools that harness that power.

• Grondall Hearthstone, Troll Weaponsmith •

Much of how your character relates to his world is determined by his Discipline, and through his Discipline, by his talents. Talents are capabilities powered by an adept's ability to tap into astral space and draw magical energy into the physical world; how he uses those energies makes him unique in his Discipline and helps him live according to that Discipline. Though the talents your character may learn are limited by his Discipline, how effectively and creatively he uses them is limited only by your imagination.

The way a character uses his talents draws from every aspect of the game system: spell magic, combat, making tests for actions, and so on. The brief explanations of the various elements of using talents are referenced to the complete explanations provided elsewhere in this book. Because of their magical nature, learning and improving talents is much easier than learning and improving mundane skills.

The individual **Disciplines** chapters list the talents available to adepts of each Discipline. This chapter describes those talents.

USING TALENTS

When a character uses a talent, he will usually make a test to determine how successfully he used that talent. This test often replaces other types of tests, including Attribute, Damage, Initiative, or Attack Tests. The step number used for the test is determined by adding an Attribute step to the talent rank. The Difficulty Number against which the test is made is often based on the target's Social, Spell, or Physical Defense rating. Other Difficulty Numbers appear in the individual talent descriptions.

If an adept has multiple talents that replace the same Attribute step, he may only benefit from the use of one of those talents for a given test. For example, if the character had two talents that could be substituted for his Dexterity step in the same test, he would have to choose which talent to use. Similarly, a character can only be affected by a single use of a talent at any one time; multiple uses do not stack. If targeted by another use of the same talent, the character is only affected by the greater of the two effects. However, in the case of talents that last longer than one round, an adept may extend his use of a talent by activating it again before the talent's duration expires. In this case, the new duration replaces any time remaining from the first use, so long as the effects remain the same.

See the **Game Concepts** chapter, p.18, for more information on rolling Action dice and making Action Tests.

TALENT TESTS

To make a Talent Test (usually referred to by the name of the talent, i.e., Missile Weapons Test), the character rolls the Action dice indicated by the talent step against a target Difficulty Number. For the test to be successful, the result must be at least equal to the Difficulty Number.

If the result exceeds the Difficulty Number by a suitable margin, the character may have achieved an advantageous result level, which would increase or otherwise beneficially change the effect of the character's talent use.

Pathetic Results

A Pathetic result on a Talent Test is a result lower than that required to achieve a Poor result, and usually denotes something especially bad has occurred. This is always at the gamemaster's discretion, and he may choose to ignore such results. Where a Pathetic result has a suggested outcome, it is noted in the talent's description.

Related Tests

Many talents are intended only for use in combat. The effects of these talents may cause damage to a target character. After successfully using such a talent, the character makes a Damage Test to determine how many Damage Points his attack caused the target. Usually this test is based on the type of weapon the character is using, but sometimes the Talent Test will replace the normal Damage Test. The effects of non-combat talents appears in the individual talent descriptions. For example, some talents allow a character to resist the effects of social actions made against the character—referred to as Interaction Tests.

A successful test result allows the character to resist his opponent's social interaction, letting him ignore Intimidation or Persuasion attempts, or the effects of talents such as Taunt.

Special Uses and Exceptions

The individual talent descriptions in this chapter give detailed rules for using each talent. Any special uses of or exceptions to normal talent use are noted in the talent description.

DISCIPLINE TALENTS

Some Disciplines emphasize the importance of particular talents and mold a greater portion of their magic around these talents. These talents are called **Discipline talents**. When a character uses a Discipline talent, he may spend 1 Karma Point to add a Karma die to the Talent Test. This die is rolled at the same time as the Talent Test and affects that test only. Spending a Karma Point on a Discipline talent does not improve the result of any other tests that occur as a result of the Talent Test.

> *Kricklen, a t'skrang Swordmaster, is using his Melee Weapons talent to make a particularly stylish attack against his opponent. Since Melee Weapons is a Discipline talent for Swordmasters, Kricklen may choose to spend a Karma Point to increase his chance of success. This Karma Point only affects his Melee Weapons Test. If the attack is successful, Kricklen does not get to roll his Karma die again on the subsequent Damage Test.*

Discipline talents are denoted with a superscripted "D" at the end of the talent name in the individual **Discipline** chapters.

Multi-Discipline Talent Use

Characters who are members of multiple Disciplines may find that some of their talents are Discipline talents for more than one Discipline. Regardless of how many Disciplines the talent in question is a Discipline talent for, the character may only spend 1 Karma Point on a single Talent Test, unless noted otherwise in the talent description.

If the gamemaster is using the Multi-Discipline Karma Ritual optional rule, any Karma Points spent on Discipline talents must come from the Current Karma Point pool of one of the Disciplines for which the talent is a Discipline talent (see **Learning New Disciplines** in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 425).

Talent Duration

The effects of some talents vary in duration. Many talents have a duration determined by multiplying the talent rank by a time increment (rounds, minutes, hours, days, and so on). For example, the effect of Engaging Banter lasts for a number of rounds equal to the character's Engaging Banter rank. In most cases, if the character using the talent is knocked unconscious, the talent's effect ends.

Dispelling Talents

Because talents are powered by magic, characters and gamemaster characters can interrupt or end an opponent's use of a talent by using magic-disrupting spells such as Dispel Magic. The Difficulty Number for dispelling a talent is based on its talent rank. Only those talents with an extended duration can be dispelled this way. This excludes talents such as Karma Ritual and Durability, which have no duration. Also, some talents are more or less resistant to being dispelled; these talents note the Difficulty Number required to dispel them in their description.

See **Dispelling Magic** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 291, for more information on dispelling talents.

Game Terms

The talent descriptions describe how to use each talent. The text also describes the effects of the talent, and **boldface** entries above each description summarize important game information. This information falls into the following categories.

Step Number

The talent step is usually determined by adding the character's talent rank to the Attribute step listed under the "**Step Number**:" notation. If the talent requires the character to make a Talent Test, the step number is used to determine the Action dice the player rolls. For example, a character with a Perception step of 6 and knowledge of the Spellcasting talent at Rank 3 would have a Spellcasting step of 9. The Step/Action Dice Table shows that Step 9 uses D8+D6 Action dice.

Certain talents use only a talent rank; no Attribute step is added to the talent rank in this case. Many of these talents require no Talent Test; their effect is determined differently, as detailed in the talent description. For example, a character's Karma Ritual rank determines the maximum number of Karma Points the character can recover each day when he performs his Discipline Karma ritual.

Action

Some talents require the character to take their Standard action to use them. These are noted by the word "Yes" in the "Action:" notation. A "Yes" may also indicate that a character can perform no other action while using this talent. Note that not all talents requiring an action can be performed during a single combat round; some talents require several minutes or longer to perform. Talents which do not require an action are noted by the word "No" in the "Action:" notation. These talents are usually Simple actions (see **Actions** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 396), although some may be used out of sequence for normal actions, for example, those talents that replace Initiative Tests, such as Air Dance or Tiger Spring.

"NA" appears in the "Action:" notation for some talents. These talents are always in use. A character automatically benefits from talents with this notation; he has constant access to the talent's effects. Talents with an "NA" notation cannot be dispelled.

If a talent has any special action requirements or restrictions, they are noted in the description.

Requires Karma

Some talents require a character to spend Karma, providing additional magical energy to fuel the talent. These talents are noted by the word "Yes" in the "Requires Karma:" notation in their description.

If a talent requires Karma, the character must spend a Karma Point to allow the talent to be used. If a character does not have any Karma Points, he may use a Recovery Test instead to generate the necessary magical energy. If the talent requires a Talent Test to be made, roll the Karma die and add it to the result. If a character has no Karma Points or Recovery Tests, he cannot use the talent.

If a talent that requires Karma is a Discipline talent for a character's Discipline (see **Discipline Talents,** p. 166), the character may choose whether or not to spend a Karma Point. This supersedes the requirement to always spend Karma.

Unless the description states otherwise, a character can spend only 1 Karma Point to use a talent.

Strain

Talents that cause Strain drain small amounts of a character's life energy to fuel their use. The "Strain:" notation shows the number of Strain Points of damage the character takes each time he uses the talent. A character always takes full, unmodified damage from Strain, and may take damage from Strain multiple times for a single talent during a round. No armor protects against Strain damage. Unless specified, Strain never causes Wounds.

Malgat the Air Sailor knows the Quick Shot talent at Rank 3. He may make up to 3 additional missile attacks per round using this talent. Quick Shot has a Strain cost of 1. If Malgat used Quick Shot to make 3 attacks, he would take 3 Strain Points of damage.

Talent Descriptions

Abate Curse

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Abate Curse talent temporarily nullifies any curse that may be present on an object. The adept must be within 3 yards of the object to use this talent, and must remain within this range

throughout the talent's duration or the effect ends. The adept makes an Abate Curse Test against the highest step number of any curse present. If the test succeeds, any curses on the object are neutralized for a number of hours equal to the adept's Abate Curse rank. This talent does not alleviate a curse's effects on those already affected by it, but will allow unaffected characters to handle the object without risking the curse's effects.

See the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 110 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information on curses and how they work.

Acrobatic Strike

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Acrobatic Strike talent allows an adept to perform flips, jumps, swings, or other physical maneuvers during combat, making him harder to hit. The adept must be free to move (not immobilized or pinned down) and have sufficient space to perform maneuvers in. The adept makes an Acrobatic Strike Test against the highest Physical Defense among any opponents able to attack him. If the test succeeds, the adept adds his Acrobatic Strike rank as a bonus to his Physical Defense for the remainder of the round. If the adept is Knocked Down, or otherwise finds his movement restricted, he loses this bonus.

On a Pathetic result, the adept is automatically Knocked Down (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 409); the adept has made a faulty landing, hit an obstacle, or tripped, and can take no further action that round.

Air Dance

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Air Dance talent allows an adept to perform quick, gliding movements and rapid attacks. Air Dance can only be used in combination with Combat Movement. Windling adepts are not limited to ground movement with this talent; they may use Air Dance while flying. The adept uses his Air Dance step in place of his Dexterity step for his Initiative Test, incurring the normal Initiative Penalties from armor and shields (see **Determine Initiative** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 395).

If attacking an opponent in close combat that round, the adept compares his Initiative Test result against his opponent's Initiative. On an Excellent result, the adept may make an additional close combat attack against his opponent following that character's action.

Air Sailing

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Air Sailing talent allows an adept to work the rigging, tiller, and oars of an airship. An adept who wishes to join an airship crew must know Air Sailing at Rank 1 or more. Positions of command require greater ability: a ship's mate must know Air Sailing at Rank 4; a captain must know Air Sailing at Rank 7; a navigator must know Air Sailing at Rank 8. Not all airships have a navigator, but most vessels larger than an airboat have both a captain and a mate.

The adept makes an Air Sailing (5) Test to help propel an airship. The result level determines how many crew members the adept takes the place of. An Average result is equivalent to 1 crew member; a Good result, 2 crew members; an Excellent result, 3 crew members; an Extraordinary result is equivalent to 4 crew members.

For an airship to stay airborne, at least 25 percent of the crew must make a successful Air Sailing (5) Test each hour. If at least 50 percent of the crew make a successful test, the airship can maneuver at its current altitude, dive, or climb slowly in a straight line. If 75 percent of the crew are successful, the airship can speed up, maneuver while climbing, or perform aerobatics. An airship with a rowing crew of 20 needs at least 5 rowers to succeed at Air Sailing Tests to stay afloat. This might also be an equivalent number, such as 2 rowers, 1 of whom achieved an Extraordinary result on his Air Sailing Test (thereby replacing 4 rowers).

See the **Airships and Riverboats** chapter on p. 141 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information on airships and how to use them in the **Earthdawn** game.

Air Speaking

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1 (see text)

The Air Speaking talent allows an adept to communicate without vocalizing any words. Elementalists often use this talent to lecture at gatherings. The adept moves his lips, mouthing the words he wants to speak, then makes an Air Speaking Test. Anyone within Air Speaking Test result × 5 yards of the adept hears him speaking as if he were conversing normally. Each use of Air Speaking lasts for a number of hours equal to the adept's Air Speaking rank. If an adept extends the conversation, or wants to include newcomers in an existing conversation, he must make another Air Speaking Test.

The Strain cost reflects the concentration required to establish and maintain communication. Those without knowledge of Air Speaking can hear someone employing this talent, but can only reply using normal communication methods. When using Air Speaking, the adept "talks" in a language he knows; if those listening do not know the language being spoken, they cannot understand what is being said.

Animal Bond

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Animal Bond talent creates a bond of trust between an adept and an animal, improving its Attitude towards him (see the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 90 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). The adept makes an Animal Bond Test against the animal's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the animal takes a Neutral "live and let live" attitude toward him. The adept may make additional tests to further improve the animal's Attitude towards him, but must spend at least one week with the animal between tests, treating it well during that time. Each subsequent increase requires an additional result level on the Animal Bond Test.

Once the animal's Attitude increases to Loyal, it willingly takes risks for the adept and expects appropriate rewards for doing so. (This is more easily accomplished for an animal than for a Name-giver friend. All a dog really wants, for example, is lots of affection and enough food.) A Loyal animal will accompany the adept on adventures if he so desires. However, an animal will not maintain a better Attitude towards an adept than the adept shows to it. As a result, mistreatment, neglect, or abandonment of the animal can offset the effects of Animal Bond, worsening the animal's Attitude towards the character.

The Animal Bond talent can only be used on non-sentient, natural creatures. It cannot be used to improve the Attitudes of Horrors, Horror constructs, or sentient beings of any kind.

Animal Leadership

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Animal Leadership talent allows an adept to befriend and lead a group of animals. The adept makes an Animal Leadership Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional animal. If the test succeeds, the target group accepts the character as a member of their pack. On a Good result, the animals also treat the adept as their pack leader for a number of hours equal to his Animal Leadership rank. During this time, the animals obediently follow the adept's lead; they attack if he attacks, run if he runs, and so on. The adept cannot command the animals he leads to perform an action, however; the Animal Leadership talent does not give him the ability to communicate with them. He can only lead by example. On a Pathetic result, the adept's attempt at "usurping" the leadership role goes poorly. The animals turn on the adept and attack him, attempting to drive him away. They will flee if things turn markedly bad for them (if several animals are killed or injured, or the adept's comrades join the fight).

Animal Possession

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 2

The Animal Possession talent allows an adept to place his spirit into the body of an animal. The adept touches the animal, then makes an Animal Possession Test against the animal's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, his spirit takes possession of the animal's body and the animal's spirit enters the adept's body. The adept now controls the animal's body, but not vice versa. While using Animal Possession, the adept's physical form slumps into a coma-like state; he retains his own intellect while in the animal's body, but cannot perform any actions that the animal is normally incapable of, such as speaking.

The effect of Animal Possession lasts for a number of hours equal to the adept's Animal Possession rank, or until animal and adept again touch. If the animal body is killed during this time, the possession ends immediately. Regardless, when the effects of the talent end, both spirits return to their proper bodies. Any damage inflicted on the animal body during the possession is also applied to the character at this time. No armor protects against this damage. An unwilling animal may attempt to resist the effects of the talent by making a Willpower Test against the Animal Possession step. If this test succeeds, the animal prevents the possession from occurring. Otherwise the talent functions normally and the animal may take no further actions until the end of the talent's duration.

Animal Training

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Animal Training talent allows an adept to train an animal to obey simple commands such as "scout ahead," "smell that," and "go home," as well as the more usual "stop," "heel," "fetch," and "kill." Each command requires a separate successful use of Animal Training, and the animal must hold at least a Friendly attitude towards the adept in order to be trained. Each use requires a day of training, during which time the adept must treat the animal well. The adept makes an Animal Training Test against the creature's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the animal understands and obeys the command. Trained animals only respond to commands given by characters they hold at least a Friendly attitude toward, including their trainer. The effects of Animal Training last for a number of months equal to the adept's Animal Training rank. Repeated uses of Animal Training can extend the duration of the effect, like a refresher course. If an adept tries to maintain too large a collection of trained animals, he will likely find their training slipping unless he constantly works with them. The oldest commands learned will be the first forgotten if the adept neglects his animals' training.

Animate Object

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Animate Object talent infuses an object with rudimentary life force and intelligence and gives it arms, hands and legs. The adept must first create and weave a thread to the object. This means that only objects with True patterns can be animated by this talent (see **Weaving Threads to Pattern Items** in the **Thread Magic** chapter, p. 268). Once a thread has been successfully woven, the adept makes an Animate Object Test against the object's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the object becomes animated for a number of days equal to the adept's Animate Object rank.

ANIMATE OBJECT TABLE

Attribute	Step Number
Dexterity	Talent rank
Strength	Talent rank
Toughness	Talent rank
Perception	2
Willpower	2
Charisma	3

The maximum object weight that the adept can animate is equal to his Animate Object Test result × 10 pounds. An adept can animate a maximum number of objects equal to the lower of his Animate Object or Thread Weaving rank. All animated objects possess a Death Rating appropriate to the material from which they are made (the gamemaster determines this, based on the values given for **Barriers and Structures** in the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 106 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**) but have no Wound Threshold or Unconsciousness Rating. The object has a Combat Movement rate of 20 yards and a Full Movement rate of 40 yards per round. The gamemaster decides what natural armor or weapons, if any, the object possesses. Attribute steps for animated objects are either fixed step numbers or based on the adept's Animate Object rank, as shown on the Animate Object Table.

An adept can use blood magic to greatly prolong the "life" of an object he has animated. By taking 2 permanent Damage Points, the adept animates the object for a number of years equal to his Animate Object rank. The Damage Points can only be healed after the duration expires or the animated object is destroyed. This use of blood magic is an exception to the normal rules for blood magic (see the **Workings of Magic** chapter, p. 259).

Anticipate Blow

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Anticipate Blow talent allows an adept to better defend against an incoming attack. The adept must have a higher Initiative Test result than his opponent in order to use this talent against him. The adept makes an Anticipate Blow Test against his opponent's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the adept adds his Anticipate Blow rank as a bonus to his Physical Defense against that opponent's attacks until the end of the round.

Anticipate Blow can also help a character make more effective counter-attacks during the round in which it is used. If the character delays his action until an opponent that he has used Anticipate Blow against attacks him, he may add his Anticipate Blow rank to

the result of his next Attack Test against that opponent. An adept can use the Anticipate Blow talent against a maximum number of opponents equal to his Anticipate Blow rank each round.

ARCANE MUTTERINGS

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Arcane Mutterings talent allows an adept to confuse other characters by uttering dire and largely incomprehensible warnings. The adept makes an Arcane Mutterings Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If successful, the target characters become confused, and are considered Harried for the duration of the talent (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408). Due to the disconcerting nature of the talent, this penalty also applies to the target's Social Defense. The effect of Arcane Mutterings lasts a number of rounds equal to the adept's Arcane Mutterings Rank. During this time, the adept must continually "mutter" or else the effect ends; this requires the adept's concentration. On a Good result, the affected characters also feel uneasy and will take no actions against the adept or his companions while the talent is in effect, so long as no one takes any obviously hostile action against them. Arcane Mutterings has no effect on characters already engaged in combat.

ARMORED MATRIX

Step Number: Rank
Action: NA
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Armored Matrix talent provides a magician with an improved type of spell matrix designed to better protect their spells. An Armored Matrix holds the pattern of a spell and one prewoven spell thread, in the same manner as an Enhanced Matrix. The matrix's Mystic Armor absorbs damage from attacks directed against it, such as from the Matrix Strike talent; the Armored Matrix is better protected than other spell matrices. The Mystic Armor rating of the matrix is equal to the magician's base Mystic Armor plus his Armored Matrix rank.

Each Armored Matrix represents a separate talent with its own rank and is improved independently. See the appropriate **Discipline** chapter to determine how many matrices of this type the magician may learn. For example, a Wizard can have up to three Armored Matrix talents, while an Elementalist only has two. See **Spell Matrix Types** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 287, for more information on spell matrices.

ARMOR MOUNT

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Armor Mount talent allows an adept to increase the natural armor of his mount. The adept makes an Armor Mount Test against the mount's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the adept adds his Armor Mount rank as a bonus to the animal's Physical Armor for a number of minutes also equal to his Armor Mount rank.

ASTRAL POCKET

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1 (see text)

The Astral Pocket talent allows an adept to create a pocket in astral space in which to store items. An adept can use this talent to create an astral pocket whenever he wishes, but he cannot have more than one pocket active at any one time. The adept makes an Astral Pocket (6) Test. If the test succeeds, a pocket is created in astral space. The test result determines the maximum weight of goods the pocket can hold. Once created, an adept can store and retrieve items in the pocket, but suffers 1 Strain Point of damage when performing either of these actions. Equipment and items carried in an astral pocket do not count toward the adept's own encumbrance limit (see **Encumbrance** in the **Creating Characters** chapter, p. 48). The pocket remains in existence for a number of days equal to the adept's Astral Pocket rank, or until discarded by the adept.

An astral pocket may be visible to characters who can see into astral space. The viewing character makes an appropriate Astral Sensing Test against the Spell Defense of the pocket's owner. On an Excellent result, the character notices the pocket, which appears as a finely woven net of purple and silver. Once detected, an astral pocket can be attacked in the same manner as a spell matrix. If destroyed, any items in an astral pocket are deposited into astral space. If the owner has some means of entering astral space, such as the Spirit Portal spell, he can retrieve the items, otherwise they are lost.

ASTRAL SIGHT

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Astral Sight talent allows an adept to see into the astral plane. Each use of the Astral Sight talent lasts a number of rounds equal to the adept's Astral Sight rank, and can view all astral objects within a range equal to his Astral Sight rank × 10 yards.

The adept makes an Astral Sight (6) Test—the normal Spell Defense of astral space. If the test succeeds, the adept senses the astral imprint of all objects and entities within range. The astral imprint only reveals the location and shape of an object or entity—it provides no further information. If the adept wishes to examine a particular imprint for more information, he makes a second Astral Sight Test against the Spell Defense of the subject being examined. An Average result allows the adept to view the subject's pattern.

An adept using Astral Sight to view a magical item can see the item's pattern, and therefore learn it is magical in nature. Examining the item this way does not provide any information about the

item's history, nor does he learn any Test Knowledges. For more information on astral space and astral perception, see **Astral Space** in the **Workings of Magic** chapter, p. 254.

Astral Web

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Astral Web talent creates a sticky web. The maximum area that may be covered is equal to the adept's Astral Web rank × 9 square yards. The web can be projected to a maximum distance equal to the adept's Astral Web rank × 3 yards. The web exists in both the physical and astral planes, and may catch creatures in either. The adept makes an Astral Web (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the web is created and lasts for a number of minutes equal to the Astral Web Test result. Any character caught in the web, or attempting to cross the area covered by the web, makes a Dexterity Test against the Astral Web Test result. If this test fails, the character is stuck to the web. While stuck, the character is considered Knocked Down (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 409).

The web's Strength step is equal to the adept's Astral Web step. Each round, a trapped character can make a Strength Test against the Strength step of the web to free himself. Alternatively, sufficient damage inflicted on the web will free the character. A number of Damage Points inflicted on the web equal to its Strength step is sufficient to free one character. Each character trapped in the web must be freed individually.

Attribute Pattern

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Attribute Pattern talent allows an adept to weave a temporary thread to one of his Attributes, thus boosting it. The adept makes an Attribute Pattern Test against the Attribute step to be enhanced. If the test succeeds, he attaches a temporary thread to the designated Attribute, increasing its effective step number by +1 for each result level achieved. The temporary thread lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Attribute Pattern rank before it detaches and disappears, ending the talent's effect.

Aura Armor

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 2

The Aura Armor talent allows an adept to magically enhance his Armor ratings. The adept makes an Aura Armor Test and adds his Aura Armor rank as a bonus to his Physical and Mystic Armor ratings for a number of rounds equal to the Aura Armor Test result.

Avoid Blow

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Avoid Blow talent allows an adept to dodge blows directed at him in combat. When targeted by a close or ranged combat attack, the adept can make an Avoid Blow Test against his opponent's Attack Test result to dodge the blow before it causes him injury. Dodging a ranged attack requires a Good result. If the test succeeds, the adept avoids the blow—he sees the attack coming and dodges out of the way at the last moment. A Pathetic result on an Avoid Blow Test means the adept is automatically Knocked

Down (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 409). The adept can use this talent a number of times per round equal to his Avoid Blow rank, but only once against each Attack Test. An adept cannot use Avoid Blow if he is Surprised or his attacker has Blindsided him (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 407).

Bank Shot

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Bank Shot talent allows an adept to ricochet projectiles and thrown weapons off objects on the way to their target. An adept need not have line of sight to the target in the round during which he uses this talent, but must have had a line of sight to the target during his last action. The adept points out the objects off which he intends to ricochet his shot, up to a number equal to his Bank Shot rank, then makes a Bank Shot Test as his ranged combat Attack Test. If the test succeeds, the projectile or thrown weapon ricochets off the designated objects and strikes the target. Many adepts find this talent useful for bypassing obstructions that lie between them and their target, such as cover, shields, and even other characters. Use of the Bank Shot talent destroys any arrows, bolts or other missile weapon projectiles used in the attack. Though Bank Shot nicks and scratches daggers and other throwing weapons, these remain usable afterwards, unless the Bank Shot Test resulted in a Pathetic result, in which case they too are ruined.

Bardic Voice

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Bardic Voice talent allows an adept to use his rich voice and persuasive magic to charm others. The adept makes a Bardic Voice Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. On an Average result the adept impresses the group enough that they listen with interest to what he says; they will not follow him, but will probably cooperate with his suggestions, so long as they aren't particularly dangerous.

On a Good result, the adept has successfully charmed the group and may command the affected characters for a number of minutes equal to his Bardic Voice rank. The adept cannot command the group to take any greater risks than he himself is genuinely willing to take. For example, an adept could not command the group to attack a troll camp unless he intended to personally participate in the raid.

BARGAIN WITH SUMMONED CREATURE

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Bargain With Summoned Creature talent improves an adept's ability to strike a deal with a creature or entity he has summoned. The adept makes a Bargain With Summoned Creature Test against the creature's Social Defense. The result level required depends on the bargain the adept offers the creature. If the deal is deemed to be fair (from the creature's point of view) an Average or Good result seals the bargain. If the creature believes the deal is disadvantageous, the adept will need an Excellent result. A failed test result does not mean that the creature will necessarily be hostile, only that it will refuse to do the bargainer's bidding. Because this talent does not constrain the character to the terms of the bargain, many summoned creatures will insist that the character seal his portion of the agreement with blood magic before performing any actions in his service (see **Blood Magic** in the **Workings of Magic** chapter, p. 259). Without using blood magic to seal the bargain, the maximum duration of any bargain struck can be no greater than the adept's Bargain With Summoned Creature rank in hours. After this time, the summoned creature is free to do what it wishes.

BATTLE BELLOW

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Battle Bellow talent allows an adept to intimidate his foes en masse. The range of this talent is equal to the adept's Battle Bellow rank × 5 yards. The adept makes a Battle Bellow Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, all affected characters suffer a –1 penalty to their Action Tests for each result level achieved. Battle Bellow can also inspire an adept's companions, raising spirits and boosting morale. The adept makes a Battle Bellow Test as described above, targeting friendly characters only. If the test succeeds, all affected characters add +1 to their Social Defense for each result level achieved on the Battle Bellow Test. The effects of Battle Bellow last for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Battle Bellow rank. Opponents that are immune to fear are also immune to the effects of the Battle Bellow talent.

BATTLE SHOUT

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Battle Shout talent allows an adept to strongly intimidate a single foe. To use this talent, the adept must be no further than his Battle Shout rank in yards from his opponent. The adept makes a Battle Shout Test against his opponent's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the target incurs a penalty equal to the adept's Battle Shout rank to all Action Tests he makes until the end of the following round. Targets that are immune to fear are also immune to the effects of Battle Shout. Each successful use of the Battle Shout talent against an opponent increases the difficulty of subsequent attempts during the same encounter. Increase the required result level for any additional Battle Shout Tests made against that target by one level for the remainder of the encounter.

BESTIAL RESILIENCE

Step Number: Rank + Toughness
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Bestial Resilience talent allows an adept to recover from damage more quickly than normal. The adept uses his Bestial Resilience step in place of his Toughness step when making a Recovery Test (see **Effects of Injury** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 402).

BESTIAL TOUGHNESS

Step Number: Rank + Toughness
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Bestial Toughness talent improves an adept's ability to resist taking major damage. The adept makes a Bestial Toughness Test and adds his Bestial Toughness rank to his Wound Threshold for a number of rounds equal to the test result. If the adept is suffering from a Wound he cannot use this talent.

BLADE JUGGLE

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1 (see text)

The Blade Juggle talent allows an adept to create a whirling, flashing barrier of knives, daggers, or other bladed weapons between himself and his opponents. The adept makes a Blade Juggle Test against a Difficulty Number equal to the combined weapon Size of the blades being juggled + the highest Damage step among the blades. If the test

BLADED WEAPON TABLE

Weapon	Size	Damage Step
Battle-axe	4	6
Broadsword	3	5
Dagger	1	2
Dwarf Sword	2	3
Hand-axe	2	4
Knife	1	1
Short Sword	2	4
Troll Sword	4	6

succeeds, the adept takes 1 Strain Point of damage and begins juggling. The adept continues to take Strain during each round he juggles, but also adds a bonus equal to the current number of blades being juggled to his Physical Defense for as long as he continues to do so. For example, an adept attempting to juggle three hand-axes (Damage 4; Size 2) must make a Blade Juggle Test against a Difficulty Number of 10 (3 × 2 + 4 = 10). If the test succeeds, he adds +3 to his Physical Defense.

An opponent who attacks the adept with a close combat Attack Test result at least equal to the adept's normal Physical Defense, but less than his Blade Juggle-modified Physical Defense, strikes a randomly determined blade. The blade deflects the attack, then spins away from the adept, possibly striking the attacker. The adept makes a Blade Juggle Test as a thrown Attack Test. If the test succeeds, the adept makes a Damage Test for the weapon.

The Bladed Weapon Table shows the weapon Size and Damage step for some of the blades commonly used to juggle. See the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 434, for a complete list of bladed weapons.

Blind Fire

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Blind Fire talent allows an adept to target an opponent that he could see during a previous round, but who is no longer visible, with a missile or throwing weapon. The adept makes a Blind Fire Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the adept senses the target's location and may make a ranged combat Attack Test against him. Use of the Blind Fire talent also negates any Darkness modifiers, though the target still benefits from Cover if the weapon's path must pass through it (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 407). For example, an ork who jumps behind a wall would not benefit from the cover of the wall since the adept, knowing the ork's location, could simply arc the weapon's path over the wall. If the same character hid inside a guardhouse with the door slammed shut, however, he would gain the benefits of cover, as awareness of his location alone would not be sufficient to bypass the intervening obstacles.

Each use of the Blind Fire talent lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Blind Fire rank. Blind Fire is very effective when used in combination with the Bank Shot or True Shot talents.

Blood Guilt Weapon

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Blood Guilt Weapon talent allows an adept to use blood from the victim of a crime to test the innocence or guilt of a suspect. The adept puts a few drops of the victim's blood onto his weapon before accusing the suspect of a specific crime against the victim. The drops of blood flare into points of flame, red at first, then changing to white within seconds. The flame produces no heat and dies away after 1 round. During the round in which the flames burn, the adept attacks the suspect, making a Blood Guilt Weapon Test as his Attack Test against the suspect's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, and the suspect is guilty of the crime of which he has been accused, the attack hits and the adept makes a Damage Test, as normal. If the test fails, or the suspect is innocent, the attack does not strike home—an arrow shot at the suspect will veer away at the last instant, a sword will come to a sudden halt a fraction of an inch from the suspect's neck, and so on.

Blood Share

Step Number: Rank + Toughness
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Blood Share talent allows an adept to transfer damage between himself and another willing character or creature. Using Blood Share requires that a deep trust exists between the two parties; the target must hold at least a Loyal attitude to the adept using the Blood Share talent (see the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 90 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**).

The adept makes a small cut on both himself and the target, then touches the two incisions together and makes a Blood Share Test. The result is the maximum number of Damage Points that can be transferred between the adept and the target. Depending on the situation, the adept might want to transfer the full number of Damage Points or only a portion. Likewise, he might transfer the damage from the target to himself, or vice versa. For example, an adept might decide to transfer only 7 Damage Points from a Blood Share Test result of 10, or he might choose to transfer the whole amount. Transferring only 7 points from the target to himself would reduce the target's Current Damage by 7 points, however, not the full 10 points. Transferred damage never causes a Wound, but if the number of Damage Points transferred causes the adept's or the target's Current Damage total to equal or exceed his Unconsciousness or Death Rating, the adept or target passes out or dies, respectively. Members of the Cavalryman Discipline almost universally honor this trust, and have coined the term "blood betrayer" to refer to anyone who uses Blood Share to transfer so much damage to another character that he dies. Other Cavalrymen shun blood betrayers.

Body Blade

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Body Blade talent allows an adept to temporarily transform one of his limbs into a weapon, enhancing his ability to inflict damage with unarmed attacks. The adept's Body Blade rank determines the type of weapon into which the limb transforms. At Rank 1, the side of one hand harden to a knife edge; at Rank 2, fingers stretch into dagger blades; at Rank 5, an entire forearm elongates into a gleaming broadsword or a t'skrang's tail suddenly ends in a spiked mace-head; at Rank 8 or higher, the created weapon sparks or glows with magical power. While Body Blade is active, the adept

uses his Body Blade step for all unarmed Damage Tests made with the appendage. Any Karma dice are rolled in conjunction with the Damage Test. The effects of the Body Blade talent last until the end of the round in which it is used.

Book Memory

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Book Memory talent allows an adept to memorize a book or other written text, committing it to memory for use at a later time. The adept need not be able to read the language to memorize a book. The adept makes a Book Memory Test against the Spell Defense of the book to be memorized—typically 5 for ordinary books, but higher for magical texts. The Spell Defense of a grimoire is equal to the Dispel Difficulty of the highest-Circle spell it contains (see **Grimoires**, p. 284, and **Dispelling Magic**, p. 291, in the **Spell Magic** chapter). If the test succeeds, the adept can memorize a number of pages per minute equal to his Book Memory rank. The adept need only make one successful Book Memory Test per book.

Once memorized, the contents of a book remain in the adept's memory for a number of months equal to his Book Memory rank before fading. During this time the contents of the book are readily accessible; the adept can read, transcribe, or look up information as though he had an actual copy of the book in front of him. An adept cannot hold more texts in memory at one time than his rank in Book Memory, though he may voluntarily discard currently memorized texts in order to memorize new ones.

Book Recall

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Book Recall talent allows an adept to retrieve information memorized through use of the Book Memory talent, but which has faded with the passage of time, or has been pushed out of the adept's memory by other books. While there is no real limit to the amount of memorized information that an adept can ever learn, the Recall Difficulty is based on the total number of books the adept currently has memorized, as shown in the Book Recall Table. This is because of the difficulty of sifting through all the information readily available to the adept through the Book Memory talent in order to access information he has previously memorized, and which is stored in his subconscious.

BOOK RECALL TABLE

# Books Memorized	Recall Difficulty
1	7
2	8
3	9
4	10
5	11
6+	+1

The adept makes a Book Recall Test against the Recall Difficulty. If the test succeeds, the adept retrieves the lost information, which remains in memory for a number of minutes equal to his Book Recall rank. During this time the contents of the book are readily accessible to him; the adept can read, transcribe, or look up information as though he had an actual copy of the book in front of him. The adept may even return it to active memory if desired, provided he has a free Book Memory rank available. On a Pathetic result the adept's knowledge of the book in question has degraded to the point where he can no longer recall any information from it. All knowledge of the book is effectively lost to the adept, although he can always take the time to memorize the book again using his Book Memory talent.

Borrow Sense

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Borrow Sense talent allows an adept to temporarily take one of an animal's five senses—touch, taste, hearing, smell, or sight—for use as his own. The adept does not literally "see through the animal's eyes," however; instead, his own sense becomes like that of the animal. The adept touches the animal whose sense he wants to borrow, then makes a Borrow Sense Test against the animal's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the adept gains all the benefits (and limitations) of the borrowed sense. The effect lasts for a number of minutes equal to the adept's Borrow Sense rank, during which time the animal temporarily loses the use of that sense. Because the loss of one of its senses is a distressing, disorienting experience, only animals with at least a Loyal attitude toward the adept (see the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 90 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**), or those under the effect of a controlling spell or talent, such as Dominate Beast, will willingly submit to the Borrow Sense talent. If the adept attempts to take a sense from an unwilling animal, he must achieve a Good result with his Borrow Sense Test.

The gamemaster has the final word on the specific effects of borrowing a given animal's sense. Generally, some senses give the adept new sensory abilities—a bat's sonar, a snake's ability to smell by "tasting" the air, and a cat's night vision are a few such examples. In other situations, borrowed senses improve the adept's existing senses—the sharp vision of an eagle, and the keen hearing or smell of a dog are a few such animal senses. At the gamemaster's discretion, the adept may gain a +1 to +3 bonus to any Perception Tests he makes with the improved sense.

Call Arrow

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Call Arrow talent allows an adept to retrieve his arrows by calling them back to him. Any arrows fired by the adept that remain intact within 100 yards, fly back to him, tumbling and rotating into proper position, before dropping into their quiver. The adept makes a Call Arrow Test, the result of which is how many arrows return to him. The adept cannot retrieve more arrows than he has actually fired.

If an arrow is attached to another object, or something is attached to the arrow (like a rope or cord), it cannot be retrieved through use of this talent. However, Call Arrow will extract arrows from the bodies of opponents and return them to the adept. Call Arrow also works on other types of missiles, including crossbow bolts, sling bullets and blowgun needles.

Call Mount

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Call Mount talent allows an adept to magically call his mount to him. The adept makes a Call Mount Test against the mount's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the mount senses the adept's call and attempts to make its way to him at its fastest Movement rate. The talent's range is equal to the Call Mount Test result × 50 yards.

Casting Pattern

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Casting Pattern talent allows a magician to improve the result of a single spellcasting attempt. Before using the Casting Pattern talent, the magician must declare what spell he will be enhancing with it. After weaving any required spell threads the magician makes a Casting Pattern Test against the spell's Weaving Difficulty (or Reattunement Difficulty, if the spell has no threads). If the test succeeds, the magician adds his Casting Pattern rank as a bonus to his Spellcasting Test for that spell.

Cat's Paw

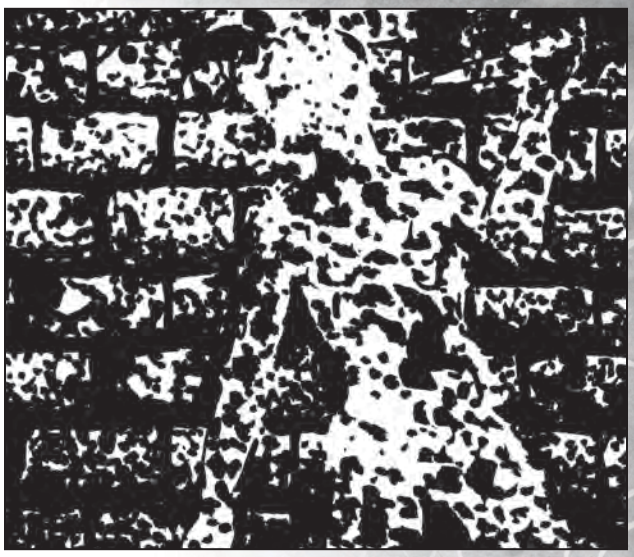
Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Cat's Paw talent allows an adept to move very quietly. The adept makes a Cat's Paw Test, the result of which becomes the Detection Difficulty for Perception Tests made to hear him. Because the magic of this talent makes the adept even harder to hear than normal, any Perception Tests made to discern the sound of his movements require a Good result to be successful.

Chameleon

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Chameleon talent allows an adept to blend into his surroundings, making him very difficult to see. The adept makes a Chameleon Test, the result of which becomes the Detection Difficulty for Perception Tests made by those attempting to spot the adept, even when he is moving. This ability is not without limits, however: the adept must move slowly in order to maintain the



blending effect. If the adept engages in combat or moves faster than half his normal Movement rate, the camouflage is disrupted. Though his features appear blurry and indistinct, he can be seen normally, and will remain visible until the end of the round in which he slows down. Each use of the Chameleon talent lasts for a number of minutes equal to the adept's Chameleon rank.

Champion Challenge

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Champion Challenge talent allows an adept to call out a formal challenge to the leader of an opposing group of characters, urging him to let single combat decide an impending battle. The adept makes a Champion Challenge Test against the opposing leader's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the leader may choose to ignore the challenge. If he does, however, both he and his men become demoralized and are considered Harried for a number of hours equal to the adept's Champion Challenge rank. This penalty also affects their Social Defense. On a Good result, the opposing leader feels honor-bound to acknowledge the challenge.

Though the two sides may negotiate terms, the end result is the same: the enemy leader must either accept the challenge or have his men stand down. If the leader accepts the challenge, either he or his chosen champion must face the adept in single combat. If the adept is victorious, the opposing group must yield. If the leader (or his champion) wins, the adept's side must yield. If anyone attempts to interfere with the duel, or initiates hostilities once the challenge has been resolved, that character suffers an automatic Wound, as though he had broken a blood peace oath (see **Blood Oaths** in the **Workings of Magic** chapter, p. 260).

Charge

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Charge talent allows an adept to increase the damage inflicted by a Charging attack. If the attack is successful, the adept uses his Charge step in place of his Strength step for the Damage Test. Only the rider's Damage Test is improved by the Charge; his mount does not benefit from use of this talent. The normal rules for Charging attacks otherwise apply (see **Mounted Combat** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 413).

An adept may also make a Charge Test in place of a Strength Test to avoid losing his weapon or being dismounted by a lance or spear attack.

CLAW FRENZY

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1 (per attack; see text)

The Claw Frenzy talent allows an adept to make multiple unarmed attacks against an opponent. The adept must have the free use of both hands and the Claw Shape talent must be active during any round in which he uses Claw Frenzy. The adept declares how many Claw Frenzy attacks he intends to make, up to a maximum number equal to his Claw Frenzy rank. Each declared attack causes the adept 1 Strain Point of damage, which he takes regardless of how many attacks he actually makes. The adept makes a Claw Frenzy Test in place of an unarmed Attack Test, and continues to make Claw Frenzy Tests until he defeats all opponents within reach, he reaches the maximum number of attacks declared that round, or he fails to hit an opponent—whichever comes first. If an adept is required to spend Karma, he spends a Karma Point on each Claw Frenzy Test he makes. If the talent is a Discipline talent, the adept may choose whether to spend Karma before each Claw Frenzy Test. These Karma Points are in addition to any Karma the adept may choose to spend on Claw Shape Tests.

CLAW SHAPE

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Claw Shape talent allows an adept to transform his hands into fearsome claws. While Claw Shape is active, the adept uses his Claw Shape step for all unarmed Damage Tests made with the claws. Any Karma dice are rolled in conjunction with the Damage Test. Claw Shape lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Claw Shape rank or until the adept makes a successful Unarmed Combat Test against an opponent, after which his hands return to normal.

CLIMBING

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Climbing talent allows an adept to clamber up or down vertical surfaces and objects. The adept makes a Climbing Test against the Climbing Difficulty of the surface being scaled, as determined by the gamemaster. If the test succeeds, the adept may climb a maximum distance equal to his Climbing rank+3 yards. On a Pathetic result he loses his grip and falls, possibly incurring Falling damage (see the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 107 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). Regardless of the adept's Climbing rank, he cannot climb further than his Combat Movement rate each round.

COBRA STRIKE

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Cobra Strike talent allows an adept to make a sudden, unexpected attack when initiating combat. This talent can only be used during the first round of combat, and only if the adept's Declared Action is to make a close combat attack. The adept uses his Cobra Strike step in place of his Dexterity step for the Initiative Test. If the adept's Initiative Test result is higher than his opponent's, his opponent is caught off-guard and cannot use any defensive abilities, such as the Avoid Blow or Riposte talents or skills, against the first close combat Attack Test the adept makes that round. Abilities that function independently of the character, such as the Spirit Dodge talent, remain unaffected however.

COLD PURIFY

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Cold Purify talent allows an adept to create an improvised poultice to stop the effects of natural or magical poison. To use this talent the adept requires access to ice, snow, chilled water, or other cold material, which is packed around the poisoned character's Wound. If the character doesn't have any external injuries, then a Wound must be created to allow the poultice to draw out the poison. The adept spends a round preparing the poultice, then makes a Cold Purify Test against the higher of the poison's Spell Defense or step number. If the test succeeds, the effect of the poison is stopped, and the victim recovers a number of Damage Points equal to the difference between the Cold Purify Test result and the test's Difficulty Number.

CONCEAL WEAPON

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Conceal Weapon talent allows an adept to hide a weapon or other object somewhere on his body. Unlike the Conceal Weapon skill, this talent uses illusion magic to help mask the weapon's location. While the adept must make a reasonable attempt to conceal the weapon, any obvious shortcomings (like a hilt sticking out a pocket) are hidden by the illusion. The maximum weapon Size that can be concealed is restricted to what the adept can use one-handed (see **Weapon Size Restrictions** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 434). An adept may conceal a combined Size of weaponry equal to his Conceal Weapon rank using this talent. The adept makes a Conceal Weapon Test, the result of which becomes the Detection Difficulty for any attempts made to spot the weapon. At the gamemaster's discretion, the character's choice of clothing may further affect the weapon's Detection Difficulty, increasing or decreasing it as appropriate. This concealment lasts until the weapon is removed from its hiding place.

As long as the weapon remains concealed, the adept may gain the benefit of Surprise when drawing and striking an opponent with it. Any characters who are unaware of the weapon's presence at the time of the attack make a successful Perception Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster in order to avoid being Surprised (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 409). The Difficulty Number for this test is usually equal to the adept's Dexterity step, but may be increased by the use of other abilities, such as the Fast Hand talent.

Confront Horror

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 5

The Confront Horror talent allows an adept to confront and potentially banish a Horror. This is a legendary talent; there are far more stories about people using it than actual documented cases. The adept makes a Confront Horror Test against the Horror's Social Defense. If the character was not marked by the Horror, he gains a +10 bonus to his test. If the test succeeds, the Horror and the adept are locked in a Contest of Wills, which lasts until one of them wins. This contest only involves the two contestants. Other characters may act normally during the contest but should anyone harm the Horror, the talent effect is broken and the character loses the contest. Unfortunately, harm done to the adept does not result in the Horror forfeiting the contest.

During the contest, the Horror and the adept may only use talents and abilities that oppose Social Defense, attempt to dominate their target, or which resist such actions. Examples include the Terror and Thought Worm Horror powers, the Bardic Voice talent, and a Contest of Wills (see the **Spirits** chapter on p. 363 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). The first contestant to win three rounds wins the contest. If the adept wins, he commands the Horror to leave this plane of existence and makes a second Confront Horror Test. If the test succeeds, the Horror is compelled to leave and cannot return while the adept lives, unless he gives it permission to do so. If the Horror wins, the adept can never use the Confront Horror talent against that Horror again.

Create Arrow

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Create Arrow talent allows an adept to magically create arrows. The adept makes a Create Arrow Test, the result of which is the maximum number of arrows the character can create. The arrows are formed one at a time, as they are fired by the adept, and vanish immediately after striking their target or when the talent expires. Each use of the Create Arrow talent lasts for a number of minutes equal to the adept's Create Arrow rank—any remaining arrows that haven't been fired at the end of that time are lost. While the talent name might indicate otherwise, Create Arrow also works to magically create other types of missiles, including crossbow bolts, sling bullets, and blowgun needles.

Creature Analysis

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Creature Analysis talent allows an adept to gain information about a creature he is observing. The adept makes a Creature Analysis Test against the creature's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the adept's player can ask a specific question that would reveal one of the creature's game statistics or abilities for each result level achieved on the Creature Analysis Test, such as, "What is its Physical Defense?" or "What is its Death Rating?" The question must be about a specific trait—general questions such as "How tough is it?" should warrant equally vague answers ("Pretty tough"). The gamemaster should also disallow questions comparing more than one statistic, such as "Is this beast tougher than I am?" or "Which is higher, its Physical or Spell Defense?"

When using the Creature Analysis talent, the adept uses a form of divination magic to gain information about the creature he is observing. Adepts often use this talent to size up an unknown creature's Spell or Social Defense to determine how well other

talents, such as Dominate Beast, will work on it. At the gamemaster's discretion, such uses of the Creature Analysis talent can yield insights about a creature's vulnerabilities—insights that can prove very useful to any adventuring group about to tangle with an unknown beast.

Critical Hit

Step Number: Rank
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Critical Hit talent allows an adept to target an opponent's vulnerable areas, increasing the damage inflicted by his attacks. The adept makes a close combat or ranged Attack Test against his opponent, as normal. On an Excellent result, the adept adds his Critical Hit rank as a bonus to his Damage Test.

Crushing Blow

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Crushing Blow talent allows a character to make a fearsome attack intended to inflict maximum damage. Use of this talent must be declared before the attack is made. The character makes a close combat Attack Test as normal. If the test succeeds, the adept uses his Crushing Blow step in place of his Strength step for the Damage Test.

Dead Fall

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Dead Fall talent allows an adept to feign the appearance of death. The Dead Fall talent creates the illusion of a Wound, or the signs of poison or disease, and masks the character's breathing in order to support the appearance of the adept's "death". As the adept collapses to the ground, he makes a Dead Fall Test, the result of which is the illusion's Disbelief Difficulty (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions** in the **Illusionism Spells** chap-

ter, p. 322). Anyone observing the adept may make a Perception Test as a Sensing Test. If this test fails, they believe that the adept is really dead.

The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Dead Fall rank. At the end of the talent's duration, the adept may make another Dead Fall Test to maintain the illusion.

DEFENSE

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Defense talent improves an adept's ability to avoid physical attacks. The adept makes a Defense Test, the result of which determines the talent duration, in rounds. While the talent is in effect, the adept adds his Defense rank as a bonus to his Physical Defense.

DETECT FALSEHOOD

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Detect Falsehood talent is a magical form of insight that allows an adept to determine if someone is lying. The adept makes a Detect Falsehood Test against the target's Social Defense. On a Good result, the adept knows that the target is lying to some degree. On an Excellent result, the adept knows what sort of lie is being told—an Exaggeration, a Half-Truth, or a complete Fabrication. See the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 92 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information on Deceit and how it works.

DETECT INFLUENCE

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Detect Influence talent allows an adept to determine if someone is under the influence of a Horror. The adept makes a Detect Influence Test against the character's Social Defense. An Average result is sufficient to reveal that the target is contaminated by some form of Horror taint; unfortunately, this information isn't particularly reliable, since such taint is common to any adventurer who has recently fought a Horror.

A Good result reveals whether the target is currently possessed by, or actively under the influence of, a Horror. An Excellent result reveals whether the target has made a voluntary pact with a Horror, and will also reveal if the character is Horror-marked, but not under the active influence of a Horror. An Extraordinary result reveals the type and identity of the Horror.

DETECT TRAP

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Detect Trap talent allows an adept to detect traps of both mechanical and magical origin. The adept makes a Detect Trap Test and compares the result against the Detection Difficulty of any traps within short range of Visibility (see the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 117 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). The average Detection Difficulty for most mechanical traps is 5, though some well-concealed traps may have a Detection Difficulty as high as 9. The Detection Difficulty for magical traps is equal to the trap's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the adept notices something that gives away the presence of the trap or traps in question. On a Good result, the adept can pinpoint the trap's trigger and generally figure out how to avoid setting it off. An Excellent result tells the adept what type of effect (crushing, smashing, poison, and so on) the trap employs. On an Extraordinary result the adept may add his Detect Trap rank as a bonus to any attempts he makes to disarm the trap (see **Disarm Trap**, p. 179).

See the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 108 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information on traps and how they work.

DETECT WEAPON

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Detect Weapon talent allows an adept to detect the presence of hidden weapons, whether concealed by normal or magical means. The adept makes a Detect Weapon Test and compares the result against the Detection Difficulty of any concealed weapons within short range of Visibility (see the **Adventuring** chapter of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). If the test succeeds, the adept spots one or more weapons and knows their type, but is unaware of any magical properties the weapon may possess.

Once the adept notices a concealed weapon, he becomes aware of its presence and is alert to possible treachery. As a result, he is not susceptible to being Surprised by an attack with the concealed weapon (see **Conceal Weapon**, p. 176), unless the weapon's owner takes other measures to gain Surprise against him.

DEVELOP ANIMAL SENSE

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Develop Animal Sense talent allows an adept to acquire an animal's sharper physical senses. To acquire a new sense, the adept must spend at least 24 hours with the animal whose sensing ability he wants to learn, during which time the animal must be able to use the sense. At the end of this time, the adept makes a Develop Animal Sense Test against the animal's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, he acquires the new sense, with all the benefits and limitations thereof.

The gamemaster has the final word on the specific effects of a given sense. Generally, some senses give the adept new sensory abilities—a bat's sonar, a snake's ability to smell by "tasting" the air, and a cat's night vision are a few such examples. In other situations, the new sense simply improves one of the adept's existing senses—the sharp vision of an eagle, and the keen hearing or smell of a dog are a few such animal senses.

At the gamemaster's discretion, the adept may gain a +1 to +3 bonus to any Perception Tests he makes with the improved sense in such cases. An adept can learn a maximum number of animal senses equal to his Develop Animal Sense rank.

DIRECTION ARROW

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 2

The Direction Arrow talent allows an adept to determine the location of a target character or object relative to his own position. In order to use this talent, the adept must possess an item directly associated with the target, such as a strand of hair, a bit of masonry, or even a pattern item. The adept fires an arrow straight up into the air and makes a Direction Arrow Test against the target's Spell Defense. Regardless of the outcome, the arrow rises to its full height, then plummets to the earth where it shatters into sparks. If the test succeeds, the sparks form a flaming

arrow 1 yard long that points in the direction of the target. If the test fails, or if the target is farther away than a number of miles equal to the adept's Direction Arrow rank, the burning fragments scatter haphazardly, with no clear direction indicated.

While the talent name might indicate otherwise, Direction Arrow also works with other types of missiles, such as crossbow bolts, sling bullets, and blowgun needles.

Disarm

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Disarm talent allows an adept to use a combination of feints and flashing weapon play to knock an opponent's weapon from his hand. The Disarm talent cannot be used against weapons that are attached to or part of the defender's body, such as claws, shields, and t'skrang tail weapons. The adept makes a Disarm Test against his opponent's Physical Defense. If the test succeeds, the adept relieves his opponent of his weapon, sending it spinning away in a direction of the adept's choice. If the character is wielding the weapon with two hands, the adept requires a Good result to successfully disarm him. The target takes no damage from being disarmed; instead, the Damage Test result determines how many feet the weapon is flung from the wielder.

Disarm Trap

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No (Yes; see text) **Strain**: 1

The Disarm Trap talent allows an adept to use deduction, divination magic, and a deft touch to render mechanical and magical traps inoperative. The adept must spend a Karma Point when disarming a magical trap. The adept makes a Disarm Trap Test against the trap's Disarm Difficulty, as determined by the gamemaster. If the test succeeds, the triggering mechanism of the trap is disabled, preventing it from activating. On a Pathetic result, the trigger is "tripped" and the trap immediately goes off.

The adept may attempt to disarm the same trap a number of times equal to his Disarm Trap rank. Should he fail all of his attempts, he cannot make any more tests against that trap until he increases his Disarm Trap rank. See the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 108 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information on traps and how they work.

Disguise Self

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Disguise Self talent allows an adept to use illusion magic to disguise himself as another humanoid being of his choice, within certain limits. The disguised being can weigh no more than twice, and not less than half, the adept's body weight. The adept may not vary the height, width, or length of any part of his body, limbs or torso, by more than 50 percent for the purposes of the disguise. For example, a human character trying to disguise himself as a t'skrang would have an awfully short tail. The adept makes a Disguise Self Test, the result of which becomes the Detection Difficulty for any attempts made to see through the disguise. Each use of Disguise Self lasts until the adept chooses to discard it or for a maximum number of hours equal to the adept's Disguise Self rank.

The Disguise Self talent only alters the adept's appearance. If attempting to impersonate another character, the adept will likely require other abilities, such as the Acting skill or Mimic Voice talent, to convince others of his false identity.

Dominate Arrow

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Dominate Arrow talent allows an adept to control the flight path of an arrow fired by another character. The adept must have a higher Initiative Test result than the character firing the arrow and must be able to see the missile during its flight. The adept makes a Dominate Arrow Test against the firing character's missile Attack Test result. If the test succeeds, the adept can control the arrow's flight. The adept can simply direct the arrow away from the firing character's intended target.

He may also direct the arrow to hit a new target of his choosing (including the firing character), using the Dominate Arrow Test result as his missile Attack Test against the target's Physical Defense. In this case, the result level required to hit (or inflict an Armor-Defeating Hit on) the target is increased by one level. If the test succeeds, the firing character (not the adept) makes a Damage Test, as normal, applying any Range modifiers to the Damage Test (see **Ranged Combat** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 411).

While the talent name might indicate otherwise, Dominate Arrow also works on other types of missiles, including crossbow bolts, sling bullets, and blowgun needles.

Dominate Beast

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Dominate Beast talent allows an adept to subdue and temporarily control an animal. The adept makes a Dominate Beast Test against the animal's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the adept establishes dominance over the animal for a number of minutes equal to his Dominate Beast rank, during which time the animal will not take any hostile action against him. The adept may command the creature to perform one simple task that requires less time to complete than the talent's duration. This task cannot pose more danger to the animal than to the adept.

Should the adept attempt to use Dominate Beast on an animal already under the influence of a talent or spell, his Dominate Beast Test-result-must exceed the result of the ability affecting the target animal. If the test succeeds, he gains control of the animal. The Dominate Beast talent can only be used on non-sentient, natural creatures. It cannot be used to control Horrors, Horror constructs, or sentient beings of any kind.

Down Strike

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Down Strike talent allows an adept to use the advantage of height to inflict additional damage on a target in close combat. The adept must be at least 1 yard above his target and must declare the talent's use before making the attack. The adept makes his close combat Attack Test as normal. If the test succeeds, the adept uses his Down Strike step in place of his Strength step for the Damage Test.

Durability

Step Number: Rank
Action: NA
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

Unique for each Discipline. The Durability talent increases an adept's ability to take damage. Each rank in the Durability talent permanently increases an adept's Death and Unconsciousness

Ratings. The adept's Discipline determines the increase.

While Durability is specific to each Discipline, this talent is learned and improved only for the adept's first Discipline (however, see the optional rule for **Realigning Durability** in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 428).

The Durability Increase Table shows each Discipline and the appropriate increase per Durability rank listed as two numbers separated by a slash. The number to the left of the slash represents the increase to the adept's Death Rating, per rank; the number to the right represents the increase to the adept's Unconsciousness Rating, per rank.

DURABILITY INCREASE TABLE

Discipline	Increase
Air Sailor	6/5
Archer	6/5
Beastmaster	7/6
Cavalryman	7/6
Elementalist	4/3
Illusionist	4/3
Nethermancer	4/3
Scout	6/5
Sky Raider	8/6
Swordmaster	7/6
Thief	5/4
Troubadour	6/5
Warrior	9/7
Weaponsmith	6/5
Wizard	4/3

Evantra, an elven Archer, improves his Durability to Rank 3. According to the Durability Increase Table, each rank in the Durability talent adds +6 to his Death Rating and +5 to his Unconsciousness Rating. At Rank 3, the adept will have added +18 to his original Death Rating and +15 to his original Unconsciousness Rating.

EAGLE EYE

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Eagle Eye talent allows an adept to aim at a distant target, increasing his chances of hitting it. The adept makes an Eagle Eye Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, he makes his ranged combat Attack Test against the target as if he were at Short range. The talent's effect only applies to the adept's Attack Test; Range penalties are still applied to Damage Tests as normal (–2 at Medium range; –3 at Long range; see **Ranged Combat** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 411). Each use of the Eagle Eye talent lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Eagle Eye rank or until he makes an Attack Test. The talent only gives an adept a better chance of hitting his target; it does not increase the range of the weapon he is using.

EARTH ARMOR

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Earth Armor talent wraps an adept in the power of the living earth as a form of protection. The adept makes an Earth Armor Test, the result of which becomes his earth armor's Death Rating. The armor has a Physical Armor rating equal to the adept's Earth Armor rank. An adept chooses when to use his earth armor, but must do so before his opponent makes a Damage Test. Whenever the adept's earth armor is used to absorb damage, he reduces the armor's Death Rating by the number of Damage Points inflicted. The armor disappears when its Death Rating is reduced to zero; any excess damage is passed on to the adept. Increase the result level required to inflict an Armor-Defeating Hit on the adept by one level (from Excellent to Extraordinary) while the armor is in effect. Damaged earth armor may be repaired. The adept makes an Earth Armor Test, reducing the armor's Current Damage by the result. Each use of the Earth Armor talent lasts for an hour.

EARTH SKIN

Step Number: Rank + Toughness
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0 (see text)

The Earth Skin talent increases an adept's resistance to magical attacks. When using this talent, the adept's skin becomes shot through with dark veins of elemental earth. Use of the Earth Skin talent requires one of the adept's Recovery Tests; if he has no Recovery Tests available to him, he cannot use this talent. The adept makes an Earth Skin Test and adds his Earth Skin rank to his Spell Defense. Each use of the talent lasts for a number of hours equal to the Earth Skin Test result.

Earth Skin may be used in conjunction with the Wood Skin and Stone Skin talents, with the effects, durations, requirements and any limitations of the different talents being combined.

ECHO LOCATION

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Echo Location talent locates objects and characters by sound. This talent works well for spotting things in the dark; no Darkness modifiers apply to adepts using Echo Location to detect opponents (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 407). The adept makes an Echo Location Test and compares the result against the Spell Defense of each solid object or character within a range equal to his Echo Location rank × 10 yards. If the test succeeds, the adept detects and tracks the position of the object or character for a number of rounds equal to his Echo Location rank.

EFFECT PATTERN

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Effect Pattern talent improves the effectiveness of a magician's spell. The magician declares he is using Effect Pattern before he weaves any spell threads, then makes an Effect Pattern Test against the spell's Weaving Difficulty (or Reattunement Difficulty, if the spell has no threads). If the test succeeds, the magician adds his Effect Pattern rank as a bonus to the spell's Effect Test when the spell is cast.

ELEMENTAL HOLD

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Elemental Hold talent prevents an elemental from moving or taking any action other than communicating. The adept must be within 20 yards of the elemental. The adept boldly faces the elemental and orders it to halt, then makes an Elemental Hold Test against the elemental's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the elemental is held in place for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Elemental Hold rank. This requires the adept's concentration; other than communicating with the elemental, he cannot move, cast spells, or perform any other activity that requires him to take an action. A break in concentration causes the talent to end, freeing the elemental.

Each round, the elemental may attempt to free itself by making a Willpower Test against the Elemental Hold step. If the test succeeds, the elemental is freed and the talent's effect ends.

Elemental Tongues

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Elemental Tongues talent allows an adept to speak the languages of air, earth, fire, and water—the four elemental tongues. Adepts cannot communicate with wood or plant elementals using this talent, because it requires a special spell to unravel their peculiar tongue (see **Plant Talk** in the **Elementalism Spells** chapter, p. 296). If an adept has an unassigned Elemental Tongues rank available, he can attempt to learn a new elemental language. The adept makes an Elemental Tongues Test against the language's Learning Difficulty. If the test succeeds, the language has been learned and the adept notes it down on his Character Record Sheet. The Learning Difficulty for each elemental language is shown in the Elemental Tongues Difficulty Table.

ELEMENTAL TONGUES DIFFICULTY TABLE

Elemental Tongue	Learning Difficulty
Air	7
Earth	5
Fire	7
Water	8

Once an Elemental Tongues rank has been assigned to a language, it cannot be used to learn any other elemental language. To learn an elemental language using Elemental Tongues, the adept first listens to the elemental talking for at least 1 minute, then makes an Elemental Tongues Test against the language's Learning Difficulty. If the adept fails to learn the elemental's tongue, he cannot attempt to learn that same language again until he improves his Elemental Tongues rank. He can attempt to learn other unlearned elemental languages, however. Because there are only four elemental languages, it is possible for an adept to have learned them all by the time he has improved his Elemental Tongues rank to Rank 4.

When speaking to an elemental, the adept makes an Elemental Tongues Test, the result of which is compared against the Spell Defense of any elementals within a range equal to the Elemental Tongues Test result × 5 yards. The result level determines the level of communication. On an Average or Good result, the elemental understands the basic gist of what the adept is talking about, and vice versa, but the adept is not able to ask complex questions or make specific requests. An Excellent result means the elemental completely understands the adept; the adept can discuss complex topics with the elemental and ask it detailed questions.

Each Elemental Tongues Test lasts for a number of minutes equal to the adept's Elemental Tongues rank. This allows the adept to communicate with those elementals he has initially succeeded in establishing contact with. If the adept requires an extended conversation, or needs to include newcomers into an existing conversation, he must make another Elemental Tongues Test. The Strain cost reflects the concentration required to establish and maintain communication.

Emotion Song

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Emotion Song talent allows an adept to sing songs that arouse an audience to a basic emotion, such as fear, love, hate, happiness, anger, or joy. The audience directs the emotion at the subject of the song. For example, if an adept sings a song about love for a king, the audience feels the emotion expressed (love in this case) about the king mentioned in the song. Each performance of Emotion Song requires at least 30 minutes to complete. At the end of this time, the adept makes an Emotion Song Test against the highest Social Defense among the members of the audience. If the test succeeds, some or all of the audience are affected by the song. An Average result indicates that 25 percent of the audience is affected by the song; a Good result affects 50 percent of the audience; an Excellent result affects 75 percent of the audience; an Extraordinary result affects the entire audience by the song. Each consecutive use of the Emotion Song talent creates a cumulative effect, with each additional result adding to the one before; two consecutive Average results have the same effect as one Good result, two Good results create the same effect as one Excellent result, and so on. Likewise, once the adept has affected the entire audience, he can continue his performance, engaging a bigger audience with his song. The adept can perform for a maximum number of hours equal to his Emotion Song rank. After this time, the adept cannot use Emotion Song again for 24 hours.

On a Poor result for any Emotion Song Test, the adept must immediately stop performing. The crowd has grown weary of his performance, and the adept may not use Emotion Song again for 24 hours. The effects of his performance up to that point, if any, are still felt by the audience. On a Pathetic result for any Emotion Song Test, the effect of the song changes, turning the emotion felt by the audience into the opposite emotion intended by the adept. This is only felt by those affected by the talent to this point, so will have no effect if this was the first Emotion Song Test made. The maximum audience size that can be affected by the performance is equal to the adept's Emotion Song rank × 10 people. The effect of the talent lasts for a number of days equal to the adept's Emotion Song rank. During this time, those affected are more susceptible to suggestions related to the subject and emotion expressed by the song; characters making such suggestions gain a +1 bonus to any Interaction Tests they make (see the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 92 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). Characters making suggestions counter to the emotion suffer a –1 penalty to their Interaction Tests.

Empathic Command

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Empathic Command talent allows an adept to command his mount through emotion and mental imagery. The adept need not speak any commands out loud, but he must be in physical con-

tact with the mount to use Empathic Command on it. The talent has no affect on any other animal except the adept's mount. The adept makes an Empathic Command Test in place of his mount's Willpower Test to resist the effects of fear, charm or spell effects directed against the mount.

Empathic Sense

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1 (see text)

The Empathic Sense talent allows an adept to gain information about the emotional state of another character. To use Empathic Sense, the adept makes an Empathic Sense Test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, the adept senses the target's emotions and gains information appropriate to the result level achieved on the Empathic Sense Test. An Average result gives the adept an idea of the target's general emotional state. A Good result allows him to read the target's surface emotions. On an Excellent result, the adept knows exactly what the character is feeling. At the gamemaster's discretion, the adept may also gain a +1 bonus per result level achieved to any Interaction Tests he makes where knowledge of the target's emotional state would be helpful. Each use of this talent lasts for a number of minutes equal to the adept's Empathic Sense rank and has a range of 10 yards.

An adept with Empathic Sense may choose to extend the talent's duration to a year and a day by "attuning" the talent to a voluntary target. This requires 30 minutes of quiet meditation with the target character and causes the adept 1 permanent Damage Point. This damage cannot be healed until the talent duration ends. This use has the added benefit of extending the talent's range to a number of miles equal to the adept's Empathic Sense rank and providing the adept with a vague sense of the attuned character's location, within a 90-degree arc. Unattuning a character before the talent's duration expires requires another 30 minute ritual with that character. Regardless of the method used, an adept may not be attuned to more characters at one time than his Empathic Sense rank.

Endure Cold

Step Number: Rank + Toughness
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Endure Cold talent allows an adept to withstand the extremes of temperature caused by snow, ice or cold. Each time the adept takes freezing or cold damage he may make an Endure Cold Test, the result of which is deducted from the number of Damage Points received after taking armor into account, but before determining the effects of Wounds, unconsciousness, or death. The adept can use this talent a number of times each day equal to his Endure Cold rank.

Enduring Art

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

Beastmasters may learn the Enduring Art talent in place of the Frighten Animals talent at Fourth Circle. The Enduring Art talent allows an adept to permanently paint, tattoo or ritually scar someone (including himself) with an animal symbol that acts like a blood charm. By calling on the strength of the animal, the bearer of the charm temporarily improves the Attribute commonly associated with that animal.

An adept forced to use Enduring Art on an enemy, or who willingly uses it on someone against whom he bears a grudge, can depict an animal that will negatively affect the subject. The adept might lie about the true significance of the animal, saying something like, "The tortoise will expand your ruggedness as if you had slipped inside its shell." The aspect associated with the animal depicted in the art is determined by the artist during the ritual, and therefore can conflict with commonly held associations. Some examples of common associations appear below.

Bonuses

Dexterity: Monkey, Jaguar
Strength: Bear, Horse
Toughness: Boar, Thundra Beast
Perception: Eagle, Cheetah
Willpower: Cat, Elephant
Charisma: Tiger, Peacock

Penalties

Dexterity: Tortoise
Strength: Crane
Toughness: Mouse
Perception: Rhinoceros
Willpower: Dog
Charisma: Snake

An adept may create Enduring Art on himself or others. He must spend at least 36 hours—not necessarily consecutive—creating the art, during which time the adept and the subject may not engage in other strenuous or distracting activities. At the beginning of the 36 hours, the adept makes an Enduring Art Test against the subject's Spell Defense; the subject cannot voluntarily lower his Spell Defense for the procedure. If the test fails, the adept cannot find a suitable spot upon which to begin the artistic pattern, and may not try again on that subject for a week. If the test succeeds, the process begins and the subject takes 2 permanent Damage Points. This damage may never be healed.

The person decorated with the Enduring Art adds a +1 bonus to any Action Tests made using the associated Attribute for 1 round. This causes the character 1 Strain Point of damage per test. Because this is a type of blood charm, the Enduring Art cannot be used for the first 24 hours after the process is finished.

Engaging Banter

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Engaging Banter talent allows an adept to use his charming style and a touch of magical suggestion to distract a character. The adept must be able to be understood by the target character for the banter to work. The adept makes an Engaging Banter Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, both the adept and the character spend time engaged in witty, idle chat. The adept must concentrate on the conversation, which lasts for a number of rounds equal to his Engaging Banter rank. During this time, the target character is distracted, and is considered Harried (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408).

The adept may end the chat and its effect at any time during the talent's duration. Likewise, if the adept's concentration is broken, the effect of the Engaging Banter ends. Engaging Banter may be used against a character engaged in combat, but any attack causing a Wound to the target immediately negates the effect of the talent, making him immune to further Engaging Banter Tests for the next 24 hours.

Enhanced Matrix

Step Number: Rank
Action: NA
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

Magicians learn the Enhanced Matrix talent to make better use of spells requiring threads. An Enhanced Matrix holds

the pattern of a single spell. Unlike a regular spell matrix, an Enhanced Matrix also holds a single pre-woven spell thread as well as the spell pattern. The magician weaves this thread when he attunes the spell to the Enhanced Matrix, allowing him to cast the spell without having to weave the held thread, thus saving him time and effort. The matrix's Mystic Armor absorbs damage from attacks directed against it, such as from the Matrix Strike talent. The Mystic Armor rating of the matrix is equal to the magician's base Mystic Armor.

Each Enhanced Matrix represents a separate talent with its own rank, and is improved independently. See the appropriate **Discipline** chapter to determine how many matrices of this type the magician may learn. For example, a Wizard can have up to two Enhanced Matrix talents. See **Spell Matrix Types** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 287, for more information on spell matrices.

Ethereal Weapon

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 2

The Ethereal Weapon talent turns an adept's weapon incorporeal. The weapon glows with a turbulent haze of red, green, or blue, and is able to pass through physical obstacles, including armor, becoming solid as soon as it strikes a living target. The adept makes an Ethereal Weapon Test as his melee or ranged combat Attack Test against his opponent's Physical Defense. If the test succeeds, the adept makes a Damage Test for the weapon, ignoring the target's Physical Armor.

This talent can only be used against living opponents with a physical presence. When used with missile weapons, only the missile becomes ethereal, not the bow, crossbow, blowpipe, or sling.

Evidence Analysis

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

Equal parts observation, logic and divination magic, the Evidence Analysis talent allows an adept to examine physical evidence and determine the answers to questions relating to his investigation. For example, an adept might examine a bed to determine that its occupant had not slept well, or he might identify a weapon as being the object used to murder someone. As a general rule, Evidence Analysis can only answer questions regarding "what" or "how" something happened to an object or place. The adept makes an Evidence Analysis Test against the Spell Defense of the person responsible for the physical evidence. If the test succeeds, the adept learns the answer to one or more questions about the object or place. An Average result provides the answer to 1 question; a Good result to 2 questions; an Excellent result to 3 questions; an Extraordinary result provides the answer to 4 questions. In the previous example, the adept would make an Evidence Analysis Test against the Spell Defense of the person who had slept in the bed. If he achieved a Good result, he could ask the gamemaster one or two "what" or "how" questions relating to the bed.

If the activity occurred within 24 hours of the Evidence Analysis Test being made, the adept gains a general impression of when the event happened (i.e., morning, afternoon, or evening) with a successful test result. When using Evidence Analysis to evaluate evidence that is more than a day old, add +1 to the Difficulty Number for each day after the first; other than the increased Difficulty Number, there is no limit to the age of the evidence being analyzed. The gamemaster answers the questions posed to him. Evidence Analysis cannot help the adept answer the questions of "who" or "why"—the focus of the examination is on facts, not on motive or intent.

False Sight

Step Number: Rank
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The False Sight talent allows an adept to intensify his illusions, making them more difficult for observers to penetrate. The adept can only use False Sight on illusions he creates, and only at the time of their creation. The adept adds his False Sight rank to the Disbelief Difficulty for any attempts to Sense, Disbelieve, or otherwise see through the illusion (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions** in the **Illusionism Spells** chapter, p. 322). The effects of this talent last for as long as the illusion does.

Fast Hand

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Fast Hand talent combines sleight-of-hand with minor illusion magic to allow an adept to move one or two small items from one place to another without being noticed. These items cannot measure more than 6 inches along any one dimension. The adept makes a Fast Hand Test, the result of which becomes the Detection Difficulty for any attempts made to notice the move. Anyone able to observe the adept's action may make a Perception Test against the Detection Difficulty to notice the action immediately after the switch has occurred. This talent does not allow the adept to empty a purse or pocket of its contents (see **Picking Pockets**, p. 195), although it could be used to switch two purses around.

Fearsome Charge

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 2

The Fearsome Charge talent allows a mounted adept to intimidate an opponent while making a Charging attack (see **Mounted Combat** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 413). The adept undergoes a radical transformation as he charges—his eyes grow larger or glow, his teeth become pointed or the canines more elongated, and his hair stands away from his head in a wild tangle. The adept makes a Fearsome Charge Test against the target's Social Defense. On an Average result, the target is frozen with fear and cannot move or act against the adept; on a Good result, the target flees away from the adept at his fastest Movement rate. Fearsome Charge can

also cause others witnessing the effect to flee in fear. The Fearsome Charge Test result is compared against the Social Defense of any other opponents witnessing the charge. On a Good result, the target freezes with fear. On an Excellent result, the target flees away from the adept at his fastest Movement rate. The effect of the talent lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Fearsome Charge rank. An adept can affect a maximum number of opponents (targets and observers) equal to his Fearsome Charge rank. A character affected by this talent can throw off the effects. Each round, the character makes a Willpower Test against the adept's Fearsome Charge step. If the test succeeds, the character overcomes his fear and can act normally again.

Fence

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Fence talent helps an adept get a better price for stolen or illegal goods. Shady merchants usually buy stolen or illegal goods for a base 10 percent of their value (see the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 432). The adept makes a Fence Test against the merchant's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the merchant's purchase price is increased by 5 percent of the goods' value. The adept continues to make additional Fence Tests until he reaches a suitable price, or fails a test. If a test fails, the last price negotiated is decreased by 5 percent of the goods' value, and negotiations are concluded. An adept can attempt a maximum number of tests equal to his Fence rank per transaction. What constitutes a transaction may vary from a single ring to an entire chest of jewelry, determined by how much "illicit merchandise" the adept is trying to move. The adept can only use the Fence talent on one transaction each day against a merchant.

Fireblood

Step Number: Rank + Toughness
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0 (see text)

The Fireblood talent makes the blood oozing from an adept's scratches, cuts, and injuries, bubble and hiss, cleansing, cauterizing and healing the adept. He must have a Recovery Test available to him to use this talent. The adept makes a Fireblood Test in place of a Recovery Test, as normal. He must be currently engaged in combat, although the adept does not have to be directly facing an opponent; the heat of being in battle provides the stimulus for the talent. If the adept is not fighting an opponent, or there is no fighting going on around him, he cannot use this talent. The adept is also not bound by the usual limitations on how long he has to wait before being eligible to make another Recovery Test (see **Effects of Injury** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 402). He can make a Fireblood Test for each Recovery Test available to him, but only one such test each round. The adept cannot make any Attack Tests during the round in which he makes a Fireblood Test.

Fire Heal

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Fire Heal ritual talent allows an adept to cleanse himself in a healing flame. This talent presents some risks for low-Circle adepts, who generally possess low Wound Thresholds and Death Ratings. Successfully completing the Fire Heal ritual grants the adept bonus Recovery Tests, while failure burns him. Before starting the Fire Heal ritual, the adept first builds an open fire large enough to completely engulf him. The ritual requires that the adept be in full contact with the elemental power of fire. If a spell or item currently protects the adept from the effects of fire, the Fire Heal talent has no effect. Before stepping into the fire, the adept declares how many extra Recovery Tests he is attempting to gain. Each use of Fire Heal requires a 30 minute ritual for the first Recovery Test, +30 minutes for each additional Recovery Test the character wants to gain. For example, to gain 1 bonus Recovery Test requires a 30 minute long ritual. To gain 3 bonus Recovery Tests requires a 90 minute long ritual (30 + 30 × 2 = 90).

The gamemaster makes a Step 6 Fire Intensity Test for the first Recovery Test, adding +2 for each additional Recovery Test the adept is attempting to gain. The adept makes a Fire Heal Test against the Fire Intensity Test result. If the test succeeds, the adept gains the desired number of bonus Recovery Tests. If the test fails, the adept gains no bonus Recovery Tests. Instead, he suffers a Wound and a number of Damage Points equal to the difference between the Fire Heal and Fire Intensity Test results; this damage can result in the adept taking another Wound. On a Pathetic result, the adept takes the full amount of the Fire Intensity Test. No armor protects against this damage.

Bonus Recovery Tests gained through use of the Fire Heal talent must be used before the adept gains his Recovery Tests the following day or they are lost.

First Impression

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The First Impression talent allows an adept to favorably impress a gamemaster character he has just met for the first time. The adept makes a First Impression Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the target character's Attitude improves towards the adept by one degree; for example, a Neutral character becomes Friendly, an Unfriendly character becomes Neutral, and so on. On an Excellent result, it improves by two degrees (see the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 90 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information on Attitudes and how they work). At the gamemaster's discretion, a Pathetic result worsens the character's Attitude by one degree. The new Attitude may be changed for better or worse through future interactions, but reverts back to the original at a rate of one degree per day. Any openly hostile act the adept commits against the impressed character immediately erases the impression. An adept may only attempt to use the First Impression talent once against a given character.

First Ring of Perfection

Step Number: Rank
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The First Ring of Perfection talent allows an adept to increase the effectiveness of other talents. This talent can only be used to improve the result of talents that require at least 1 minute to use. Use of First Ring of Perfection must be declared before making the Talent Test for the designated talent. If the test succeeds, the adept adds his First Ring of Perfection rank as a bonus to the result of the Talent Test.

Flame Arrow

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 2

The Flame Arrow talent transforms a normal arrow into a fiery missile, destroying the arrow in the process. The adept makes a missile Attack Test against the target. If the test succeeds, he makes a Flame Arrow Test as his Damage Test. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

While the talent name might indicate otherwise, Flame Arrow also works on other types of missiles, including crossbow bolts, sling bullets, and blowgun needles.

Forge Armor

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 2

The Forge Armor talent allows an adept to improve the Armor rating of armor or shields. The adept must carry out his work at a properly equipped forge. Forge tools (see **Adventuring Equipment** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 451) can only be effectively employed in a forge. Improving armor in a poorly equipped forge might double or triple the time requirement, while a well-equipped forge may halve the time. The forge's quality and its effect on armor improvement is determined by the gamemaster.

Improving armor is more difficult than creating it anew, due to the care required in retaining the integrity of the original armor. The adept spends a number of days equal to the armor's original Physical + Mystic Armor working on the armor (half this time for shields). At the end of this period, the adept makes a Forge Armor Test against the armor's current Physical + Mystic Armor + 9. As the armor is improved, it becomes harder to forge. Forge Armor Tests to improve thread armor or shields are always made against the armor's base statistics as shown in the Thread Armor or Thread Shield Table (see the **Magical Treasures** chapter on p. 170 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**), ignoring Armor Rating increases for woven threads, but taking into account previous uses of Forge Armor. For example, improving hide armor (Phys 5; Myst 1) for the first time takes six days and requires a successful Forge Armor Test against a Difficulty Number of 15 (5 + 1 + 9 = 15). Improving threaded chain mail for the first time—to which an adept has woven a Rank 3 thread, technically making it Phys 9, Myst 0 armor—takes seven days and requires a Good result on a Forge Armor Test against a Difficulty Number of 16 (the armor's "normal" Phys 7 + Myst 0 + 9 = 16).

A successful test result adds +1 to the armor or shield's Physical or Mystic Armor. Thread armor and shields require a Good result for improvement. For example, hide armor could be improved by +1 to Phys 6; Myst 1 with the first successful Forge Armor Test; this adds +1 to the Difficulty Number of the next Forge Armor Test, increasing it to 16. Threaded chain mail (Rank 3; Phys 9; Myst 0) could be improved by +1 to Phys 10; Myst 0, with the Difficulty Number for the next Forge Armor Test increasing by +1 from 16 to 17 (based on the armor's non-thread statistics) and would require another Good result for further improvement. A failed test result has no effect other than wasting time. A Pathetic result on any Forge Armor Test ruins normal armor and shields; a Rule of One result ruins even thread armor and shields (see the **Game Concepts** chapter, p. 18).

The effect of the Forge Armor talent lasts for a year and a day; this duration is measured from the date of the last successful forging attempt on the armor or shield. A set of armor or a shield's Physical or Mystic Armor cannot be improved by more than half its original rating, rounding fractions up. If the armor has no Mystic Armor rating, it cannot be enhanced using this talent. For example, hide armor can be enhanced by this talent by +4 points, to a maximum of Phys 8; Myst 2. Threaded chain mail can be enhanced by this talent by +4 points, to a maximum of Phys 11; Myst 0 with no threads woven to it, and to Phys 13; Myst 0 with a Rank 3 thread (this armor has no Mystic Armor, so that rating cannot be improved). After this, the armor or shield can only be improved through the use of talents such as Aura Armor or Improve Armor. As a result, talented Weaponsmiths are almost always in demand. The enchantment on armor or a shield which has already been enhanced to its maximum can still be renewed with a successful Forge Armor Test; in this case, the forging simply extends the remaining enchantment period to a year and a day. Thread armor and shields can also continue to be improved by weaving higher-Rank threads to them.

Adepts with this talent often charge for the time and materials they use. The basic daily rate for improving an item of armor or a shield is equal to the adept's Forge Armor rank × 10 silver pieces. For example, a Weaponsmith with Forge Armor at Rank 5 would normally charge 50 silver pieces per day to work on improving a set of armor. Each attempt the Weaponsmith makes to improve hide armor requires a minimum of six days effort and costs at least 300 silver pieces, whether successful or not.

Forge Blade

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Forge Blade talent allows an adept to improve the Damage step of a weapon. Despite its name, Forge Blade may be used to improve any weapon, not just bladed weapons (those with this ability originally made their reputations by forging swords, daggers and other bladed weapons); this includes throwing and missile weapons, but not bolts, arrows, or other ammunition for the latter. The adept must carry out his work at a properly equipped forge. Forge tools (see **Adventuring Equipment** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 451) can only be effectively employed in a forge. Improving weapons in a poorly equipped forge might double or triple the time requirement, while a well-equipped forge may halve the time. The forge's quality and its effect on weapon improvement is determined by the gamemaster.

Improving a weapon is a more difficult task than creating a new weapon from scratch, due to the skill required in honing an already tempered blade. The adept spends a number of days equal to the Size of the weapon working on the improvement. At the end of this time he makes a Forge Blade Test against a Difficulty Number equal to the weapon's current Damage step + 9; as the weapon is improved, it becomes more difficult to forge. Forge Blade Tests to improve thread weapons are always made against the weapon's base statistics as shown in the Thread Weapon Table (see the **Magical Treasures** chapter on p. 165 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**), ignoring Damage step increases for woven threads, but taking into account previous uses of Forge

Blade. For example, improving a broadsword (Damage step 5; Size 3) for the first time takes three days and requires a successful Forge Blade Test against a Difficulty Number of 14 (5 + 9 = 14). Improving a threaded crystal sword for the first time—to which an adept has woven a Rank 3 thread, technically making it a Damage step 10 weapon—takes five days and requires a Good result on a Forge Blade Test against a Difficulty Number of 16 (the weapon's "normal" Damage step 7 + 9 = 16).

A successful test result adds +1 to the weapon's Damage step. Thread weapons require a Good result for improvement. For example, a broadsword would be improved by +1 to Damage step 6 with the first successful Forge Blade Test; this adds +1 to the Difficulty Number of the next Forge Blade Test, increasing it to 15. A threaded crystal sword (Rank 3; Damage step 10) would be improved by +1 to Damage step 11; the Difficulty Number for the next Forge Blade Test increases by +1 from 16 to 17 (based on the weapon's non-thread statistics) and would require another Good result for further improvement. A failed test result has no effect other than wasting time. A Pathetic result on a Forge Blade Test ruins normal weapons; a Rule of One result ruins even thread weapons (see the **Game Concepts** chapter, p. 18).

The effect of the Forge Blade talent lasts for a year and a day; this duration is measured from the date of the last successful forging attempt on the weapon. The maximum enhancement a weapon may receive from this talent is equal to the lower of the weapon's Size or original Damage step. For example, a broadsword's Damage step can only by enhanced by up to +3, as its Size of 3 is lower than its original Damage step of 5. A quarterstaff's Damage step can only be enhanced by +2, as its original Damage step of 2 is lower than its Size of 5. A threaded crystal sword can only be enhanced by +5 (above thread rank bonuses), as its Size of 5 is lower than its base original Damage step of 7. After this, it can only be improved through use of the Improve Weapon talent. As a result, talented Weaponsmiths are almost always in demand. The enchantment on a weapon which has already been enhanced to its maximum can still be renewed with a successful Forge Blade Test; in this case, the forging simply extends the remaining enchantment period to a year and a day. Thread weapons can also continue to be improved by weaving higher-Rank threads to them.

Adepts with this talent often charge for the time and materials they use. The basic daily rate for forging a weapon is equal to the adept's Forge Blade rank × 10 silver pieces. For example, a Weaponsmith with Forge Blade at Rank 5 would normally charge 50 silver pieces per day to work on improving a weapon. Each attempt that the Weaponsmith makes to improve a broadsword (a Size 3 weapon) requires a minimum of three days effort and costs at least 150 silver pieces, whether successful or not.

Frighten

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Frighten talent allows an adept to scare others. Stepping in front of his intended victim, the adept stares silently at the character's eyes (who must also be able to see the adept's eyes) then makes a Frighten Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target becomes frightened and attempts to get away from the adept's line of sight at his fastest Movement rate. The target remains scared for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Frighten rank, during which time he will not willingly approach the adept. If the target character is not able to completely escape from the immediate area, he will attempt to move as far away as possible from the adept at his fastest Movement rate. If an opportunity presents itself for him to move out of line of sight while the talent is in effect, he will do so. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the adept's Frighten step. If the test succeeds, he throws off the effect of his fear and the talent ends.

Frighten Animals

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Frighten Animals talent terrorizes one or more animals. Only those animals within the adept's line of sight are affected by this talent. He may frighten a maximum number of animals equal to his Frighten Animals rank. The adept makes a Frighten Animals Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional animal. If the test succeeds, the animals flee in terror away from the adept at their fastest Movement rate; hounds will desert a hunter, a mount will throw its rider, guard tigers will flee from their ward, and so on.

The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Frighten Animals rank. Each round, the animal may attempt to overcome its fear by making a Willpower Test against the adept's Frighten Animals step. If the test succeeds, the animal stops fearing the adept and may act normally. Most animals will not make a Willpower Test, however, so this test is made at the gamemaster's discretion.

Gain Surprise

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Gain Surprise talent allows an adept to use an even mix of stealth, illusion and mind magic to surprise an opponent. The adept makes a Gain Surprise Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the adept gains the advantage of Surprise when he next acts against the target (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 409). The target's knowledge of the adept's presence is magically suppressed.

Others can still see the adept as easily as before; those characters with an Initiative Test result greater than the adept can warn the target, ruining the surprise. Gain Surprise can be used to recreate or "reset" the condition of Surprise required to use some talents, such as Surprise Strike.

Gliding Stride

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1 (see text)

The Gliding Stride talent allows an adept to move in a graceful gliding fashion through the air. The adept makes a Gliding Stride Test, the result of which is the number of yards that he moves that round, to a maximum distance equal to his Combat Movement. An adept may use the Gliding Stride talent each round to move horizontally without incurring Strain; moving upward, however, causes him 1 Strain Point of damage for each round in which he makes any vertical movement. For every yard the adept moves vertically, he must move 3 yards horizontally. Divide the adept's Gliding Stride Test result by 3 to determine the maximum vertical distance in yards that the character can move that round using the Gliding Stride talent.

Gliding Stride physically suspends an adept in mid-air, but cannot raise him higher than his Gliding Stride rank × 3 yards above the ground. If the adept somehow moves higher than this (stepping off a cliff, for instance), he immediately falls to the ground, but only takes Falling damage equal to the difference between his Gliding Stride suspension limit and the actual height fallen (see the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 107 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). If an adept stands still while more than a yard above the ground, he slowly sinks to the ground. The adept loses 1 yard of altitude each round he remains stationary until he lands on the ground.

Gold Sense

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Gold Sense talent allows an adept to sense gold or other natural precious metals. This excludes orichalcum or other magical metals and True elements. If the adept already knows that other nearby characters are carrying precious metal, he may designate them to be excluded from his search. The adept makes a Gold Sense (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the adept learns the general direction and distance to the metal. Because this talent is a "sense," the parameters are vague: directions are given in terms of left or right, back or forward, and above or below, relative to the adept's position.

Gold Sense locates the largest amount of precious metal within a range equal to the adept's Gold Sense rank × 100 yards. The distance "sensed" by the adept is rounded to the nearest 100 yard increment. The minimum quantity of metal that can be detected with this talent is 1 pound. For example, an adept with Gold Sense at Rank 3 might determine that a cache of precious metal lies above him and to his left, less than 300 yards away.

Graceful Exit

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Graceful Exit talent allows an adept to escape from combat by distracting his opponents. The adept makes a Graceful Exit Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, the adept makes good his escape, immediately moving as far away from the combat as possible. He may not take any actions other than movement or the effect of the talent ends. While the Graceful Exit is in effect, those characters bedazzled by the adept's sudden departure can take no direct action against him for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Graceful Exit rank.

The Graceful Exit talent protects only the adept; his colleagues must fend for themselves. If an adept returns to the combat after having made a Graceful Exit, the originally affected characters become enraged. If possible, they will try to attack the adept, and are immune to all Interaction Tests made against their Social Defense to influence them otherwise. Their anger and outrage gives them a +1 bonus to any Action Tests they make against the adept.

Great Leap

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Great Leap talent allows an adept to jump large distances. Air Sailors and Sky Raiders often use Great Leap to cross the gaps between airships in combat, or to jump clear of burning rigging and debris. The adept makes a Great Leap Test, the result of which is the maximum distance he can travel horizontally, in yards. During the leap, the adept can jump up to half this distance vertically, but the combined distance traveled cannot exceed the Great Leap Test result, nor can it exceed the adept's Combat Movement.

Great Leap can also be used to avoid hazards, such as rock traps and falling rigging. If the adept is aware of the threat, he may make a Great Leap Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster to avoid being struck. If the test succeeds, the adept manages to leap clear at the last instant. Great Leap can only be used this way to avoid environmental hazards; it cannot be used in place of a normal Avoid Blow Test.

Haggle

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Haggle talent allows an adept to drive a "hard bargain" when selling or buying goods. The adept makes a Haggle Test against the customer's or merchant's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the price rises or falls by 5 percent of the goods' cost in favor of the adept. Merchants or customers can make Haggle Tests to readjust the price in their favor. An adept may continue to make additional Haggle Tests for the same deal as long as he continues to roll an Average result for each test. As soon as he fails a Haggle Test, the adept can no longer bargain for this transaction. An adept can make a maximum number of tests per transaction equal to his Haggle rank.

Heal Animal Servant

Step Number: Rank + Toughness
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0 (see text)

The Heal Animal Servant talent allows an adept to heal any of his animal servants. The animal must be at least Loyal to the adept (see the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 90 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). The adept makes a Heal Animal Servant Test in place of one of his own Recovery Tests, reducing the animal's Current Damage total by a number of Damage Points equal to the test result. Only the adept's natural Recovery Tests can be used with this talent. Bonus Recovery Tests provided by magic items, spells, or talents like Fire Heal, cannot be used with this talent.

Heartening Laugh

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Heartening Laugh talent allows an adept to support friendly characters against fear and Intimidation. The adept spends a round directing a booming, mocking laugh at his opponents. In the following round, the adept makes a Heartening Laugh Test against the highest Social Defense among all opponents within earshot of him. If the test succeeds, any characters with at least a Friendly attitude toward the adept who can hear his laugh add the adept's Heartening Laugh rank as a bonus to any Willpower Tests they make to resist the effects of fear or Intimidation caused by his opponents. The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Heartening Laugh rank.

Hold Thread

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Hold Thread talent allows a magician to weave a thread to a spell and then to hold the spell ready until he is ready to cast it. The talent can only be used to Hold Threads for spells that require a single spell thread to be woven. Normally, these are spells with a "Threads: 1" notation, but if the magician is casting the spell from an Enhanced Matrix (with a pre-woven thread), it also includes spells with a "Threads: 2" notation (see the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 293). The magician makes a Thread Weaving Test to weave the spell thread, as normal. If the test succeeds, the magician makes a Hold Thread Test against the spell's Weaving Difficulty. If the test succeeds, the final spell thread is held within its spell matrix for a number of rounds equal to the magician's Hold Thread rank. The

magician may make a Spellcasting Test to cast the spell during any one of these rounds. The effect of the Hold Thread talent can be further extended. In the final round of the talent's effect, if the spell has not been cast, the magician may make another Hold Thread Test against the spell's Weaving Difficulty. If the test succeeds, the magician continues to hold the spell for a number of rounds equal to his Hold Thread rank. The talent duration can be extended in the same way for as long as the magician continues to make successful Hold Thread Tests. If a Hold Thread Test fails, the magician must cast the spell in the following round, or he loses it. While using Hold Thread to hold a spell, the magician cannot make any other Thread Weaving or Spellcasting Tests, other than for the spell he is currently holding.

Howl

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Howl talent allows an adept to make a character or creature flee by imitating the aggressive sounds of a creature he has personally trained. The character must be able to speak or vocalize to use this talent. The adept makes a Howl Test against the target's Social Defense. An Average result paralyzes the target with fear. A Good result, forces the target to flee away from the adept at his fastest Movement rate. He will not come near the adept again until he ceases to fear him. The talent's effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Howl Test result. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the adept's Howl step. If the test succeeds, the character overcomes his fear and the talent's effect ends.

Hypnotize

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Hypnotize talent allows an adept to magically mesmerize another character, making him susceptible to persuasion. The target character must be within 10 yards of the adept and in a state where he is not distracted; a target involved in combat cannot be hypnotized, for instance. The adept makes a Hypnotize Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the target's Attitude improves toward the adept by one degree, to a maximum of Friendly (see the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 90 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**).

While under the influence of the Hypnotize talent, the target character remains placid unless attacked. Over a number of minutes equal to his Hypnotize rank, the adept can give the target post-hypnotic suggestions. The adept makes as many Interaction Tests as required against the target's Social Defense, with successful test results persuading the target to perform actions suggested to him by the adept. The target will perform any actions to which he agrees while under the talent's effects, as long as they can be completed within a number of hours equal to the adept's Hypnotize rank after the hypnosis session ends.

A character can only be affected by a single Hypnotize effect at a time. The Hypnotize talent does not require the adept to be able to speak with the target character, merely to grab his attention long enough to exercise the talent's magic on him.

Poohrt the windling Thief successfully hypnotizes an off-duty guard in a tavern. He improves the guard's Attitude and uses a little persuasion to get what he wants. While hypnotized, the guard agrees to let Poohrt into the house he guards as long as the windling brings some ale to share. Poohrt knows Hypnotize at Rank 3, and so the effect lasts for 3 hours. At the end of that time, the guard comes to his senses; while he may not blame the windling for having tricked him, he is no longer bound by the promises he made while under the talent's effects.

Impressive Shot

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Impressive Shot talent allows an adept to impress onlookers with a display of targeting accuracy. The adept chooses a target and declares where the attack will hit, then makes an Impressive Shot Test as his ranged combat Attack Test. If the test succeeds, the adept hits the target in the designated area. Witnesses to this display of prowess may be impressed.

The adept compares the Impressive Shot Test result against the Social Defense of each character witnessing the attack. The adept adds a +1 bonus for each result level achieved to all Interaction Tests made against the affected characters. This effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Impressive Shot rank.

Impressive Strike

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Impressive Strike talent allows an adept to impress onlookers with a display of close combat prowess. The adept chooses a target and declares where the attack will strike, then makes an Impressive Strike Test as his close combat Attack Test. If the test succeeds, the adept hits the target in the designated area. Witnesses to this display of prowess may be impressed.

The adept compares the Impressive Strike Test result against the Social Defense of each character witnessing the attack. The adept adds a +1 bonus for each result level achieved to all Interaction Tests made against the affected characters. This effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Impressive Strike rank.

Improve Armor

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Improve Armor talent temporarily increases the Armor rating of a set of armor or a shield. This involves a 30 minute long ritual based on the Forge Armor talent, during which time the adept mimics a mock forging of the armor or shield. The adept must know the Forge Armor talent and must also have access to a fire at least the size of a campfire to perform this ritual.

The adept makes an Improve Armor Test against a Difficulty Number equal to the armor or shield's current Physical + Mystic Armor + 9. Improve Armor Tests made to improve thread armor or shields are always made against the armor's Spell Defense. An Average result increases the armor or shield's Physical or Mystic Armor by +1. Thread armor or shields require a Good result for improvement. A Poor result counts as one attempt to improve the armor, but otherwise imparts no benefit. A Pathetic result on any Improve Armor Test ruins normal armor; a Rule of One result ruins even thread armor or shields (see the **Game Concepts** chapter, p. 18). Improvements can be made to the item's Armor rating, regardless of any limitations reached by use of the Forge Armor talent.

During the Improve Armor ritual, the adept may attempt to improve the armor or shield a number of times equal to his Improve Armor rank. Each test adds an additional 30 minutes to the ritual. The effect of the talent lasts for 24 hours after the end of the ritual. An item can benefit from only one Improve Armor ritual at a time, but the talent may be used on the suit of armor or shield again once the duration has expired.

Improve Blade

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Improve Blade talent temporarily increases the Damage step of a melee, throwing, or missile weapon (but not the missiles themselves). This involves a 30 minute long ritual based on the Forge Blade talent, during which time the adept mimics a mock forging of the weapon. The adept must know the Forge Blade talent and must also have access to a fire at least the size of a campfire to perform this ritual. The adept makes an Improve Blade Test against a Difficulty Number equal to the weapon's current Damage step+9. Improve Blade Tests made to improve thread weapons are always made against the weapon's Spell Defense. An Average result adds +1 to the weapon's Damage step. Thread weapons require a Good result for improvement. A Poor result counts as one attempt to improve the weapon, but otherwise imparts no bonus. A Pathetic result on any Improve Blade Test ruins normal weapons; a Rule of One result ruins even thread weapons (see the **Game Concepts** chapter, p. 18). Improvements can be made to the weapon's Damage step, regardless of any limitations reached by use of the Forge Blade talent.

During the Improve Blade ritual, the adept may attempt to improve the weapon a number of times equal to his Improve Blade rank. Each test adds an additional 30 minutes to the ritual. The effect of the talent lasts for 24 hours after the end of the ritual. A weapon can benefit from only one Improve Blade ritual at a time, but the talent may be used on the weapon again once the duration has expired.

Incite Mob

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

INCITE MOB TABLE

Group Size	Result Level
Talent rank × 10	Average
Talent rank × 25	Good
Talent rank × 50	Excellent
Talent rank × 100	Extraordinary

The Incite Mob talent motivates a group to act against a target character. The adept spends at least 1 minute shouting and yelling, encouraging a group of sentient beings into action. The adept outlines a grievance against the target character and proposes an action—peaceful or violent, constructive or destructive—for the mob to take, then makes an Incite Mob Test against the highest Social Defense among the group. The group's size determines the result level required to motivate them, as given in the Incite Mob Table. If the test succeeds, the mob follows the adept's proposed course of action for a number of hours equal to his Incite Mob rank. On a Pathetic result, the adept himself becomes the target of the grievance and action he proposed to the mob. Once motivated and sent into action, a mob becomes largely uncontrollable. The adept can only regain control of the mob by somehow gaining their attention long enough to make a second, more successful, Incite Mob Test.

Incite Stampede

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Incite Stampede talent makes a group of animals stampede. The adept spends at least 1 minute running and screaming in and around the animals he is trying to stampede, then makes an Incite Stampede Test against the highest Social Defense among the herd. The number of animals in the group determines the result level required to start a stampede, as given in the Incite Stampede Table. If the test succeeds, the animals stampede uncontrollably in a direction chosen by the adept, continuing to rampage for a number of hours equal to the adept's Incite Stampede rank, or until they are exhausted, or until they encounter a great enough danger or obstacle to stop the stampede. On a Pathetic result, the animals stampede in a random direction, determined by the gamemaster. A second, more successful, Incite Stampede Test can stop a stampeding herd, although the practical problem of running around and screaming loud enough to be heard by the animals limits this use.

INCITE STAMPEDE TABLE

Group Size	Result Level
Talent rank × 10	Average
Talent rank × 25	Good
Talent rank × 50	Excellent
Talent rank × 100	Extraordinary

Item History

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Item History talent allows an adept to learn the history of an enchanted or mundane item. The adept must carry the item on his person for a week, studying it carefully for 1 hour each night. After a week of study, the adept makes an Item History Test against the item's Spell Defense. The result level determines the amount of knowledge gained. An Average result reveals one Test Knowledge from the item's history; a Good result reveals two Test Knowledges; an Excellent result reveals three Test Knowledges; an Extraordinary result reveals four Test Knowledges from the item's history.

When Item History is used on mundane items (which do not have True patterns), each result level provides the adept with a different piece of information about that item. The Item History talent can be used multiple times on the same item, each test requiring another week of study. The result level of each additional Item History test determines the number of new Test Knowledges that the adept discovers. An adept can learn a maximum number of Test Knowledges equal to his Item History rank. He can learn more Test Knowledges once he increases his Item History rank.

Millat, an elven Troubadour, is currently studying the Ring of Gorlianna. He has already learned three Test Knowledges from the ring's history. On his latest Item History attempt, Millat achieves a Good result, giving him knowledge of two more Test Knowledges from the ring's past. This means Millat now knows a total of five Test Knowledges from the history of the Ring of Gorlianna. However, because Millat knows the Item History talent to Rank 4, he can only learn a maximum of four Test Knowledges; the fifth Test Knowledge remains out of his reach until he improves his Item History talent to Rank 5, allowing him to make another attempt to learn more of the ring's secrets.

See the **Workings of Magic** chapter, p. 251, for more information on threads and Pattern Knowledge, and the **Thread Magic** chapter, p. 264, for more information on weaving threads to magic items and how Key Knowledges are used.

Karma Ritual

Step Number: Rank
Action: NA
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

Unique for each Discipline. The Karma Ritual talent allows an adept to replenish his pool of Karma Points. All Disciplines have their own unique Karma rituals. An example is included with the

description for each Discipline (see the individual **Disciplines** chapters). The ritual takes 30 minutes to complete and can only be performed once each day. Once the adept has completed his Karma ritual, he can purchase a number of Karma Points equal to his Karma Ritual rank by paying a number of Legend Points equal to the number of Karma Points purchased × 10. For example, an adept purchasing 4 Karma Points has to pay 40 Legend Points. These Karma Points are added to the adept's Current Karma Point total. An adept cannot have more Karma Points than his Maximum Karma Points total allows (see **Karma** in the **Creating Characters** chapter, p. 47, for more information).

If the gamemaster is using the optional rule for Multi-Discipline Karma Rituals (see **Learning New Disciplines** in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 425), he may require an adept to learn and improve each of his Discipline's Karma Ritual talents independently. The adept is still restricted to performing only one Karma ritual each day, although he may choose which Discipline benefits from the Karma Point increase.

Lasting Impression

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Lasting Impression talent allows an adept to impress a group of onlookers. An adept can only use Lasting Impression on first meeting a group of characters or when preparing to leave a group to whom he will not return for at least 24 hours. The adept selects those upon whom he wants to leave an impression, to a maximum number of characters equal to his Lasting Impression rank. The adept strikes a dramatic pose, then makes a Lasting Impression Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, a powerful image of the adept is imprinted in the target's mind. The adept adds his Lasting Impression rank as a bonus to any Interaction Tests he makes against the affected targets for a number of weeks equal to the adept's Lasting Impression rank. Once impressed, a target cannot be so affected by the same adept until the talent's duration expires. After using the talent, if the adept is seen by any of the target characters within 24 hours of his departure, the effect immediately ends.

Leadership

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Leadership talent allows an adept to lead a group of gamemaster characters. The target characters must all harbor at least a Friendly attitude toward the adept (see the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 90 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). The adept makes a Leadership Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. The result level determines the talent's effect and duration. An Average result means the target group treats the adept as their leader for his Leadership rank × 10 minutes; a Good result for a number of hours equal to his Leadership rank; an Excellent result means the target group treats the adept as their leader for his Leadership rank × 2 hours. While under the adept's leadership, the target characters will follow his lead. They will attack if the adept leads them into battle, retreat if he retreats, or establish a typical camp when he calls for a break, including setting watches if nightfall is approaching. Characters affected by this talent cannot be commanded to take an action that is contrary to their own nature or places them in more harm than the adept they follow is willing to himself pursue.

Life Check

Step Number: Rank + Toughness
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0 (see text)

The Life Check talent gives an adept a last chance to save himself from dying. Each use of the Life Check talent uses up one of the adept's Recovery Tests. If the adept does not have a Recovery Test available to him at the time of death, he cannot use this talent. Should the adept's Current Damage total equal or exceed his Death Rating, he immediately makes a Life Check Test in place of a Recovery Test. If the test result lowers the adept's Current Damage total below his Death Rating, he avoids dying. If his Current Damage is less than his Unconsciousness Rating, he regains or retains consciousness. If the Life Check Test result is not sufficient to bring the adept's Current Damage total below his Death Rating, then the adept is dead; he may not make another Life Check Test. An unsuccessful use of the Life Check talent does not prevent the application of other forms of healing, such as a last chance salve, to the adept (see **Healing Aids** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 450).

Lifesight

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Lifesight talent allows an adept to see the strength and composition of another being's life force. The adept makes a Lifesight Test and compares the result against the Spell Defense of each living being within a range equal to his Lifesight rank × 10 yards. If the test succeeds, the adept can see that target's life force and gains qualitative information about it. A vibrant, healthy life force appears as a strong but delicate latticework of light and opalescent force. Weaker life forces are dimmer, and parts of the latticework may appear warped or broken. The life force of a character near death shows almost no visible latticework, just a few disconnected bright spots, one or more of which is fading. Each use of the Lifesight talent lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Lifesight rank. An adept can use Lifesight to view a target's life force through solid, non-living objects. For example, a character could see the life forces of people hiding behind a brick wall, but not someone hiding inside the bole of a tree.

Lion Heart

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Lion Heart talent improves an adept's ability to resist fear and being intimidated. The adept uses his Lion Heart step in place

of his Willpower step when making tests to resist the effects of fear or Intimidation.

Lion Spirit

Step Number: Rank
Action: NA
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Lion Spirit talent increases an adept's defense against fear and intimidation. The adept adds his Lion Spirit rank as a bonus to his Spell and Social Defense against such effects.

Lip Reading

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Lip Reading talent gives an adept a discreet method of eavesdropping on a character's conversation. The adept must be able to see the speaker's lips to use this talent. The adept makes a Lip Reading Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, he is able to read what the speaker is saying for a number of minutes equal to the Lip Reading Test result.

The adept must be able to understand the language that the character is speaking in order to himself understand what is being said. If he doesn't, he can phonetically sound out what the target is saying, allowing someone else nearby who can understand the language to translate for him.

Lizard Leap

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Lizard Leap talent allows an adept to jump to a great height. The adept makes a Lizard Leap Test, the result of which is the maximum distance he can jump vertically, in yards. During the jump, the adept can leap up to half this distance horizontally, but the combined distance traveled cannot exceed the Lizard Leap Test result, nor can it exceed the adept's Combat Movement.

Lizard Leap can also be used to avoid environmental hazards, such as pit traps and falling rocks. If the adept is aware of the threat, he may make a Lizard Leap Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster to avoid being struck. If the test succeeds, the adept manages to leap clear at the last instant. Lizard Leap can only be used to avoid environmental hazards; it cannot be used in place of a normal Avoid Blow Test.

Lock Picking

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Lock Picking talent conjures a set of pale blue telekinetic lock picks which an adept uses to open mundane and magical locks. The adept makes a Lock Picking Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster for mundane locks, or against the lock's Spell Defense for magical locks. If the test succeeds, the lock opens.

The adept may attempt to open the lock a number of times equal to his Lock Picking rank. Should he fail all of his attempts, or on any Pathetic result, he cannot open that lock until he increases his Lock Picking rank.

Lock Sense

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Lock Sense talent allows an adept to detect ordinary or magical traps placed on locks, or that are triggered by someone opening the lock. It also allows an adept to detect hidden locks, like those often found on secret doors. The adept makes a Lock Sense Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster for mundane locks and traps, or against the lock or trap's Spell Defense, if magical. If the test succeeds, the adept detects the trap or lock's presence. An adept must be within 2 yards of a lock to use this talent. Each use of Lock Sense lasts only long enough to sense one lock or trap. A hidden lock must first be found before it can be checked for traps; the adept must make a separate Lock Sense Test for each effect.

Maneuver

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Maneuver talent allows an adept to sacrifice his action to avoid an opponent's attacks, allowing him to move into a more advantageous position against that opponent. The adept makes a Maneuver Test, the result of which replaces his base Physical Defense against that opponent for the remainder of the round, even if it is lower than his normal Physical Defense. If the adept successfully avoids all attacks directed at him by his opponent that round, he may add his Maneuver rank to the result of the first close combat Attack Test he makes against his now outmaneuvered opponent during the following round. If his attack is successful, the adept may also add his Maneuver rank as a bonus to his Damage Test against that same opponent.

Matrix Strike

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Matrix Strike talent allows an adept to attack a target character's spell matrices. The adept makes a Thread Weaving Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, one of the target's spell matrices has been struck and the adept makes a Matrix Strike Test as his Damage Test to determine how much damage is caused to the matrix. The matrix's Mystic Armor protects against this damage. Any of the target's spell matrices can be attacked through the use of this talent, including Spell, Enhanced, Armored or Shared matrices, and matrix objects. Unless the adept can see it, the matrix struck is determined randomly. See **Spell Matrix Types** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 287, for information on spell matrices and how they are damaged and repaired.

Melee Weapons

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

An adept uses the Melee Weapons talent in close combat to make a melee attack against a target with a hand-held weapon, like a sword, axe, or dagger. The adept makes a Melee Weapons Test against the target's Physical Defense. If the test succeeds, the attack hits the target. The adept makes a Damage Test for the weapon used to determine how much damage he causes. See **Melee Attacks** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 409, for more information.

MEMORIZE IMAGE

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Memorize Image talent stores images of a person or event in an adept's mind, allowing them to be recalled later to form the central image for an illusion. The adept makes a Memorize Image Test and notes down the type of image and the test result associated with it. The image can afterwards be used in Illusionism spells with a Learning Difficulty no greater than the Memorize Image Test result (see **Learning Spells** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 283).

The maximum-Circle spell that the image may be used with is equal to the adept's Memorize Image rank.

Enyiat, a human Illusionist, sees a spectacular river of fire near Death's Sea and decides to memorize the image. He makes a Memorize Image Test with a result of 12. Enyiat's player notes down a brief description of the image and the Memorize Image Test result, then compares the result against the Learning Difficulty of spells listed on the Spell Difficulty Table, p. 283). He sees that Enyiat has memorized the image well enough to use it as the basis for illusions of Fourth Circle or less.

The realism of illusions created from images memorized through use of this talent is greatly enhanced. The adept adds his Memorize Image rank as a bonus to the Disbelief Difficulty of any illusions based on a memorized image.

The maximum number of images that an adept may have memorized at any time is equal to his Memorize Image rank. Memorized images can be forgotten, but only with some effort. The adept may forget a previously memorized image by making a successful Memorize Image Test against his own Spell Defense.

METAL WARD

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Metal Ward talent reduces the damage inflicted on an adept from attacks utilizing any form of metal. This includes most weapons, the spikes in pit traps, and so on. The adept makes a Metal Ward Test against the higher of his own or his armor's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, he adds his Metal Ward rank as a bonus to his Physical Armor for a number of rounds equal to the Metal Ward Test result.

MIMIC VOICE

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Mimic Voice talent allows an adept to mimic any voice he hears. An adept uses Mimic Voice to both learn the voice and mimic it. If the adept does not understand the language of the person whose voice he is trying to mimic, Mimic Voice produces the equivalent of baby babble; the sounds are right, but the words don't mean anything.

When an adept hears a voice he wants to mimic, he makes a Mimic Voice Test against the speaker's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the adept can attempt to mimic that voice any time for a number of hours equal to his Mimic Voice rank. When attempting to fool someone by mimicking a voice, the adept makes a Mimic Voice Test, the result of which becomes the Detection Difficulty for any tests made to detect the mimicry.

MIND WAVE

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Mind Wave talent confuses and confounds a target character. An adept must be standing adjacent to, and remain within 2 yards of, the target to use this talent against him. The adept makes a Mind Wave Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, all conscious thoughts are washed away from the target's mind. The character completely loses his train of thought—the talent's magic imparts a vaguely pleasant sensation—and is considered Harried for the duration of the talent (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408). This condition also affects his Social Defense. While in this confused state, the character will not initiate any actions, although he will defend himself if attacked. The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Mind Wave rank.

The adept cannot communicate with others during the talent's duration; it requires his complete concentration to maintain the effect. Each round, the target character may make a Willpower Test against the adept's Mind Wave step. If the test succeeds, he shakes off the euphoria and regains his mental faculties, thus ending the talent.

MISSILE TWISTER

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Missile Twister talent envelops an adept with a funnel of air that flings arrows and other missiles away from him in every direction. The adept makes a Missile Twister Test, the result of which is the number of rounds the talent remains in effect. During this time, the adept adds his Missile Twister rank as a bonus to his Physical Defense against ranged combat attacks directed at him.

The twister is especially effective against lighter projectiles, like blowpipe darts, arrows and bolts. Only extremely accurate missile fire will hit an adept protected by this talent. Increase the result level needed to hit the adept with missile weapons by one level; in most cases, the adept will only be hit on a Good result (and Armor-Defeating Hits will require an Extraordinary result) on a missile Attack Test against his modified Physical Defense.

MISSILE WEAPONS

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

An adept uses the Missile Weapons talent to make a missile attack against a target, using a bow, crossbow, or some other weapon that fires projectiles. The adept makes a Missile Weapons Test against the target's Physical Defense. If the test succeeds, the attack hits the target. The adept makes a Damage Test for the weapon used to determine how much damage he causes.

See **Missile Attacks** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 412, for more information.

MOMENTUM ATTACK

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Momentum Attack talent allows an adept to make an additional close combat attack while his opponent recovers from the first blow. The adept makes his initial close combat Attack Test against his opponent, as normal. On a Good result, he may make a Momentum Attack against the same opponent. After the

adept has resolved the damage from his first attack, he makes a Momentum Attack Test against his opponent's Physical Defense. If the test succeeds, he makes a Damage Test as normal.

Damage bonuses applied to the initial attack do not carry over to the Momentum Attack Test. For example, if the adept uses the Crushing Blow talent with his first attack, he does not add that damage bonus to his Momentum Attack. This talent can only be used once per round.

Mount Attack

Step Number: Rank
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Mount Attack talent allows an adept to increase the accuracy of his mount's attacks. The adept must be riding the mount for it to benefit from this talent. The adept adds his Mount Attack rank as a bonus to the mount's Attack Test.

Mount Durability

Step Number: Rank
Action: NA
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Mount Durability talent increases a mount's ability to take damage. Apart from only being effective on an adept's mount, the Mount Durability talent is otherwise identical to the Durability talent (see **Durability**, p. 180). Each rank in the Mount Durability talent increases the mount's Unconsciousness Rating by +5 and its Death Rating by +6.

An adept may transfer the effect of the talent from one mount to another, but only one of his mounts may benefit from this talent at a time. The Mount Durability talent only works on living mounts, not mechanical, undead or spirit mounts (see **Spirit Mount**, p. 203).

Moving Earth

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Moving Earth talent allows an adept to animate a section of earth, creating a carpet on which he and other passengers can ride. The adept makes a Moving Earth Test, the result of which is the number of hours the talent remains in effect. The section of earth animated is 3 yards by 3 yards in size and 1 yard thick. It has a Combat Movement rate of 38 yards and a Full Movement rate of 76 yards per round. The section of earth has a Carrying Capacity equal to the adept's Moving Earth rank × 200 pounds.

When traveling, the moving earth acts as a living shield between its riders and any attackers. The adept adds his Moving Earth rank to the Mystic Armor of anyone riding on the earth section. All passengers add +3 to their Physical Armor. Once the section of earth is in motion, the adept must concentrate to control the direction and speed, or to stop and start its movement. If his concentration is broken, the earth section stops moving and the talent ends.

Multi-Charge

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1+ (per attack; see text)

The Multi-Charge talent allows an adept to make Charging attacks against one or more targets during a combat round (see **Mounted Combat** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 413). The adept makes a Multi-Charge Test against each opponent's Physical Defense, taking 1 Strain Point of damage per attack. If the test succeeds, he makes a Damage Test for the weapon used, as normal. An adept may charge a number of opponents equal to his Multi-Charge rank. He cannot attack an opponent more than once, however. The adept must be able to reach all of his targets within the movement allowed to him that round.

Multi-Shot

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1+ (per attack; see text)

The Multi-Shot talent allows an adept to make multiple missile weapon attacks against one or more targets during a combat round (see **Ranged Combat** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 411). The adept makes a Multi-Shot Test against his opponent's Physical Defense, taking 1 Strain Point of damage per attack. If the test succeeds, he makes a Damage Test for the weapon used, as normal. An adept may attempt a number of attacks equal to his Multi-Shot rank. Attacks may be directed against just one target, or divided up as the adept desires among any targets in range.

Multi-Strike

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1+ (per attack; see text)

The Multi-Strike talent allows an adept to make multiple close combat attacks against one or more targets during a combat round (see **Close Combat** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 409). The adept makes a Multi-Strike Test against his opponent's Physical Defense, taking 1 Strain Point of damage per attack. If the test succeeds, he makes a Damage Test for the weapon used, as normal. An adept may attempt a number of attacks equal to his Multi-Strike rank. Attacks may be directed against just one target, or divided up as the adept desires among any targets within reach.

Multi-Tongue

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1 (per minute; see text)

The Multi-Tongue talent allows an adept to temporarily speak any language, as long as he has heard at least 7 different words spoken in that language. The adept listens to the speaker, then makes a Multi-Tongue Test against the Learning Difficulty of the language (see **Speak Language**, p. 201), adding +2 to the Difficulty Number if it is a dialect. If the test succeeds, the adept can speak that language for a number of minutes equal to his Multi-Tongue rank. Each minute of speaking, the adept makes a Multi-Tongue Test to see how well he is communicating. The test result determines the level of comprehension attained. Simple sentences or ideas, only require a result of 2; normal conversation requires a result of 6; technical conversations require a result of 10; conversations about philosophy require a result of 13.

The Strain cost reflects the concentration needed to establish and maintain communication for each minute of conversation.

Multi-Weaving

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Multi-Weaving talent allows a magician to weave multiple spell threads. This is the only way a spell thread can be woven and a spell cast during the same round. Using this talent, a magician can weave more than one spell thread in a round, making a Thread Weaving Test for one thread and a Multi-Weaving Test for another, or the magician can make a Multi-Weaving Test to weave

a spell thread and a Spellcasting Test to cast the spell. For example, a magician could make a Thread Weaving Test to weave a spell thread, then weave a second spell thread using Multi-Weaving. If his first Thread Weaving Test failed, he could still use Multi-Weaving to weave another spell thread that round. Alternatively, the magician could weave a spell thread with Multi-Weaving, then make a Spellcasting Test to cast the spell, all in the same round.

Multi-Weaving can also be used to weave multiple spell threads in a single round, in the same way as a standard Thread Weaving allows (see **Casting Spells** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 285). Multi-Weaving and Thread Weaving cannot be used to weave the same spell thread; the magician cannot use Multi-Weaving to "reweave" the thread for a failed Thread Weaving Test, although, if the spell requires multiple threads, he can use Multi-Weaving to weave another different spell thread. For example, a magician fails his Thread Weaving Test to weave a thread for a spell requiring only 1 spell thread. He cannot use Multi-Weaving to "reweave" the spell thread in the same round. If the spell required 2 spell threads, however, he could use Multi-Weaving to weave the second thread, then use Multi-Weaving to weave the remaining thread and cast the spell in the next round.

MYSTIC AIM

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Mystic Aim talent allows an adept to draw a steady aim on a target with a missile weapon. The adept spends 1 round aiming at a target within line of sight and range of his weapon, then makes a Mystic Aim Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a small visible mark appears on the target. The adept adds his Mystic Aim rank as a bonus to the next missile Attack Test he makes against the target.

Once the adept makes a missile Attack Test (even if against a different opponent) or if the target moves out of line of sight, the mark disappears and the bonus is lost. If the adept does not make a missile Attack Test within a number of rounds equal to his Mystic Aim rank then the mark disappears from the target. Mystic Aim cannot be used with the Aiming combat option (see **Combat Options** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 403).

The mark created this talent is unique to the adept. A mark might appear as two or three plain white dots, a symbol from his home town or village, or some other image personal to the adept.

NETHERWALK

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Netherwalk talent allows an adept to send his spirit forth to walk through astral space. This talent is used infrequently, as its use poses a grave danger to those who travel in astral space. The adept makes a Netherwalk Test, the result of which is the number of minutes his spirit can move about in astral form. The adept must return his spirit to his body before the talent expires, otherwise his spirit becomes separated from his body. Should this happen, the adept dies, and his spirit is doomed to wander astral space. The adept may end his Netherwalk at any time before the duration expires, but can only do so when his spirit has re-entered his body.

While in astral space, the adept can pass through many physical barriers that exist only in the physical world. Any attempts to pass through objects with a Spell Defense rating require the adept to make a Netherwalk Test against the object's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the adept can continue on past the obstacle. When traveling in astral space, the adept can move at a maximum speed equal to his Combat Movement rate.

NETHERWALK DAMAGE TABLE

Region Type	Damage per Minute	Spell Defense
Safe	Step 4	+0
Open	Step 8	+4
Tainted	Step 12	+8
Corrupt	Step 16	+12

During the time he spends Netherwalking, an adept exposes himself to the dangers of astral space. These can be from the polluted nature of astral space, as well as the presence of Horrors on the astral plane. The adept suffers damage for each minute his spirit spends in astral space, the amount received dependent on the astral region type through which the adept is traveling, as determined by the gamemaster.

The Netherwalk Damage Table shows the damage that an adept takes during each minute of astral travel, based on the classification of the region.

The astral pollution present can work to an adept's advantage by helping to obscure him from the view of any nearby Horrors. This obscuring effect is also dependent on the type of region through which the adept is traveling. The pollution adds a bonus to the adept's Spell Defense, as shown in the Netherwalk Damage Table, based on the region's classification.

See **Casting Raw Magic** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 289, for more information on Safe, Open, Tainted, and Corrupt region types.

Orbiting Spy

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Orbiting Spy talent allows an adept to summon a spirit that serves as a lookout. The adept makes an Orbiting Spy Test, the result of which is the number of hours that the spirit is summoned for. The spy spirit hovers at a height of 1 to 20 yards, traveling in a circular pattern centered on the adept; the adept determines exactly how high or low the spirit hovers. Conjured spies cannot affect or be affected by the physical world. An orbiting spy is immune to most spells, except those which disrupt or dispel magic. Whenever the adept wants to use the spirit to detect something, he makes an Orbiting Spy Test in place of a Perception Test for the spirit. If the test succeeds, the spy spirit informs the adept of anything unusual it notices. This requires the adept's concentration that round. An adept can have only one orbiting spy active at a time.

Many adepts using the Orbiting Spy talent give the spirit specific instructions regarding what to look for, in order to prevent unpleasant surprises. An adept may direct the spirit to look out for and inform him of the presence of a number of objects or creatures equal to his Orbiting Spy rank. The spirit will remain on constant alert for these creatures or objects; this does not require the adept to concentrate to direct the spy spirit. The gamemaster makes Orbiting Spy Tests for the spirit and advises the adept of the results, if applicable. Spy spirits can see into the astral plane as well as the physical world, so can inform the adept of anything that may be lurking around in astral space.

Picking Pockets

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Picking Pockets talent combines a deft touch with minor levitation magic to allow an adept to remove an item from the pocket or pouch of another character. The adept makes a Picking Pockets Test, the result of which becomes the Difficulty Number for any attempts made to notice the theft. Anyone able to observe the adept's action, including the target character, may make a Perception Test against the Detection Difficulty to notice the action immediately after the action has occurred.

Pin

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Pin talent allows an adept to corner an opponent by making a rapid series of whirling attacks or threatening gestures, thus restricting the opponent's movement. The talent can be used against a number of characters equal to the adept's Pin rank, but they must all be within close combat reach of the adept. The adept makes a Pin Test as his close combat Attack Test against the highest Physical Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, the targets are pinned by the adept and cannot voluntarily move away from him. The Pin attack inflicts no damage.

A pinned target may only attack the adept, but incurs a penalty equal to the adept's Pin rank to all of his Action Tests. The talent effect lasts until the end of the following round or until the adept next acts, whichever occurs first.

Kricklen, a t'skrang Swordmaster, attempts to pin two enemy Wizards, one with a Physical Defense of 7, the other with a Physical Defense of 10. This makes Kricklen's target Difficulty Number 11 (10 + 1). He makes a successful Pin Test, with a result of 11. The Wizards cannot voluntarily move away from the t'skrang until he next acts. They also suffer a –4 penalty (the Swordmaster's Pin rank) to their Action Tests.

Plant Shelter

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Plant Shelter talent allows an adept to make the nearby plant life grow rapidly enough to form a protective shelter. The adept sings to the plants to gain their cooperation, mystically urging them to grow into a shelter according to his instructions. The shelter takes 15 minutes to form, and lasts for a number of hours equal to the adept's Plant Shelter rank. The adept makes a Plant Shelter Test, the result of which becomes the shelter's Barrier Rating (see the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 106 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). The shelter has a Physical Armor rating equal to the adept's Plant Shelter rank.

A shelter holds the adept and a number of human-sized characters equal to the adept's Plant Shelter rank. Trolls and obsidimen count as two human-sized characters, dwarfs as one-half human-size, and windlings as only one-quarter human-size. If more than the allowed number of characters crowds into a shelter, the talent's effect is disrupted and the plants return to their former shape.

Poison Resistance

Step Number: Rank + Toughness
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Poison Resistance talent increases an adept's resistance to poison. The adept may make a Poison Resistance Test in place of a Toughness Test when resisting the effects of poison. The adept can also make a Poison Resistance Test in place of a Recovery Test when healing the damage inflicted by the poison. Each Poison Resistance Test an adept makes, whether successful or not, removes some of the poison from the adept's body. A few drops of blood seep through his skin, carrying away some of the poison affecting him. Reduce the Difficulty Number by –1 for each successive Poison Resistance Test made against that same dose of poison. See the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 121 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information on poisons and how they work.

Questor

Step Number: Rank
Action: NA
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

Available to all adepts, but only with the gamemaster's permission. The Questor talent allows adepts to tap into the powers of the Passions of Barsaive. Questors are characters who exemplify the qualities of one of the worshipped Passions. Questor abilities and the Passions of Barsaive are more fully described in the **Passions and Questors** chapter, p. 462.

Quickblade

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 2

The Quickblade talent allows an adept to make agile darting thrusts or cuts with his melee weapon. He must be wielding a melee weapon and must also declare use of the talent before Initiative is rolled. The adept uses his Quickblade step in place of his

Dexterity step for the Initiative Test. When using the Quickblade talent, the adept's Initiative Test is not modified by any Initiative Penalties for armor or shields.

Quick Shot

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1+ (per attack; see text)

The Quick Shot talent allows an adept to fire additional missiles at a target. The adept declares how many additional Quick Shot attacks he intends to make, to a maximum number equal to his Quick Shot rank. Each Quick Shot attack declared causes the adept 1 Strain Point of damage, which he takes regardless of how many attacks he actually makes. The adept's first missile attack is made with a Missile Weapons Test; successive attacks are made using a Quick Shot Test. All Quick Shot attacks are made against the target of the initial Missile Weapons Test. A Quick Shot attack must be successful for another attack to be made; an adept who fails a Quick Shot Test cannot make any more attacks using this talent that round. The adept makes a Damage Test, as normal, for each successful attack.

Rally

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0 (1; see text)

The Rally talent allows an adept to inspire his companions while in the midst of battle. If the adept is not able to be seen over the heads of his colleagues, he takes 1 Strain Point of damage to make himself heard. The adept declares those companions whom he wishes to rally, excluding himself, then makes a Rally Test, comparing the result against the Social Defense of each target character. If the test succeeds, the target may make an immediate Recovery Test if one is available to him; the talent provides no bonus Recovery Tests. Those affected by the Rally talent also ignore any Action Test penalties for being Harried or Knocked Down for 1 round (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 406). The adept can inspire a number of characters equal to his Rally rank.

Range Pattern

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Range Pattern talent increases the range of a magician's cast spell. It cannot be used on spells with a range of "Self" or "Touch." The magician declares he is using Range Pattern before weaving any spell threads, then makes a Range Pattern Test against the spell's Weaving Difficulty (or Reattunement Difficulty, if the spell has no threads). If the test succeeds and the spell is cast successfully, the magician increases the spell's normal range by his Range Pattern rank × 100 yards.

Read and Write Language

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1 (see text)

The Read and Write Language talent allows an adept to learn to read and write different languages. Using this talent, the adept may learn a maximum number of languages equal to his Read and Write Languages rank. If the adept has an unassigned Read and Write Language rank available, he can attempt to learn a new language.

LANGUAGE DIFFICULTY TABLE

Language	Learning Difficulty
Dwarf*	5
Sperethiel (Elf)**	6
Human	6
Obsidiman	7
Or'zet (Ork)***	6
T'skrang	7
Troll	6
Windling	7

* All characters beginning play with the Dwarf language know the Throalic dialect.
** The language of the elves is called *Sperethiel*.
*** The language of the orks is called *Or'zet*.

To learn a new language, the adept must have access to at least one page of text written in the language. The adept "reads" the page of text, which takes him 1 minute, then makes a Read and Write Language Test against the language's Learning Difficulty. If the test succeeds, the language has been learned and the adept notes it on his Character Record Sheet.

If the adept fails to learn the language, he cannot attempt to learn that same language again until he improves his Read and Write Language rank; he can attempt to learn other languages or dialects, however. Once a Read and Write Language rank has been assigned to a language, it cannot be used to learn any other language. The Learning Difficulty for the different racial languages is shown in the Language Difficulty Table; the values given reflect the difficulty of learning the standard "generic" versions of these languages.

When reading a language, the adept makes a Read and Write Language Test to see how well he understands what he is reading. The test result determines the level of comprehension. To understand simple sentences or ideas, such as "The mayor's house lies East of here," only requires a result of 2; histories or legends containing peculiar idioms or flowery phrases require a result of 6; manuals or other books filled with jargon specific to a field of study require a result of 10. To understand philosophical treatises on the nature of magic or other writings filled with specialized academic language and abstract ideas requires a result of 13. When writing a language, use the same Difficulty Numbers as for reading, depending on the complexity of the topic the adept is writing about.

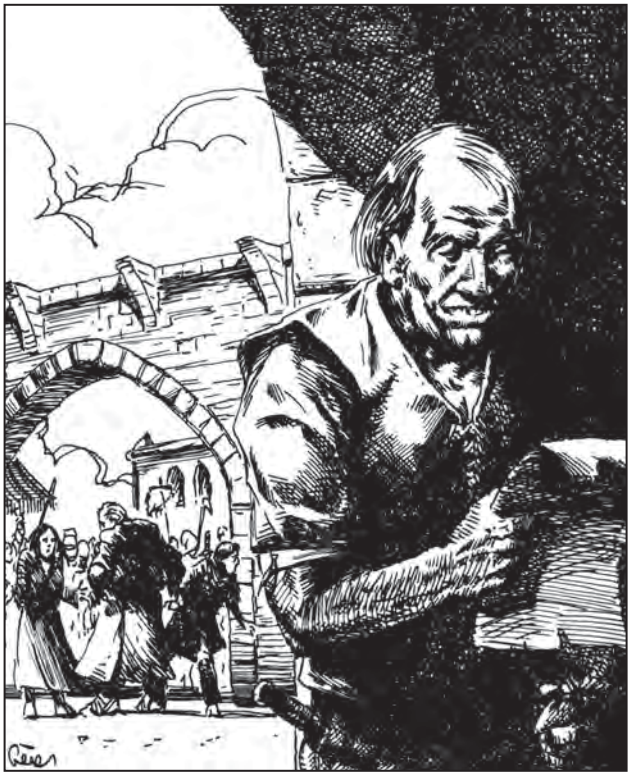
The effect of each Read and Write Language Test lasts for a number of hours equal to the adept's Read and Write Language rank. This allows the adept to read and write at the level achieved by that test result during this time. If the adept has a requirement to read or write text at a more complex level, he must make another Read and Write Language Test. The Strain cost reflects the concentration required during this time. It takes the adept 1 minute to read a page of text. Writing down a page of text takes him 10 minutes.

Dialects

Languages are often complex and most possess many different variations, or dialects. These dialects are sometimes regional, others by city, or even by kaer. Adepts attempting to learn a dialect add +2 to the Learning Difficulty of the base "racial" language. The adept must know how to read and write the "racial" language before he can attempt to learn a dialect of that language.

Once learned, any dialects that an adept knows are recorded separately; the dialect is noted on the adept's Character Record Sheet in parentheses beside the language it is based on. An adept can learn a number of dialects for each "racial" language he knows equal to his Read and Write Language rank. For example, all player characters begin game play knowing how to read and write Dwarf with a Throalic dialect, which is noted in parentheses on their Character Record Sheet.

When attempting to read or write in a dialect, an adept who knows the base "racial" language, but not the dialect, adds +2 to the Difficulty Number of his Read and Write Language Tests.



Read and Write Magic

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0 (see text)

The Read and Write Magic talent allows an adept to read and write magical writing, such as that found on scrolls, or magical glyphs. For each page of writing that the adept is attempting to translate, he makes a Read and Write Magic Test against the writing's Difficulty Number, determined by the gamemaster. If the test succeeds, the result level determines how well the adept understands the writing. An Average result allows the adept to understand the basic gist of the text, but not any subtle or complex ideas it contains; a Good or Excellent result means the adept understands the subtleties of the text, though he might misinterpret obscure clues or riddles; an Extraordinary result means the adept completely understands the magical writing and easily deciphers any hints, clues, or hidden meanings.

The Read and Write Magic talent also allows a magician to learn new spells and write them into his grimoire. Without knowledge of this talent, a magician cannot learn new spells. A magician can attempt to learn only one spell per day, unless he sacrifices Recovery Tests. For each Recovery Test he sacrifices, the adept may make an additional Read and Write Magic Test. The magician makes a Read and Write Magic Test against the spell's Learning Difficulty. If the test succeeds, the magician has learned the spell and can then write it in his grimoire. See **Learning Spells** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 283, for more information on learning and scribing spells.

Reshape Object

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 2

The Reshape Object talent allows an adept to change the shape, but not the mass, of non-living objects. The adept makes a Reshape Object Test against the higher of the object's Physical Armor, Barrier Rating, Spell Defense, or a Difficulty Number of 6. If the test succeeds, the adept reshapes the object into a new form over a 10 minute period. An adept can reshape a maximum weight of material equal to his Reshape Object rank × 20 pounds.

The effect of the Reshape Object talent is permanent. The complexity of the final form should be taken into consideration. If the adept wants to reform an object into something more ornate or intricate than the original, the gamemaster may require a Good result on the Reshape Object Test, for instance.

Camlan, a human Elementalist, picks up a 10 pound gold ingot, then runs his hands over it, stroking and coaxing the metal into a new shape. After 10 minutes of activity, he makes a successful Reshape Object Test agaisnt a Difficulty Number of 6. Where was once a simple ingot of gold, now sits a plain golden cup.

Resist Taunt

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Resist Taunt talent allows an adept to resist the effects of attacks directed against his Social Defense. Any time another character's social action affects the adept, he may make a Resist Taunt Test against the character's Interaction Test result. If the test succeeds, the adept resists the effect of the Interaction Test—he steels himself and reconsiders his response at the last instant.

The Resist Taunt talent works similarly to the Avoid Blow talent, except that it is only effective against social attacks such as Persuasion, Taunt, Intimidation, or other similar talents or Interaction Tests. The adept can use this talent a number of times each round equal to his Resist Taunt rank, but only once against each social attack directed at him during a round.

Segue, a t'skrang Troubadour, has a Social Defense of 7. Kricklen, a t'skrang Swordmaster, Taunts him—some quip about Segue being able to play music better with his tail than he can with his lute—with a Taunt Test result of 14. Segue chooses to ignore the Taunt, so he decides to use his Resist Taunt talent. He rolls a 15 on his Resist Taunt Test—a success! Strumming his lute Segue puts on an air of blatant disdain. Kricklen, realizing his Taunt has failed, blushes and flails his own tail around in frustration.

Riposte

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 2

The Riposte talent allows an adept to block an opponent's melee attack, possibly turning it back on his erstwhile attacker. The adept uses his melee weapon to make a Riposte Test against his opponent's Attack Test result. If the test succeeds, the adept parries or blocks the attack, and may immediately counterattack, comparing the Riposte Test result against his opponent's Physical Defense. On a Good result, the riposting attack hits and the adept makes a Damage Test, as normal. Riposte Tests can result in Armor-Defeating Hits, but only if the adept achieves an Extraordinary result (one level higher than normal).

An adept can only riposte attacks that he is aware of and can react against. If the adept is Blindsided, by being attacked from behind, for example, or Surprised, he cannot riposte the blow (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 406). The adept can use this talent a number of times each round equal to his Riposte rank, but may only make a single counterattack per round.

Riposte Tests can only be made against melee Attack Tests directed against the adept, including an opponent's Riposte Test if he also knows the Riposte talent or skill. A character may choose to Riposte or Avoid Blow a melee attack; he cannot do both against the same attack.

Riposting Longer Weapons

Optional Rule: When using Riposte against longer melee weapons, the adept may not be able to reach his opponent for an effective counterattack. The adept must be wielding a weapon with a Size no smaller than his opponent's weapon Size–2, in order to be able to inflict a return attack, and therefore damage him. For example, a damaging response to a lance (Size 6) attack may be made with a successful two-handed sword (Size 5) Riposte, but not with a broadsword (Size 3) Riposte.

The Riposte Test is made normally against long weapons and can deflect such attacks, thus avoiding harm, but the adept cannot inflict a return blow if his weapon is not large enough. There are conditions that bypass this handicap, however:

- The adept has a higher Initiative than his opponent.
- The adept has made a successful Maneuver Test against his opponent.
- The adept's opponent has made a Charging attack against him.

Any of these situations allow the adept to move into a position from where he can properly Riposte weapons of any Size. There may also be other situations not noted here, as determined by the gamemaster.

Ritual of the Ghost Master

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 2

Unique for each Discipline. The Ritual of the Ghost Master talent allows a character to summon the ghost of a former member of his Discipline to help a character advance to the next Circle (see the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 424). All Disciplines have their own version of this ritual. The ritual must be performed at night. A character begins by drawing a circle on the ground around himself, then spends 1 hour within the circle mimicking the use of each of his talents. At the end of the hour, the character closes his eyes and speaks the True Name of the ghost master he wishes to summon, then makes a Ritual of the Ghost Master Test against the ghost master's Spell Defense. If the test is successful, the ghost master appears. On a Pathetic result, the ghost master does not appear, but the character has opened a portal to astral space that remains open for a number of rounds equal to the Ritual of the Ghost Master Test result. The character has no control over the portal; other entities or Horrors may pass through the opening in astral space. Otherwise, the ritual has no effect. The Ritual of the Ghost Master can be attempted only once per day.

The first time the character successfully summons a ghost master, he must give the master an orichalcum coin. On accepting the coin, the ghost master returns to his own world. After three more nights have elapsed, the character may resummon the ghost master. When the ghost master reappears, the character enters into a training pledge with him by taking back the orichalcum coin, enchanted by the master to serve as a pledge coin. The ghost master trains the character whenever he is summoned, but fades away at daybreak.

As with normal training for Discipline advancement, the character must complete 40 hours of training with the ghost master within three weeks of accepting the pledge coin. If he does not finish his training within that time, he must begin again. The character can continue to train with the same ghost master each time he meets the requirements to advance to a new Circle, as long as the ghost master is of a sufficiently high Discipline Circle.

The training pledge made with the ghost master carries the same obligations as a standard training pledge, except that a character cannot train other characters as a ghost master.

For more information on ghost masters and training pledges, see the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 424.

Rushing Attack

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No (see text) **Strain**: 0 (see text)

The Rushing Attack talent allows an adept to move his Full Movement rate while also making a single attack that round. The adept may only use Dexterity-based talents or skills, such as Missile Weapons, Melee Weapons or True Shot, for his Attack Test. If an adept's Rushing Attack rank is less than the talent or skill rank used for the attack, the adept uses his Rushing Attack rank instead. For example, an adept with Missile Weapons at Rank 5 and Rushing Attack at Rank 3 can only use his Missile Weapons Talent at Rank 3 when making a Rushing Attack. The adept pays any Strain or Karma costs associated with the other talent.

Safe Path

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Safe Path talent allows an adept to find the safest path through unfamiliar territory by contacting an elemental spirit and discussing the terrain with it. The adept does not conjure the elemental, he only establishes mental contact with it. Sometimes the elemental animates a part of the nearby landscape, making its conversation "audible" to other characters. Unless the adept has knowledge of the elemental's language (see **Elemental Tongues**, p. 181), the elemental will only communicate using "sign language," utilizing its native element to produce simple, but effective, signals which the adept will need to translate. The adept makes a Safe Path Test, the result of which is the number of miles of safe passage the elemental can predict. The elemental communicates to the adept which is the safest path to take and provides an indication of what possible elemental dangers or natural beasts might lie ahead. For example, a Safe Path Test with a result of 21 means the elemental can direct the adept along the safest route along his intended direction of travel for at least the next 21 miles. If an obstacle lurks 25, or even 22, miles along the way, the elemental will not give the adept even a hint about it.

Keep in mind that what an elemental considers dangerous is likely to be vastly different than what poses danger to a Namegiver. An elemental's knowledge of an area is also limited by its type. For example, earth elementals know very little about flying or swimming dangers, but may be able to describe the kinds of arms and armor carried by other adventuring groups within the talent's effective distance. The information relayed by the elemental does not indicate the intentions of other character or creatures, merely their presence, and whether the elemental "thinks" they are dangerous. an adept is not guaranteed to make contact with an elemental; if the gamemaster determines an elemental is not present in the adept's vicinity, then the talent has no effect.

Safe Thought

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Safe Thought talent allows an adept to hide a specific type of thought or attitude from telepathic probes or other types of divination magic. This talent replaces the "real" thought or attitude with vague and non-committal images or sensations in response to the mind probe. The Safe Thought talent can only be used on a voluntary subject, who chooses which thought the talent will hide. For example, some typical thoughts that might be hidden by

this talent are "the best treasure we found in Parlainth" or "King Gerrik is an idiot."

The adept makes a Safe Thought Test against the subject's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the result becomes the target's Spell Defense against attempts to magically probe for the hidden thought. The thought remains hidden for a number of hours equal to the adept's Safe Thought rank. A successful mind probe discovers the hidden thought and also ends the talent.

Screaming Arrow

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Screaming Arrow talent allows an adept to intimidate a target character by shooting an arrow that literally "screams" at him. The arrow travels in a tight spiral, shrieking toward its target. The adept makes a Screaming Arrow Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the target becomes unnerved by the arrow's shrieking, and attempts to get away from the adept's line of sight at his fastest Movement rate.

The target remains frightened for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Screaming Arrow rank, during which time he will not willingly approach the adept. If the target character is not able to completely escape from the immediate area, he will attempt to move as far away as possible. If an opportunity presents itself for him to move out line of sight while the talent is in effect, he will do so. Each round, the target character makes a Willpower Test against the adept's Screaming Arrow step. If the test succeeds, the target overcomes his fear and the talent ends.

While the talent name might indicate otherwise, Screaming Arrow also works on other types of missiles, including crossbow bolts, sling bullets, and blowgun needles.

Second Attack

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Second Attack talent allows an adept to make an additional close combat or ranged attack in the same round. The adept uses the same weapon he wielded for his first Attack Test that round to make a Second Attack Test against his opponent's Physical Defense. If the test succeeds, the adept makes a Damage Test for the weapon, as normal.

Second Chance

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Second Chance talent allows an adept to reattempt a failed action. Whenever the adept fails an Action Test, he may use the Second Chance talent to immediately attempt the Action Test again. The adept makes a Second Chance Test against his opponent's Spell Defense, or the Spell Defense of the object he attempted his action against. If the test succeeds, the adept may immediately re-attempt the original action, taking any Strain or Karma costs and rerolling the Action dice, as if the adept was making the Action Test for the first time. The Second Chance talent can only be used once each round.

Second Weapon

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Second Weapon talent allows an adept to attack with two different melee weapons in the same round. The second weapon is held in the off-hand and must be at least one Size smaller than the adept's primary weapon. Both weapons must be able to be wielded with one hand. The adept makes a Second Weapon Test as a bonus Attack Test. If the test succeeds, the adept makes a Damage Test for the weapon, as normal. T'skrang characters may use a tail weapon as a second weapon.

Sense Magic Weapon

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Sense Magic Weapon talent allows an adept to sense magical weapons or other magical items. If the adept already knows that other nearby characters are carrying magical items, he may designate them to be excluded from his search. The adept makes a Sense Magic Weapon Test against the highest Spell Defense of

all magical treasures within the adept's Sense Magic Weapon rank × 10 yards. If the test succeeds, the adept learns the general direction and distance to the item. Because this talent is a "sense," the parameters are vague: directions are given in terms of left or right, back or forward, and above or below, relative to the adept's position. The distance "sensed" by the adept is rounded to the nearest 10 yard increment. For example, an adept with Sense Magic Weapon at Rank 4 might determine that a magical item lies below him and to his right, less than 40 yards away.

SENSE POISON

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Sense Poison talent allows an adept to smell the presence of poison in food, drink, and even the air. The adept makes a Sense Poison Test against the higher of the poison's Spell Defense or the Spell Defense of the creature or character (in the case of a poison stinger or poisoned weapon). If the test succeeds, the adept smells poison on the target substance, object or character. The maximum range at which the adept can detect poison is equal to his Sense Poison rank × 10 yards. If a poison is carried in a tightly sealed container, such as in a vial or flask, or if the poison comprises a natural part of an animal, such as a spider's or scorpion's venom, the adept requires a Good result on his Sense Poison Test to detect the poison's presence.

SHARED MATRIX

Step Number: Rank
Action: NA
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Shared Matrix is an improved type of spell matrix that can hold multiple spells. The combined spell Circles of all spells held within the matrix cannot exceed the Shared Matrix rank. For example, a Rank 7 Shared Matrix could hold one Third Circle spell and four First Circle spells, but could not hold two Fourth Circle spells. The matrix's Mystic Armor absorbs damage from attacks directed against it, such as from the Matrix Strike talent. A Shared Matrix is better protected than other spell matrices; the Shared Matrix is armored in the same way as an Armored Matrix (see **Armored Matrix**, p. 170). The Mystic Armor rating of the matrix is equal to the magician's base Mystic Armor plus his Shared Matrix rank. A Shared Matrix cannot also hold a woven spell thread; its design is already complex enough.

Each Shared Matrix represents a separate talent with its own rank, and is improved independently. See the appropriate magician Discipline description to determine how many matrices of this type the magician may learn. For example, a Wizard can have up to three Shared Matrix talents, while an Elementalist only has two. See **Spell Matrix Types** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 287, for more information on spell matrices.

SHIELD BEATER

Step Number: Rank
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Shield Beater talent allows an adept to strike devastating blows, cleaving through shield and armor alike. The adept makes a close combat Attack Test as normal. If the test succeeds, the adept reduces his opponent's effective Physical Armor by his Shield Beater rank, increasing the likelihood that his attack will inflict damage on his enemy. The Shield Beater talent also increases the chances of shattering an opponent's shield. If an adept using the Shattering a Shield combat option achieves a Good result on his Attack Test, he adds his Shield Beater rank to the Damage Test result when determining if the shield is destroyed (see **Combat Options** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 406).

SHIELD CHARGE

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Shield Charge talent allows an adept to bash an opponent with a shield. Because of the positioning required, the adept loses the protection of his shield against all opponents, other than the one he is currently facing, for the remainder of the round. The adept makes a Melee Weapons Test against his opponent, as normal. If the test succeeds, the adept makes a Shield Charge Test to determine how much damage is inflicted.

The impetus of the attack increases the Difficulty Number of any Knockdown Tests his opponent makes; the adept adds his Shield Charge rank to the Knockdown Difficulty (see **Make a Knockdown Test** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 400).

SHOW ARMOR FLAW

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 2

The Show Armor Flaw talent allows an adept to illuminate the weaknesses in an opponent's armor. The adept makes a Show Armor Flaw Test against the higher of the target's or his armor's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the talent illuminates any vulnerabilities in the armor, reducing the required result level for Armor-Defeating Hits by one level (Excellent to Good, Extraordinary to Excellent, and so on). Once these flaws are illuminated, any character attacking the target can take advantage of the highlighted weaknesses. Each use of this talent lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Show Armor Flaw rank. The effects of Show Armor Flaw are not cumulative with the Spot Armor Flaw talent.

Silent Walk

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Silent Walk talent combines fluid movement with magical effects to dampen the sound of an adept's movement, including footsteps and other means of travel, such as the sound of a windling's flight. The adept makes a Silent Walk Test, the result of which becomes the Detection Difficulty for any Perception Tests made to hear him moving. This talent does not make the adept more difficult to see. A character who is aware of the adept's presence and watching him will observe his movements normally. While using Silent Walk, the adept may move no faster than half his normal Movement rate.

Slough Blame

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Slough Blame talent allows an adept to temporarily divert suspicion and blame from one character to another. The adept must concoct a plausible explanation, then makes a Slough Blame Test against the higher of the accuser's or scapegoat's Social Defense, +1 for each additional character involved. If the test succeeds, the blame is passed on as per the adept's explanation. The effect lasts for a number of minutes equal to the adept's Slough Blame rank; usually sufficient time for the adept to make himself scarce.

Soften Blade

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Soften Blade talent allows an adept to weaken a weapon, reducing the amount of damage it inflicts in combat. The adept can use this talent on any weapon he can see within Soften Blade rank × 5 yards. The adept makes a Soften Blade Test against the higher of the weapon's or its wielder's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the adept's Soften Blade rank is applied as a penalty to any Damage Tests made using that weapon for one hour. For example, Rank 3 Soften Blade reduces any Damage Tests made by the target weapon by 3 for one hour.

Song of Deflection

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Song of Deflection talent allows an adept to improve his defense against physical attacks. The adept sings or hums a little song to himself, then makes a Song of Deflection Test against the highest Spell Defense among his opponents, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, the adept adds his Song of Deflection rank as a bonus to his Physical Defense. The talent's effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Song of Deflection rank. While the adept is singing, he may only perform actions that do not require him to speak. If he stops singing before the end of the talent's duration, it expires.

Soul Shatter

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Soul Shatter talent pits an adept's spirit against that of another character. The adept must know the Spellcasting talent, and must be able to touch the target character. The adept makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the adept makes a Soul Shatter Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage. If the target suffers a Wound, his soul begins to break apart, piece by piece. The target continues to take damage each round thereafter, automatically suffering at least 1 Wound, plus additional Damage Points equal to the adept's Soul Shatter rank. This effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Soul Shatter rank. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the adept's Soul Shatter step. If the test succeeds, the talent effect ends.

If the target does not suffer a Wound from the initial Soul Shatter Test, the adept's spirit "buckles" from the pressure instead. Each round, the adept suffers at least 1 Wound, plus additional Damage Points equal to his Soul Shatter rank, as if someone had successfully used the talent against him. He may make Willpower Tests to end the effect, as normal.

Speak Language

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1 (see text)

The Speak Language talent allows an adept to learn to communicate with others using different languages. An adept may use this talent to learn a number of languages equal to his Speak Language rank. If the adept has an unassigned Speak Language rank available, he can attempt to learn a new language.

To learn a new language, the adept listens to someone fluent in that language speaking for at least 1 minute, then makes a Speak Language Test against the language's Learning Difficulty. If the test succeeds, the language has been learned and the adept notes it down on his Character Record Sheet.

LANGUAGE DIFFICULTY TABLE

Language	Learning Difficulty
Dwarf*	5
Sperethiel (Elf)**	6
Human	6
Obsidiman	7
Or'zet (Ork)***	6
T'skrang	7
Troll	6
Windling	7

* All characters beginning play with the Dwarf language know the Throalic dialect.
** The language of the elves is called *Sperethiel*.
*** The language of the orks is called *Or'zet*.

If the adept fails to learn the language, he cannot attempt to learn that same language again until he improves his Speak Language rank; he can attempt to learn other languages or dialects, however. Once a Speak Language rank has been assigned to a language, it cannot be used to learn any other language. The Learning Difficulty for the different racial languages is shown in the Language Difficulty Table; the values given reflect the difficulty of learning the standard "generic" versions of these languages.

When speaking in a language, the adept makes a Speak Language Test to see how well he is communicating what he wants to say. The test result determines the level of comprehension. Simple sentences or ideas, such as "Which way to the sheriff?" only require a result of 2; normal conversation that includes idioms or jargon requires a result of 6; technical conversations or other discussions filled with specialized jargon require a result of 10; conversations about philosophy, or other abstract ideas, require a result of 13.

The effect of each Speak Language Test lasts for a number of hours equal to the adept's Speak Language rank. This allows the adept to communicate at the level achieved by that test result during this time. If the adept has a requirement for more complex conversation, he must make another Speak Language Test. The Strain cost reflects the concentration required to establish and maintain communication.

Dialects

Languages are often complex and most possess many different variations, or dialects. These dialects are sometimes regional, others by city, or even by kaer. Adepts attempting to learn a dialect add +2 to the Learning Difficulty of the base "racial" language. The adept must know how to speak the "racial" language before he can attempt to learn a dialect of that language.

Once learned, any dialects that an adept knows are recorded separately; the dialect is noted on the adept's Character Record Sheet in parentheses beside the language it is based on. An adept can learn a number of dialects for each "racial" language he knows equal to his Speak Language rank. For example, all player characters begin game play knowing how to speak Dwarf with a Throalic dialect, which is noted in parentheses on their Character Record Sheet.

When attempting to speak in a dialect, an adept who knows the base "racial" language, but not the dialect, adds +2 to the Difficulty Number of his Speak Language Tests.

Spell Crystal Lock

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0 (see text)

The Spell Crystal Lock talent allows a magician to lock a spell into a spell matrix, extending the spell's duration in the process. The Spell Crystal Lock talent is a form of blood magic. The magician makes a Spell Crystal Lock Test in place of a Spellcasting Test when casting a spell from a spell matrix. If the test succeeds, the magic of the talent locks the spell into the matrix for a year and a day. The spell matrix cannot be used to hold any other spell during this time. The effect of the talent extends the spell's duration for the same period. During this time the spell matrix takes on a crystalline appearance when viewed from astral space. The blood magic required by using the Spell Crystal Lock talent causes the magician 2 permanent Damage Points, which cannot be healed until the talent's duration has elapsed.

A successful Dispel Magic (24) Test can dispel the Spell Crystal Lock and end the talent. Spells with no effective duration (immediate effect spells, such as Spirit Dart) or a duration of 1 round, cannot have their duration extended through use of this talent. Spell Crystal Lock can be used to lock spells into any type of spell matrix (a Spell, Armored, Enhanced, or Shared Matrix), however the talent's effect only "locks" the spell cast using the Spell Crystal Lock talent into the matrix; any other spells that are present are erased from the matrix. Any threads woven into the spell matrix remain in place. However, since the spell cannot be cast again from that matrix until the talent's duration expires, they effectively become useless.

The magician may have no more locked matrices than his Spell Crystal Lock rank at any time.

Spell Matrix

Step Number: Rank
Action: NA
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

A spell matrix is an astral construct that allows magicians to cast spells without interference from the denizens of astral space. The Spell Matrix talent represents the most basic type of spell matrix in the **Earthdawn** game. A magician may only safely cast a spell after he has first placed it into a spell matrix. The Spell Matrix rank determines the maximum spell Circle it can hold. For example, a Rank 1 Spell Matrix can hold only a single First Circle spell. The matrix's Mystic Armor absorbs damage from attacks directed against it, such as from the Matrix Strike talent. The Mystic Armor rating of a Spell Matrix is equal to the magician's base Mystic Armor.

Each Spell Matrix represents a separate talent with its own rank, and is improved independently. See the appropriate **Discipline** chapter to determine how many matrices of this type the magician may learn. For example, an Elementalist can have up to four Spell Matrix talents, while a Wizard only has three. See **Spell Matrix Types** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 287, for more information on spell matrices.

Spellcasting

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

A magician uses the Spellcasting talent to cast spells. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the Casting Difficulty given in the spell's description. If the test succeeds, the spell is successfully cast. See the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 282, for more information on the Spellcasting talent, and the **Elementalism** (p. 295), **Illusionism** (p. 322), **Nethermancy** (p. 345), and **Wizardry Spells** (p. 374) chapters for spell descriptions.

Spirit Dodge

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: No (Yes; see text)
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1 (see text)

The Spirit Dodge talent allows an adept to conjure a tasked spirit to protect him in combat. The adept takes an action and makes a Spirit Dodge (6) Test. If the test succeeds, a spirit is conjured, resting within the adept for a number of hours equal to the Spirit Dodge Test result, or until dismissed by the adept. Whether the adept desires it or not, the spirit automatically tries to dodge all close or ranged combat attacks that would otherwise hit the adept, pulling or pushing him in whatever direction needed to avoid being struck. The adept makes a Spirit Dodge Test against the Attack Test result. If the test succeeds, the attack misses—the spirit drags the adept out of the way at the last instant. Each time the adept makes a Spirit Dodge Test to avoid a blow, he suffers 1 Strain Point of damage.

Unlike the Avoid Blow talent or skill, the adept is never Knocked Down by a failed Spirit Dodge Test result—the spirit ensures the adept remains upright. He can still be Knocked Down from taking a Wound or from the Attacking to Knockdown combat option (see the **Combat** chapter, p. 403). If the adept is Knocked Down, any Action Test penalties are also applied to the Spirit Dodge Test—the spirit's ability to "roll" the character around to avoid being struck is impaired.

The spirit is able to see in every direction; the adept makes a Spirit Dodge Test to avoid attacks directed against him even if he is unable to see the blow coming. He still incurs any penalties from being Blindsided or Surprised; he simply reacts against them when he normally would not be able to.

Spirit Hold

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Spirit Hold talent allows an adept to anchor a restless spirit to one spot, preventing it from moving or taking any actions other than communicating. The spirit must be within 20 yards of the adept for the talent to have any effect. The adept boldly faces the target spirit, then orders it to halt and makes a Spirit Hold Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the spirit is held in place for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Spirit Hold rank. During this time, the adept must concentrate to hold the target in place; he cannot move, or take any actions other than communication. If he does, the hold is broken and the spirit is free to act.

Each round, the spirit may attempt to free itself by making a Willpower Test against the Spirit Hold step. If the test succeeds, the spirit is freed and the talent's effect ends.

Spirit Mount

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Spirit Mount talent allows an adept to conjure a mount to ride. The adept makes a Spirit Mount (8) Test—the Spell Defense of the spirit. A successful test result conjures a spirit mount "whose eyes are afire and whose skin is all summer lightning and fog." Spirit mounts usually take the form of horses or unicorns, but sages have recorded other shapes. A spirit mount can walk or gallop on air or water when unburdened, but cannot carry a rider into or over these mediums. They can sink up to 6 inches into the earth, usually sufficient to allow both the mount and the character riding it to pass along corridors too low for a normal horse and rider to travel along. No one but the adept may ride the spirit mount; the spirit mount dissolves rather than obey the commands of another. A spirit mount is conjured for a number of minutes equal to the Spirit Mount Test result, then melts into mist when the talent's duration expires.

Regardless of its actual form when summoned, a spirit mount always has the following statistics:

Spirit Mount

DEX: 5 **STR**: 4 **TOU**: 5
PER: 4 **WIL**: 6 **CHA**: 2

Initiative: 7 **Physical Defense**: 10
Number of Actions: 1 **Spell Defense**: 8

Attack (1): 6 **Social Defense**: 9
Damage: **Physical Armor**: 0
Trample (1): 5 **Mystic Armor**: 3

Death Rating: 34 **Recovery Tests**: 2
Wound Threshold: 9 **Knockdown**: 5
Unconsciousness Rating: 26

Combat Movement: 40 **Full Movement**: 80

Powers: None

Legend Points: 35

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Spirit Strike

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Spirit Strike talent allows an adept to make a close combat attack against an opponent from astral space. The adept makes a Spirit Strike Test against the higher of the target's Spell Defense or a Difficulty Number of 6. If the test succeeds, the adept hits the target. His weapon (if making a melee attack) or limb (if making an unarmed attack) disappears from view as it enters astral space and then re-emerges, trailing cold green wisps of mist. The adept makes a Damage Test to determine how much damage he inflicts on his opponent. Physical Armor protects against this damage. Defensive talents or skills, such as Avoid Blow and Riposte, cannot be used against attacks made with the Spirit Strike talent.

The adept must use some form of astral sensing to perceive his opponent, or he suffers a –5 penalty to his Attack Tests for not seeing his opponent (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408, and **Astral Sensing Methods** in the **Workings of Magic** chapter, p. 258).

Spirit Talk

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Spirit Talk talent allows an adept to talk to spirits and entities, including those who do not speak a language known to him, and those who do not normally communicate verbally. The adept makes a Spirit Talk Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the adept may talk to the spirit for a number of minutes equal to his Spirit Talk rank.

This talent does not compel the spirit to talk to the adept, it merely makes communication possible.

Spot Armor Flaw

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Spot Armor Flaw talent allows an adept to detect weaknesses in a target's armor. The adept makes a Spot Armor Flaw Test against the higher of the target's or his armor's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the adept sees any flaws in the armor, reducing the required result level for an Armor-Defeating Hit by one level (Excellent to Good, Extraordinary to Excellent, and so on).

Each use of this talent lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Spot Armor Flaw rank. The effects of Spot Armor Flaw are not cumulative with the Show Armor Flaw talent.

Sprint

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Sprint talent allows an adept to infuse himself with speed, temporarily increasing his Movement during the round it is used. The adept makes a Sprint Test, the result of which is the maximum number of yards he may add to his Combat Movement, and up to twice that amount if making a Full Movement.

The Sprint talent cannot be used during the same round as other movement-enhancing talents, such as Great Leap, Lizard Leap or Gliding Stride.

Steel Thought

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Steel Thought talent allows an adept to resist magical abilities that target his Spell Defense. Any time the character is targeted by such an ability, he may make a Steel Thought Test against his opponent's Action Test result. If the test succeeds, the adept forges his thoughts into more resilient patterns, preventing the ability from affecting him.

This talent works similarly to the Avoid Blow talent, except that it is only effective against magical abilities that target the adept's Spell Defense, such as other talents, spells and creature powers. The adept can use this talent a number of times each round equal to his Steel Thought rank, but only once against each such attempt directed at him during a round.

Kindras, a human Weaponsmith, has a Spell Defense of 8. Lucien, an elf Nethermancer, casts a spell at him and achieves a Spellcasting Test result of 16. Realizing his peril, Kindras decides to use his Steel Thought talent to protect himself against Lucien's magical assault. He rolls an 18 on his Steel Thought Test—a success! Lucien's spell fizzles, leaving him face-to-face with a very angry Weaponsmith.

Steely Stare

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Steely Stare talent allows an adept to intimidate a target character with his piercing gaze. The adept stares intently at his target, then makes a Steely Stare Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the target feels a chill travel up his spine and becomes wary of the adept; while affected by this talent the target will not take any actions against the adept unless attacked. This includes making Interaction Tests, such as Persuasion, Intimidation, Taunt, and so on. The talent's effects last for a number of minutes equal to the adept's Steely Stare rank.

The target can shake off the effect of the adept's gaze, but must make a successful Willpower Test against the Steely Stare step to do so.

Stone Skin

Step Number: Rank + Toughness
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0 (see text)

The Stone Skin talent makes an adept's skin and portions of his muscles and ligaments tougher and more resistant to physical damage. The skin's appearance becomes pebbly, even jagged, and is tough as stone. Use of the Stone Skin talent requires one of the adept's Recovery Tests; if he has no Recovery Tests available to him, he cannot use this talent. The adept makes a Stone Skin Test and adds his Stone Skin rank to his Physical Armor rating. Each use of the talent lasts for a number of hours equal to the Stone Skin Test result. This effect is similar to an obsidiman's natural armor, though obsidimen can benefit further from this talent.

Stone Skin may be used in conjunction with the Wood Skin and Earth Skin talents, with the effects, durations, requirements and any limitations, of the different talents being combined.

Stopping Aim

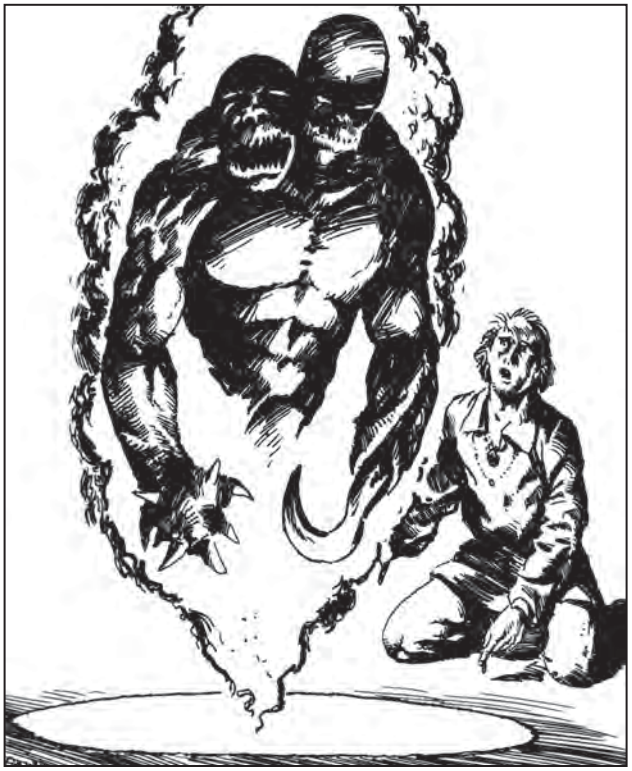
Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Stopping Aim talent allows an adept to stop a character from moving. The adept aims a loaded missile weapon, such as a bow, crossbow, or blowgun, at a target character within his line of sight, but no further away than the weapon's maximum range (see the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 436). The adept makes a Stopping Aim Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, a small, but obvious, mark appears on the target and he immediately stops dead in his tracks for fear of being skewered by the missile. The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the Stopping Aim Test result. The target remains transfixed until he is either attacked, the talent's duration expires, or he makes a successful Willpower Test against the Stopping Aim step. Keeping an aim on the target requires the adept's concentration, during which time he can perform no other actions; doing so immediately ends the talent.

Summon

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Summon talent allows an adept to summon an elemental or other extra-planar being. The adept makes a Summon Test against the Spell Defense of the being he wishes to summon. If the test succeeds, he summons the entity from its current plane to the physical plane. Note that the Summon talent only brings the crea-



ture to the adept's location; he will most likely need other magic or talents to successfully negotiate with or control the being.

There are several variants of the Summon talent unique to certain Disciplines, restricting use to summoning only a specific type of spirit, for example, elemental spirits or ally spirits. See the **Spirits** chapter on p. 358 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information on spirits and summoning.

Summoning Circle

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Summoning Circle ritual talent creates a protective circle into which an adept summons a creature or being. The adept takes 1 hour to carefully draw the circle, which must be big enough to hold the creature to be summoned. Once the circle is complete, the adept makes a Summoning Circle Test, the result of which becomes the Difficulty Number to break free for any being trapped inside. The effect lasts for a number of hours equal to the adept's Summoning Circle rank. An adept may destroy his own circle at any time by touching and symbolically "cutting" it.

After the adept creates a summoning circle, he can summon creatures into it using the Summon talent, or by another means, such as a spell. Creatures summoned into the circle cannot escape without first destroying it. Each hour, the summoned creature may make a Willpower Test against the Summoning Circle Test result. If the test succeeds, the circle is broken and the creature is freed. See the **Spirits** chapter on p. 358 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information on spirits and summoning.

Sure Mount

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Sure Mount talent helps an adept avoid being dismounted. Unless noted otherwise, the adept makes a Sure Mount Test in place of any Knockdown Test he is required to make while mounted (see **Mounted Combat** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 413).

Surprise Strike

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Surprise Strike talent allows an adept to take advantage of the element of surprise, increasing the damage of his attacks. His opponent must be Surprised for this talent to be used. The adept makes an Attack Test, as normal. If the test succeeds, the adept may use his Surprise Strike step in place of his Strength step for the Damage Test. Unless the adept can somehow regain a situation of complete Surprise (by using the **Gain Surprise** talent, p. 186, for example), he may only use the Surprise Strike talent once against an opponent during a given encounter. See **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 409, for more information on Surprise and how it works.

Swift Kick

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Swift Kick talent allows an adept to make a bonus unarmed attack against an opponent. The adept must have a higher Initiative Test result than his opponent to use this talent. The adept makes a Swift Kick Test against the target's Physical Defense. If the test succeeds, the attack hits the target. Unless noted otherwise, the adept uses only his Strength step for the Damage Test to determine how much damage he causes. If the adept does not have the free use of at least one leg, he cannot use the Swift Kick talent. T'skrang characters may make Swift Kick Tests with their tails, instead of their legs.

Swing Attack

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Swing Attack talent allows an adept to swing down at an opponent from an elevated position using sturdy ropes, rigging or even vines. The adept makes a Swing Attack Test as his close combat Attack Test. If the test succeeds, the adept adds his Swing Attack rank as a bonus to his Damage Test.

Use of the Swing Attack is equivalent to a Swooping attack and is subject to the rules for Splitting Movement (see **Combat Options** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 406), with the relevant modifiers for that option. At the gamemaster's discretion, adepts making a Swing Attack may also catch their opponent by surprise (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 409). After making a successful attack, the adept makes a Dexterity Test against the target's Toughness step to avoid being knocked off the rope or vine from the impact. If this test fails, the adept falls to the ground or deck, taking Step 5 Falling damage. He is automatically Knocked Down. An opponent with a higher Initiative Test result than the adept can brace himself against the attack. The target makes an Attack Test as normal, taking into account any modifiers for the adept using the Splitting Movement option. If the attack is successful, the target strikes the swinging adept, who takes damage normally. On a Good result, the adept is also knocked from his rope, taking Step 5/D8 Falling damage and automatically becoming Knocked Down.

Many Air Sailors learn to Swing Attack as a tactic for dropping into the thick of trouble from a position of advantage. They can use it to swiftly drop to the deck when up in an airship's rigging or, when climbing trees, to use vines to lower themselves quickly to the ground. An adept with the Swing Attack talent can also substitute his Swing Attack step for his Dexterity step when attempting other non-combat actions while swinging from the rigging.

TALENT PATTERN

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 3

The Talent Pattern talent allows an adept to weave a temporary thread to one of his talents, thus boosting it. The adept declares the target talent, then makes a Talent Pattern Test against his own unlowered Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a temporary thread is attached to the designated talent. The effect lasts for 2 rounds; a higher result level increases the talent's duration. A Good result extends the effect to 3 rounds; an Excellent result, 4 rounds; an Extraordinary result extends the effect to 5 rounds. During the talent's duration, the adept adds his Talent Pattern rank as a bonus to the "boosted" talent. This bonus can temporarily increase a talent rank beyond the normal maximum of Rank 15.

Jerreck knows Talent Pattern at Rank 2 and wants to temporarily boost his Spellcasting rank. He makes a Talent Pattern Test against his Spell Defense of 13, and rolls a 26—an Excellent result. His Spellcasting rank is increased by 2 ranks for 4 rounds.

TAME MOUNT

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Tame Mount talent allows an adept to tame an animal. The talent may be used on an animal only once each day. The adept touches the animal, then makes a Tame Mount Test against the animal's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the animal's attitude improves by one degree per result level towards the adept, to a maximum of Friendly (see the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 90 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**).

Once a mount's attitude has been raised to Friendly, the adept may ride it. No one else may ride the mount until the animal is trained; the mount is automatically Unfriendly to anyone other than the adept who tries to ride it.

TAUNT

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Taunt talent allows an adept to insult and humiliate a target character, thereby distracting him. The target must be able to understand the adept in order for the Taunt to work. The adept makes a Taunt Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the target incurs a -1 penalty to all of his Action Tests for each result level achieved on the Taunt Test. Because of the demoralizing effects of a successful taunt, subtract -1 from the target's Social Defense for each result level achieved on the Taunt Test. Each use of the Taunt talent lasts for a number of rounds equal to the character's Taunt rank.

TEMPER OTHER

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Temper Other ritual talent allows an adept to toughen another character, making him more resistant to being damaged. Both the adept and the target character must not be suffering from any damage for this talent to work. The adept draws forth icy ether from astral space, rolling the chilling substance over the target's body. The ritual requires 30 minutes of intense meditation involving both the adept and the target character. The adept makes a Temper Other Test against the higher of the target's Toughness step or a Difficulty Number of 6. If the test succeeds, the adept's Temper Other rank is added as a bonus to the target's Death Rating, Unconsciousness Rating and Wound Threshold. If the test fails, the target takes a number of Damage Points equal to his Wound Threshold, resulting in a Wound. No armor protects against this damage. The effect of the Temper Other talent lasts for 24 hours. A character can benefit from only one successful Temper Other or Temper Self ritual during this time.

TEMPER SELF

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Temper Self ritual talent allows an adept to toughen himself, becoming more resistant to being damaged. The adept must not be suffering from any damage when performing this ritual, otherwise it automatically fails. The adept draws forth icy ether from astral space, rolling the chilling substance over his body. The ritual requires 30 minutes of intense meditation, after which the adept makes a Temper Self Test against the higher of his own Toughness step or a Difficulty Number of 6. If the test succeeds, the adept's Temper Self rank is added as a bonus to his Death Rating, Unconsciousness Rating and Wound Threshold. If the test fails, the adept takes a number of Damage Points equal to his Wound Threshold, resulting in a Wound. No armor protects against this damage. The effect of the Temper Self talent lasts for 24 hours. An adept can benefit from only one successful Temper Other or Temper Self ritual during this time.

TEMPERATURE

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Temperature talent allows an adept to control the temperature within a room or other small enclosure. The area affected may be no greater than 3 yards by 3 yards by 2 yards in size. The adept must be inside or adjacent to the room in order to use this talent. The adept makes a Temperature Test against the higher of the room's Spell Defense or the highest Spell Defense among those present in the room, including himself if he is inside the room. If the test succeeds, the adept can raise or lower the room temperature by his Temperature rank × 10 degrees Fahrenheit. The effects of the temperature change are immediate and last for a number of hours equal to the Temperature Test result. The adept may cancel the effect any time he is inside or adjacent to the room; the room returns to its original temperature within 1 round.

THOUGHT LINK

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes (No; see text)
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Thought Link talent establishes a telepathic link between an adept and another character. The adept must be able to see the target character to establish a link with him. After the link is established, line of sight is no longer required. The adept makes a Thought Link Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, he establishes a link that permits the two characters to talk telepathically. Telepathic communication is silent and requires no more effort than forming the words in one's mind; using the link once established is a Simple action. The adept can communicate with the recipient up to a maximum distance equal to his Thought Link rank × 100 yards. If either party passes outside this distance, the talent ends.

The recipient of the thought hears and feels the words. Thoughts come across as words, accompanied by a buzzing, tick-

lish pressure. Though not painful, the effect has been known to cause a peculiar expression on the face of someone not expecting it. The communication exchange lasts for a number of minutes equal to the Thought Link Test result.

Thoughtful Expression

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Thoughtful Expression talent constructs an illusory face that borrows a bit of the adept's own awareness. This effect creates a magical "spy glass," useful for observing events and situations from a distance. The adept touches the target character's face, then makes a Thoughtful Expression Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a hair-thin illusion of the adept's face is superimposed over the target's own features. The illusory face moves naturally, can see, smell, talk, listen, and answer questions based on knowledge the adept possesses.

The adept has a telepathic link with the illusion, allowing him to be aware of everything that the illusion says or senses. The range of the telepathic link is effective up to 250 yards. The illusion continues when the adept is outside of this range, but he does not know what it is doing. The awareness granted by the Thoughtful Expression talent comes at a price; the adept incurs a –1 penalty to all of his Perception-based Tests. This penalty takes effect as soon as the adept finishes creating the illusion, and disappears when the illusion vanishes, after a number of hours equal to the Thoughtful Expression Test result. The adept may automatically end the illusion at any time. The illusion can be sensed and disbelieved (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions** in the **Illusionism Spells** chapter, p. 322). The illusion has a Disbelief Difficulty of 8 and a Sensing Difficulty of 16.

Thread Weaving

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

Unique for each Discipline. Adepts use the Thread Weaving talent to create and weave magical threads. An adept can have a maximum number of active threads equal to his Thread Weaving rank. Each individual thread can be woven to a maximum thread rank equal to the adept's Thread Weaving rank.

> *Caelarion knows Thread Weaving at Rank 3. This allows him to have up to 3 threads active at any time, with each thread woven to a maximum of thread rank 3.*

This limit does not apply to threads woven into spell patterns; such threads are temporary, lasting only long enough for the spell to be cast. If a magician achieves an Excellent result when weaving a spell pattern, he manages to weave an additional thread to the spell in that round, if applicable. See the **Workings of Magic** (p. 251) and **Spell Magic** (p. 282) chapters for more information about threads and spell patterns.

THREAD WEAVING TALENT TABLE

Discipline	Thread Weaving
Air Sailor	Air Weaving
Archer	Arrow Weaving
Beastmaster	Beast Weaving
Cavalryman	Rider Weaving
Elementalist	Elementalism
Illusionist	Illusionism
Nethermancer	Nethermancy
Scout	Scout Weaving
Sky Raider	Sky Weaving
Swordmaster	Weapon Weaving
Thief	Thief Weaving
Troubadour	Story Weaving
Warrior	War Weaving
Weaponsmith	Thread Smithing
Wizard	Wizardry

Each Discipline has its own unique variant of the Thread Weaving talent, as shown in the Thread Weaving Talent Table. Adepts with more than one Discipline learn and improve each of their Discipline's Thread Weaving talents independently. See **Learning New Disciplines** in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 425, for more information on multi-Disciplining and the Thread Weaving talent.

The Thread Weaving talent also gives adepts a limited version of astral sight called **Thread Sight** (see **Astral Sensing** in the **Workings of Magic** chapter, p. 259). The astral sight provided through this use of the Thread Weaving talent allows adepts only enough vision to see threads and patterns. See **Nature of Threads** in the **Thread Magic** chapter, p. 264, for more information on threads, thread weaving, and True patterns.

Throwing Weapons

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

An adept uses the Throwing Weapons talent in ranged combat to make a thrown attack against a target, by hurling a rock, dagger, spear, or other object. The adept makes a Throwing Weapons Test against the target's Physical Defense. If the test succeeds, the attack hits the target. The adept makes a Damage Test for the weapon used to determine how much damage he causes. See **Thrown Attacks** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 412, for more information.

Thunder Axe

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Thunder Axe talent allows an adept to stun an opponent. The adept must be wielding an axe or warhammer to use this talent. After making a successful melee Attack Test, the adept makes a Thunder Axe Test against the target's Spell Defense in place of a Damage Test. If the test succeeds, the target is Stunned for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Thunder Axe rank (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 409).

Tiger Spring

Step Number: Rank
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Tiger Spring talent allows an adept to react more quickly than normal in combat. The adept adds his Tiger Spring rank as a bonus to his Initiative Test that round. For example, an adept with Tiger Spring at Rank 3 would gain a +3 bonus to his Initiative Test. Tiger Spring can be used with other talents that improve Initiative, such as Air Dance.

Trace Missile

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Trace Missile talent allows an adept to trace the path of a missile simply by looking at it. The adept makes a Trace Missile Test against the attacker's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the adept traces the flight path back to the attacker, marking his forehead with a symbol similar to that created by the Mystic Aim (p. 194) or Stopping Aim (p. 204) talents. This symbol remains in place for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Trace Missile rank, or until the adept attacks the marked target. The Trace Missile talent can only be used to trace a single missile each round.

Tracking

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Tracking talent allows an adept to follow the trails left by people and animals across great distances, using a combination of divination magic and senses—in particular, sight and smell—to find traces of their passage. The adept first locates some visible tracks, then makes a Tracking Test against the tracks' Detection Difficulty. The base Detection Difficulty of the trail is equal to the lowest Dexterity step among the target group.

The age of the tracks affects the adept's ability to follow them. If the trail is more than a day old, add +2 to the Detection Difficulty; if the trail is a week or more old, add +3 to the Detection Difficulty for every week that has passed. The condition of the tracks also affects an adept's ability to follow the trail. If the tracks have been obscured by weather, such as rain or snow, the adept requires a Good result on his Tracking Test to be able to follow the tracks. If the test succeeds, a faint, luminous image of the tracks is imprinted on the adept's pupils. The adept sees this same image on the ground, allowing him to unerringly follow the tracks, even if they have been obliterated by the weather or other causes. The adept can follow the trail for a number of hours equal to his Tracking rank before requiring another Tracking Test.

An adept may also use the Tracking talent to obscure his own tracks. He may travel at a maximum speed equal to his Combat Movement rate and still obscure his tracks. If acting to disguise the tracks for a group, travel is limited to a maximum speed equal to half the adept's Combat Movement rate; he must keep to the rear of the group and spend time masking any signs of their passage. The adept makes a Tracking Test, the result of which becomes the Detection Difficulty for another character attempting to follow him. The adept makes one such test for every 24 hours of travel.

Trample

Step Number: Rank
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Trample talent allows an adept to increase the damage inflicted by his mount's attacks. The adept must be riding the mount for it to benefit from this talent. If his mount makes a successful Attack Test, the adept may add his Trample rank as a bonus to the mount's Damage Test. Despite the talent's name, the adept's mount does not necessarily have to "stomp on" an opponent to benefit from Trample; the magic of the talent boosts the damage of the mount's attack regardless of the attack method employed.

Trap Initiative

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: No (see text)
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Trap Initiative talent allows an adept to react more quickly to avoid mechanical and magical traps. Should the adept trigger a trap while seeking or attempting to disarm it, or if a trap that would affect the adept is triggered, he makes a Trap Initiative Test against the trap's Initiative Test result. If the test succeeds, the adept acts before the trap goes off, possibly avoiding harm. The adept may move up to half his Combat Movement to get out of the way. If the test fails, the trap's effect is resolved normally. See **Detect Trap**, p. 178, and **Disarm Trap**, p. 179, for more information on locating and disabling traps.

Trick Riding

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Trick Riding talent allows an adept to perform mounted acrobatics. While mounted, the adept may make a Trick Riding Test in place of an Avoid Blow Test to dodge close or ranged combat attacks directed against either himself or his mount. An adept may also use Trick Riding to goad his mount into jumping fences, chasms, flames, or other obstacles. The adept makes a Trick Riding Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster. Jumping a short fence about 1 yard high has a Difficulty Number of 4; jumping over a 3 yard wide chasm has a Difficulty Number of 12. While mounted, if the adept or his mount is required to make a Dexterity-only Test for any acrobatic maneuver, the adept may make a Trick Riding Test instead.

True Shot

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The True Shot talent allows an adept to make extremely accurate ranged attacks. The adept makes a True Shot Test as his ranged Attack Test. An adept must spend a minimum of 1 Karma Point when making a True Shot Test. If the test fails, the adept spends another Karma Point, and adds the Karma die roll to the test result. The adept continues to spend Karma in this way until he hits the target, or has spent a number of Karma Points equal to his True Shot rank. Once the target has been hit, the adept may not spend any more Karma Points to increase his result level.

Once the result of the Attack Test has been determined, the target can still dodge the attack with a successful Avoid Blow Test, or deflect it with a spell, such as Shield Mist.

True Sight

Step Number: Rank
Action: NA
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The True Sight talent allows an adept to see through illusions more easily. The adept adds his True Sight rank to the result of any tests he makes to Sense, Disbelieve, or otherwise see through an illusion. Note, this bonus does not increase the efficacy of the original test for any purposes other than detecting illusions. For example, if the adept had just made a Damage Test which also counted as a Sensing Test to detect an illusion, adding his True Sight rank to the Damage Test result would not inflict further damage; it simply increases the test result and improves the chance of success with the Sensing Test. See **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions** in the **Illusionism Spells** chapter, p. 322, for more information on illusions and how they work.

Truth Skit

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Truth Skit talent allows an adept to recreate an event from the past, with the help of other participants. All of the participants must volunteer to be part of the Truth Skit and must also have been part of the original scene. Truth Skit recreates an event that occurred no more than 7 years in the past. The adept plays the parts of all of the people who were present in the original event, but are not represented by another participant now.

A round of Truth Skit replays one round of the original event. Each round, the adept makes a Truth Skit Test against the high-

est Social Defense among the participants, excluding himself. If the test succeeds, the participants must say what they said in the original scene and must mimic the actions they originally took. If the test fails, the participants may say whatever they like or take whatever action they wish.

The adept chooses the round in which he spends the Karma Point required for the talent. The maximum duration of the skit is equal to the adept's Truth Skit rank in minutes.

Unarmed Combat

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

An adept uses the Unarmed Combat talent in close combat when making an unarmed attack against a target with his hands, feet, or another part of his body, or to make a Grappling attack against an opponent in an attempt to restrain him. The adept makes an Unarmed Combat Test against the target's Physical Defense. If the test succeeds, the attack hits the target. Unless noted otherwise, the adept uses his Strength step only when making a Damage Test to determine how much damage he causes. See **Unarmed Attacks** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 410, for more information.

Unmount

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Unmount talent improves an adept's ability to knock an opponent from his mount. If the adept's Attack Test succeeds, he makes an Unmount Test in place of a Damage Test against the target's Strength step. If this test succeeds, the target is knocked from his mount and suffers the effects of Knockdown (see **Mounted Combat** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 413).

Unshakable Earth

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Unshakable Earth talent makes an adept more resistant to being Knocked Down by attaching himself to the ground, merging with the earth and using it as an anchor. The adept must be standing on natural ground or an earthen or stone surface to use this talent. The adept makes an Unshakable Earth Test in place of a Knockdown Test when required to do so, such as from taking a Wound or being struck by an opponent using the Attacking to Knockdown combat option (see **Combat Options** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 403).

Venom

Step Number: Rank + Toughness
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Venom talent allows an adept to create a fine spray of contact poison. The venom cannot be used with a manufactured weapon. The adept makes an Unarmed Combat Test against the target's Physical Defense. If the test succeeds, he makes a Venom Test as his Damage Test. Venom damage automatically bypasses the target's Physical Armor, unless he can find some way, magical or mundane, to make the armor completely airtight. Each round the venom continues to inflict damage, for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Venom rank. A target may take an action to resist the poison, making a Toughness Test against the Venom step. If the test succeeds, the poison is rendered inert.

Versatility

Step Number: Rank
Action: NA
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

Versatility is a racial talent, available only to human adepts from the First Circle (see the **Creating Characters** chapter, p. 50). A human adept with Versatility ranks may learn talents from Disciplines other than his own, paying the same Legend Point cost as a member of that Discipline would to gain those talents. The adept must be trained by a member of the appropriate Discipline for each talent that he learns, something that many Disciplines do not always encourage their members to do.

An adept may learn a maximum number of talents from other Disciplines equal to his Versatility rank. An adept cannot learn a talent from a Circle greater than his highest Discipline Circle (for an exception to this, see the **Learning Talents From Higher Circles** optional rule in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 422). For example, if the adept's highest Discipline Circle is Third Circle, he can learn talents from other Disciplines available to them at Third Circle or lower.

Talents learned through the use of Versatility are never Discipline talents. Adepts cannot therefore learn talent knacks for any talents purchased using Versatility. Also, the Versatility talent itself, and talents learned through use of the Versatility talent, do not count toward the requirements for advancing to a higher Circle (see **Advancing Discipline Circles** in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 424). This means that adepts who consistently use Versatility to learn and improve talents from other Disciplines will generally take longer to advance through their own Discipline Circles.

An adept cannot use Versatility to learn talents available to his own Discipline. This includes talents available to the adept at higher Circles in his own Discipline. For example, a First Circle human Archer could not learn the Melee Weapons talent using Versatility because Archers already have access to the Melee Weapons talent at Fourth Circle.

By using the Versatility talent, human adepts may learn Thread Weaving and Summon talents other than those for their current Discipline. For example, a human Wizard could learn and improve ranks in the Elementalism variant of Thread Weaving, and therefore learn how to Summon elemental spirits. See **Human Versatility and Spellcasting** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 285, for more information on how the Versatility talent applies to magicians and magic.

Vital Strike

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Vital Strike talent allows an adept to find and exploit weaknesses in an opponent's anatomy. The character makes a Vital Strike Test against his opponent's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the adept adds his Vital Strike rank to the result of the next Damage Test he makes against that opponent.

Vitality

Step Number: Rank + Toughness
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

Vitality allows an adept to recover damage more effectively, giving him a number of bonus Recovery Tests each day equal to his Vitality rank. When using a bonus Recovery Test, the adept makes a Vitality Test in place of a Recovery Test to recover Damage Points. The bonus Recovery Tests afforded by this talent may be used for fueling other talents, such as Life Check or Wood

Skin. In this case, the Karma Point required for the Vitality talent use is spent, but no Karma die is rolled.

Warning Shot

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Warning Shot talent makes an adept's opponents think twice about attacking him. The adept uses this talent in conjunction with a ranged attack; the attack does not harm his opponent, but is aimed to strike very close to the target, go through a target's shirt sleeve, knock a mug from the target's hand, or otherwise demonstrate the adept's weapon prowess. The adept makes a ranged combat Attack Test against his opponent's Physical Defense, as normal. If the test succeeds, he makes a Warning Shot Test in place of a Damage Test against the target's Social Defense. On an Average result, the target is considered Harried for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Warning Shot rank (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408). On a Good result, the target is not only Harried, but won't act against the adept unless first attacked by him or his allies. The talent's effect lasts until the target makes a successful Willpower Test against the adept's Warning Shot step.

Warp Missile

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

Warp Missile allows an adept to reduce the effectiveness of an opponent's missile weapon, warping and twisting it and generally impairing its ability to inflict damage. The adept makes a Warp Missile Test against the higher of the target's or his weapon's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the wielder of the missile weapon incurs a penalty equal to the adept's Warp Missile rank to any Damage Test he makes with the target weapon. The adept can affect any missile weapon visible to him, up to a range equal to his Warp Missile rank × 20 yards. The effect of the talent lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Warp Missile rank.

Kerag, a troll Weaponsmith, knows Warp Missile at Rank 7. An enemy Archer is firing arrows from his longbow into the troll's village. As the Archer is 100 yards away from the troll, he is within range of Kerag's Warp Missile talent. Kerag makes a Warp Missile Test against the Archer's Spell Defense—a success! For the next 7 rounds, enough time for a couple of villagers to grab weapons and close on him, the Archer incurs a -7 penalty to his longbow Damage Tests, severely impairing his ability to inflict any major damage on the hapless villagers.

Water Dancing

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

Water Dancing allows an adept to dance on the surface of water. The adept makes a Water Dancing Test against the highest Spell Defense among all water creatures that can see or sense him. If the test succeeds, the adept adds his Water Dancing rank as a bonus to all Action Tests directed against the Social Defense of the water creatures. The effect lasts for a number of hours equal to the adept's Water Dancing rank. Aquatic and enchanted creatures within range are attracted to the adept and will, unless actively discouraged, approach him while he is dancing.

An adept can stay suspended on the water's surface for a number of minutes equal to the Water Dancing Test result.

Weapon Breaker

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Weapon Breaker talent allows an adept to crack and shatter an opponent's weapon. Weapon Breaker works only on manufactured weapons, not natural weapons such as a creature's fangs or claws. The adept makes an Attack Test against his opponent, as normal. If the test succeeds, he makes a Weapon Breaker Test in place of a Damage Test against the higher of the target's or his weapon's Spell Defense. An Average result knocks the weapon away from the target; a Good result damages the weapon, reducing its Damage step by –1; an Excellent result both damages the weapon and sends it flying; an Extraordinary result shatters the weapon into dozens of pieces.

Weapons that are knocked flying scatter a number of feet away from the target equal to the Weapon Breaker Test result. Damaged weapons can be repaired; shattered weapons can't.

Weapon History

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Weapon History talent allows an adept to learn the history of an enchanted or mundane weapon or set of armor, or a shield. The adept must study the weapon or armor for at least a week, carefully examining it for a minimum of 1 hour each night. After a week of study, the adept makes a Weapon History Test against the weapon's or armor's Spell Defense. The result level of the test determines the amount of knowledge gained. An Average result reveals one Test Knowledge from the item's history; a Good result provides two Test Knowledges; an Excellent result reveals three Test Knowledges; an Extraordinary result reveals four Test Knowledges from the item's history.

When Weapon History is used on mundane weapons or armor (which do not have True patterns), each result level provides the

adept with a different piece of information about that item. The Weapon History talent can be used multiple times on the same weapon or set of armor, each test requiring another week of study. The result level of each additional Weapon History Test indicates the number of new Test Knowledges that the adept discovers.

An adept can learn a maximum number of Test Knowledges equal to his Weapon History rank. Once he increases his Weapon History rank, he can learn more Test Knowledges.

Thom Hammerblade, a dwarf Weaponsmith, has devoted weeks of study to a weapon known as Grag's Battle-axe. Previous studies have revealed three Test Knowledges from the weapon's history. On his latest Weapon History attempt, Thom achieves an Excellent result, earning him knowledge of three more Test Knowledges from the axe's past. This means Thom now knows a total of six Test Knowledges from the weapon's history. However, because Thom knows Weapon History to Rank 5, he can only learn a maximum of five Test Knowledges; the sixth Test Knowledge remains out of his reach until he improves his Weapon History rank, allowing him to make another attempt to learn more of the axe's secrets.

See the **Workings of Magic** chapter, p. 251, for more information regarding threads and Pattern Knowledge, and the **Thread Magic** chapter, p. 264, for more information on weaving threads to magic items and how Key Knowledges are used.

WHEELING ATTACK

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Wheeling Attack talent allows a character to make a mounted attack and move away a distance equal to his mount's Full Movement (see **Mounted Combat** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 413). When making an Attack Test while using this talent, a character substitutes the Wheeling Attack step for his Melee Weapons or Unarmed Combat step. Wheeling Attack may be used with the Charge talent. Wheeling Attack cannot be used in the same round as Wheeling Defense.

WHEELING DEFENSE

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

A mounted adept using the Wheeling Defense talent urges his mount into a whirling circle, confusing his attackers by presenting a constantly moving target. The adept makes a Wheeling Defense Test, the result of which determines the number of rounds the talent remains in effect. During this time, the adept adds his Wheeling Defense rank to both his own and his mount's Physical Defense. Each round, the adept must move a distance at least equal to his mount's Combat Movement rate in order to gain this bonus. Wheeling Defense cannot be used in the same round as Wheeling Attack.

WHIRLWIND

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 2

The Whirlwind talent allows an adept to strike multiple foes at once. All of the target characters must be within close combat distance of the adept. The adept declares which targets he is attempting to hit, then makes a Whirlwind Test as his close combat Attack Test, comparing the result against each target's Physical Defense. If the test succeeds, the target is struck. It is possible for a single Whirlwind attack to hit some characters and miss others. After determining how many targets are struck, the adept incurs a penalty to the Damage Test he makes against each target equal to the number of targets attacked, regardless of whether they were hit or not. For example, an adept declares a Whirlwind attack against four opponents and successfully hits three of them; he suffers a –4 penalty to his Damage Test for each target struck. The Whirlwind talent cannot be used in the same round as other talents granting extra attacks (such as Second Attack or Second Weapon).

WILLFORCE

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Willforce talent allows an adept to focus his will, increasing the effectiveness of his spells, and enhancing his ability to resist magical effects targeted against him. The adept may use his Willforce step in place of his Willpower step when making an Effect Test for any spell he casts. Willforce may also be used when summoning spirits (see the **Spirits** chapter on p. 361 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**), and when using Willpower to resist the effects of some magical abilities.

WIND BOW

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Wind Bow talent allows an adept to manipulate the wind, shaping the whirling, shimmering elemental forces into a bow which can propel an arrow toward a target with terrific force. The adept makes a missile Attack Test against the target, as normal. If the test succeeds, he makes a Wind Bow Test as his Damage Test. Each use of this talent lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Wind Bow rank. A wind bow has the following Range statistics: Short 2–120, Medium 121–240, Long 241–480 yards.

While missiles are usually created specific to a particular weapon, any type of arrows may be used with the Wind Bow talent (see the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 436). The Wind Bow talent may not be used in conjunction with other talents that affect or replace missile Damage Tests, such as Flame Arrow.

WIND CATCHER

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Wind Catcher talent gives an adept a chance to control his fall from a height. To determine how effectively he manages his descent, the adept makes a Wind Catcher (6) Test. On an Average or Good result, the adept lands safely and takes no Falling damage. On an Excellent result, the adept directs his descent, landing no further from the target landing site than the distance fallen. If the test fails, the adept is unable to control his descent and plummets towards the ground unaided, taking Falling damage as normal (see the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 107 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). For example, an adept who falls from a height of 15 yards could use the Wind Catcher talent to land up to 15 yards away from where he would have normally landed. An adept can use the Wind Catcher talent to safely fall from a maximum height equal to his Wind Catcher rank × 100 yards.

Elite Air Sailors and Sky Raiders often use the Wind Catcher talent to make precise aerial assaults on enemy positions.

WINNING SMILE

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Winning Smile talent allows an adept to appear more attractive to a member of the opposite sex. Depending on the target's sexual preference, this talent may also work on characters of the same gender. The adept makes a Winning Smile Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the target finds the adept's appearance very pleasing. The adept adds his Winning Smile rank as a bonus to any Interaction Tests he makes against the target for a number of hours equal to his Winning Smile rank. An adept may only attempt a Winning Smile Test once against a given character during any 24 hour period. Regardless of the outcome, the adept must wait at least 24 hours before trying to use the talent again on the same target.

While generally most effective against members of the same race, the adept can also use Winning Smile on characters of other races, though typically with greater difficulty. The gamemaster should determine whether such an attempt requires a higher result level to be effective and, if so, how much higher. For example, a human trying to impress a dwarf may require a Good result on his Winning Smile Test. That same human attempting to impress a t'skrang might need an Excellent result, while an attempt to win over a dragon would be Extraordinary (if it is even possible). By contrast, if the target in question had a preference for humans, the test might require only an Average result.

WOOD SKIN

Step Number: Rank + Toughness
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0 (see text)

The Wood Skin talent increases an adept's resistance to damage by causing his skin, and portions of his muscles and ligaments, to become tougher. When this talent is active, the adept's skin takes on the appearance of wood or bark. Use of the Wood Skin talent requires one of the adept's Recovery Tests; if he has no Recovery Tests available to him, he cannot use this talent. The adept makes a Wood Skin Test and adds the result to both his Death and Unconsciousness Ratings for the duration of the talent. The effect of Wood Skin lasts for a number of hours equal to the adept's Wood Skin rank or until discarded by the adept. Even if the adept falls unconscious, the Wood Skin remains in effect.

Wood Skin may be used in conjunction with the Earth Skin and Stone Skin talents, with the effects, durations, requirements and any limitations, of the different talents being combined.

WOUND BALANCE

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Wound Balance talent improves an adept's ability to resist being knocked down when hurt. The adept uses his Wound Balance step in place of his Strength step when making a Knockdown Test for taking a Wound (see **Make a Knockdown Test** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 400).

WOUND TRANSFER

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Wound Transfer talent allows an adept to transfer a Wound to another living being. The adept touches the target, then makes a Wound Transfer Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a Wound is transferred from the adept to the target, along with a number of Damage Points equal to the target's Wound Threshold. No armor protects against this damage.

Regardless of the target's Wound Threshold, the adept cannot transfer more Damage Points than his Current Damage Total. The effect of this talent is immediate; the adept is effectively "healed" of both the Wound and the Damage Points transferred.

TALENT KNACKS

Talents may define the adept, but it's the refinement of these abilities that defines the true *adept. Basic swordplay is adequate for your average Swordmaster. I, however, am* not *your average Swordmaster!*

• Kricklen, T'skrang Swordmaster •

Talent knacks are specializations that enable adepts to use their Discipline talents to create specific effects. By widening the scope of what talents allow characters to do, knacks flesh out the types of actions adepts can perform when using their talents, and create greater opportunity to make each character unique.

This chapter provides guidelines for learning, creating and using talent knacks, including full descriptions for some of the many talent knacks available to the core Disciplines described in the **Disciplines** chapters.

LEARNING TALENT KNACKS

Characters may develop talent knacks on their own or learn them from members of their Discipline who are prepared to teach the character. When advancing Circles in their Disciplines, some adepts take especial care to find a tutor with knowledge of specific knacks that they may also wish to learn (see **Advancing Discipline Circles** in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 424). While learning the tenets of their new Discipline Circle, the character will often take the additional time and expense to learn one or more talent knacks. A character that wants to learn a talent knack between Circle advances will either need to seek out a tutor willing to teach him that knack, or prepare to develop it on his own. The difficulty of this task is determined by the gamemaster.

Learning Restrictions

Because of the specialized use and understanding of magic required, talent knacks can only be learned for the Discipline talents of an adept. For example, both Archers and Warriors learn the Missile Weapons talent as part of their Disciplines, but only Archers can learn talent knacks based on Missile Weapons because only Archers learn that talent as a Discipline talent.

Most talent knacks are Discipline-specific; in other words, most talents provide different types of knacks for different Disciplines. For example, only Sky Raiders can learn the Weapon Scream knack, based on the Melee Weapons talent, and a logical follow-up to their Battle Bellow and Battle Shout talents. Conversely, the Deflect Blow knack, also based on the Melee Weapons talent, can be learned by Warriors and Swordmasters, but not by Sky Raiders.

Talent knacks become available to an adept when he has reached a specific rank in the knack's supporting talent. For example, a Spellcasting knack that allows a magician to hold spell threads might be available to the character when he has learned the Spellcasting talent to Rank 5.

Untutored vs. Tutored Talent Knack Learning

While there are similarities, learning a talent knack is not as straight-forward as improving a talent. Because of the degree of specialization required, the character must spend a number of days equal to the minimum talent rank for the knack meditating on what the knack has to offer to him and how it relates to his knowledge of the supporting talent. The character must spend at least 4 hours each day in meditation. At the end of that time he pays the required Legend Point cost and records the talent knack on his Character Record Sheet.

Characters can only focus on learning one talent knack at a time. Any interruptions during this time mean the character must begin his meditation anew. The character must be rested and in good health before he starts his training. A character currently suffering from any damage or Wounds may not learn a new talent knack.

A tutor will normally charge a fee for teaching the talent knack to a character. This is usually equal to the knack's minimum talent rank × 25 silver pieces. At the gamemaster's discretion, this fee may double or even triple if the character wants private instruction.

> *Kricklen, learning the Second Riposte talent knack, meditates for 4 hours each day for 7 days and pays his tutor 175 silver pieces to learn the knack.*

A character can also develop his own talent knacks through practice and meditation. The character must be rested and in good health before he starts his training. A character currently suffering from any damage or Wounds may not develop a new talent knack.

Because of the degree of specialization required, the character must spend a number of weeks equal to the minimum talent rank for the knack practicing and meditating on what the knack has to offer to him and how it relates to his knowledge of the supporting talent. The character must spend at least 4 hours each day training. At the end of that time he pays the required Legend Point cost and records the talent knack on his Character Record Sheet.

Characters can only focus on developing one new talent knack at a time. Any interruptions during this time mean the character must begin his practice anew.

> *Serafino, a human Swordmaster, has only heard of the Second Riposte talent knack, but is unable to find a trainer. He therefore decides to develop the knack himself and trains for 7 weeks, meditating for 4 hours each day, before spending the Legend Points required to cement his new talent knack knowledge.*

Talent Knack Legend Point Cost

Talent knacks must be paid for with Legend Points. Talent knacks have no ranks—a character either knows a knack or he doesn't. The character pays Legend Points to learn the knack only once. From that point on a character can use the knack whenever he uses the talent. The Legend Point cost of the talent knack is the same as purchasing the talent at the minimum talent rank required to use the knack (see **Spending Legend Points** in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 420).

Developing a knack on his own costs the adept no more Legend Points than if he was being taught it. The Legend Point cost for a talent knack is required simply to cement the character's knowledge of the new knack. For example, a talent knack that would cost 2,100 Legend Points if learned from a tutor, still costs an adept 2,100 Legend Points if he develops it on his own.

Circle-based Talent Knack Learning

Optional Rule: Previous editions of the **Earthdawn** game based the eligibility for and availability of learning talent knacks around the character's Discipline Circle advances. Also, the Legend Point cost for learning talent knacks was *considerably* less. We have retained this as an optional rule to provide compatibility with older **Earthdawn** supplements and also because this system requires less book-keeping than training-based improvement, which might appeal to some players and gamemasters.

The gamemaster should take into account the following considerations when using this optional rule (see **Advancing Discipline Circles** in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p.424, for more information on training times and costs for advancing to a new Circle):

- Each time a character advances to a new Discipline Circle, that character has the opportunity to learn one or more talent knacks from his tutor. The character is restricted to only learning those talent knacks that his tutor knows. These knacks are only taught during Circle advancement, and cannot be learned at any other time. The gamemaster determines what knacks the tutor knows (this might require the character to look around if he wants to learn a specific knack).
- The minimum talent rank requirements must still be met for each talent knack learned.
- Learning talent knacks takes the character no additional time; the practice and meditation required is assumed to be included in the times required to advance to the new Circle.
- The Legend Point cost for each talent knack is based on the Circle at which the character first learns the supporting talent for the knack. The character pays a Legend Point cost equal to purchasing Rank 1 in the talent. The increased cost for multi-Discipline characters still applies in this case.

Caelarion is learning the Increased Dispel Difficulty talent knack. He is in the process of advancing to the next Circle in his Discipline, and has taken the time to locate a tutor who also knows this knack. The Increased Dispel Difficulty knack is based on the Spellcasting talent and requires the character to know it at a minimum of Rank 7 (which he does). Checking the Talent Rank Cost Table, the cost for Caelarion to learn a Circle 1–4 talent to Rank 1 is 100 Legend Points. This is what it will cost the Nethermancer to learn the talent knack.

Caelarion, an elven Nethermancer, is learning the Increased Dispel Difficulty talent knack. This knack is based on the Spellcasting talent and requires the character to know it at a minimum of Rank 7 (which he does). Checking the Talent Rank Cost Table, the cost for Caelarion to learn a Circle 1–4 talent to Rank 7 is 2,100 Legend Points. This is what it will cost the Nethermancer to learn the talent knack.

Kricklen, a t'skrang Swordmaster, wants to learn the Second Riposte talent knack, which is based on the Second Weapon talent. Kricklen knows Second Weapon at Rank 8, so he meets the minimum talent rank requirement (Second Riposte requires knowledge of Second Weapon at Rank 7). Second Weapon is available to Swordmasters at Fifth Circle. A look at the Talent Rank Cost Table shows the cost for Kricklen to learn a Circle 5–8 talent to Rank 7 is 3,400 Legend Points. This is what it will cost the Swordmaster to learn the Second Riposte knack.

Creating Talent Knacks

Talent knacks represent specific and individual uses of a character's talents. Therefore, no definitive list of talent knacks exists, and gamemasters and players should feel free to create unique talent knacks for their characters. As always, the gamemaster makes the final decision about allowing a talent knack in his game and about the specifics of that knack. The following guidelines will help ensure that any talent knacks you create will not unbalance your game.

Keep in mind two general rules for creating talent knacks. First, talent knacks can be learned only for Discipline talents. This requirement effectively limits the number of talents for which a character can develop knacks. Second, talent knacks should provide an additional or specialized use of a talent; they should not duplicate other talents or eliminate the need to learn other talents. Ideally they should support or extend the talent.

To create a talent knack, the player needs to decide what effect he wants to create with the knack, at what talent rank the knack becomes available to the character, and if using the knack will cost Strain or simply have a minimum result level requirement.

A player wants to create a knack for his Warrior character's Wood Skin talent. He decides that once per day during any 24 hour period in which the Wood Skin talent is active, his character should be able to add his Wood Skin rank to his Wound Threshold. The gamemaster agrees, but limits the knack by adding that it lasts only a number of minutes equal to the character's Wood Skin rank. The gamemaster and player must now agree on the rank at which the character can gain this knack.

As a general rule, talent knacks should never be available below Rank 3, and only a few should be available below Rank 5. These parameters encourage an adept to master the basics of a talent before learning knacks based on the talent.

Independent Talent Knacks

Optional Rule: Some gamemasters and players may want more freedom to learn and develop talent knacks. Using the optional Independent Talent Knacks rule allows them to ignore the requirement that talent knacks are tied to a specific Discipline talent. Instead, talent knacks are only bound to a specific talent. If the talent is not a Discipline talent, the Minimum Talent Rank requirement to learn the knack is increased by +2 ranks.

The t'skrang Swordmaster Kricklen could learn the Improvised Weapons talent knack once he has increased his Melee Weapons talent to Rank 7. Caedrus, an obsidiman Warrior, is able to learn the same knack at Rank 5, as it is a Discipline talent for the Warrior Discipline.

No examples of independent talent knacks are included in these rules. It is up to the gamemaster and players to create their own independent talent knacks for use with non-Discipline talents.

The gamemaster and player decide that the Wood Skin knack should be available at Rank 5. Only the Strain cost or minimum result level requirement of the knack remains to be determined.

If a talent knack is based on a talent that does not require a Talent Test, the character may take a number of Strain Points of damage in order to use it. For talent knacks based on talents that require Talent Tests, the gamemaster may assign either a Strain cost or a specific result level (usually one level greater than normally required), or both.

Base the Strain costs and result level requirements on the relative usefulness and power of the talent knack. Use the talent knack descriptions provided in this chapter for examples of appropriate Strain costs and result level requirements.

As this use of the Wood Skin talent will not require a Talent Test, the gamemaster assigns a cost of 2 Strain Points of damage for each use of the talent knack.

Once the specifics of the new talent knack have been determined, the adept must spend considerable time meditating on and practicing the talent upon which the knack is based, since there is no tutor able to teach him (see **Learning Talent Knacks**, p. 213, for details on how to develop talent knacks without a tutor).

This practice represents the adept's effort to create the knack's additional or unusual effect with his talent. Once the adept has completed the necessary practice time and spent the requisite Legend Points, he gains the talent knack as normal and can teach it to other adepts.

Using Talent Knacks

Once a player has learned a talent knack for his character, the character may use the knack whenever he uses the appropriate talent. Unless the knack's description states otherwise, the player simply declares that his character is using it. For example, a Nethermancer who has learned the Maintain Spell Threads knack may use it whenever he casts a spell that requires one or more threads.

Talent Knack Descriptions

Each talent knack is described according to Discipline, talent, rank and Strain cost. The "**Discipline**:" notation notes the Discipline for which the knack is available. The "**Talent**:" notation notes the talent on which the knack is based. The "**Rank**:" notation indicates the minimum rank a character must possess in that talent to learn the knack. The "**Strain**:" notation shows the number of Strain Points of damage the adept takes when using the knack. Unless stated otherwise in the knack description, this includes the Strain cost of the base talent, and is the total Strain cost for using the knack.

Some knack descriptions list more than one Discipline and talent rank. In these cases, adepts of any listed Discipline can learn the knack. The rank for each knack appears as an alpha + numeric code, with the two-letter alpha identifying the Discipline and the number identifying the talent rank at which adepts of that Discipline may learn the knack. The first Rank Number applies to adepts of the first Discipline listed; the second Rank Number applies to adepts of the second Discipline, and so on. For example, with a talent knack based on the Spellcasting talent, El3 represents a minimum requirement for Elementalists to know Spellcasting at Rank 3.

For convenience, the talent knacks in this chapter are arranged in alphabetical order. A summary, ordered by Discipline, can be found in the **Appendices** chapter, p. 489.

Spellcasting Knacks

Spellcasting knacks are talent knacks based on the Spellcasting talent. Spellcasting knacks allow magicians to expand their use of the Spellcasting talent in ways such as increasing the Dispel Difficulty of spells or "stacking" spells to create unexpected results. Adepts of all magician Disciplines can learn and use Spellcasting knacks. (Note that because adepts only can learn knacks based on their Discipline talents, non-magician adepts cannot learn Spellcasting knacks, even though they may learn the Spellcasting talent.)

Note that in many cases, Illusionists and Wizards may learn Spellcasting knacks at lower ranks than Elementalists and Nethermancers. This reflects the fact that Elementalists and Nethermancers also learn the magic of summoning, which means they tend to advance more slowly than Illusionists and Wizards in the finer arts of spellcasting.

More information on Spellcasting can be found in the **Talents** (p. 202) and **Spell Magic** (p. 282) chapters.

Thread Weaving Knacks

Thread Weaving knacks are talent knacks based on the Thread Weaving talent. Unlike most talent knacks, adepts of all Disciplines can use Thread Weaving knacks (except for those dealing with the spellcasting process, which are limited to magicians).

Most Thread Weaving knacks are used when weaving threads to magical items, pattern items and group patterns. However, a few can be used for other purposes, such as studying magical patterns or linking the talents of two or more adepts of the same Discipline. Essentially, Thread Weaving knacks allow adepts to use their Thread Weaving talent in additional and more effective ways.

More information on Thread Weaving can be found in the **Talents** (p. 207) and **Thread Magic** (p. 264) chapters.

Adept's Best Friend

Discipline: Scout
Talent: Tracking
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 3 (4; see text)

The Adept's Best Friend talent knack allows an adept to locate another character's mount, familiar or animal companion. The adept touches the owner of the animal, then makes a Tracking Test against the animal's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the adept can follow tracks to the animal as if he had successfully used the Tracking talent. Adepts can only use this knack to locate animals

with strong bonds to the other character, such as a Cavalryman's mount, magician familiars and animals bonded to a Beastmaster. An adept can also use the Adept's Best Friend knack to locate another character, provided he is able to touch an animal bonded to that character. Using the talent knack this way causes the adept 1 additional Strain Point of damage per Tracking Test.

Air Conditioning

Discipline: Elementalist
Talent: Temperature
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 1

The Air Conditioning talent knack allows an adept to change the temperature around himself, maintaining a comfortable temperature at all times. Use of this knack allows him to wear light clothing in freezing environments or to keep himself cool while taking a walk on the shores of Death's Sea. The Air Conditioning knack does not protect the adept against wind and weather or heat and cold-based attacks directed at him, however.

Air Legs

Discipline: Air Sailor
Talent: Air Sailing
Rank: 3 **Strain**: 2

The Air Legs talent knack allows an adept to keep his footing in treacherous conditions while onboard an airship. The adept makes an Air Sailing Test in place of a Dexterity Test to avoid falling off an airship, or in other similar situations while "aboard ship" that require him to make a Dexterity Test. This talent knack cannot be used when the adept is on "dry land."

Air Mount

Discipline: Cavalryman
Talent: Spirit Mount
Rank: 11 **Strain**: 2 per round

The Air Mount talent knack grants an adept's spirit mount the ability to fly through the air while carrying a rider. The mount travels at the same Movement rates it uses while on land.

Anchored Spell

Discipline: Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, Wizard
Talent: Spellcasting
Rank: El9, Il5, Ne9, Wi5 **Strain**: 1 Wound (see text)

The Anchored Spell talent knack allows a magician to affix spells to walls and other structures, creating temporary wards. To anchor a spell, the magician attaches the pattern of the spell to a wall, door or some other fixed object. When a character passes within 3 yards of the anchored spell, the temporary ward created by the spell may detect that character, triggering the spell. Once the spell has been triggered, it disperses and cannot be triggered again. The magician must first weave any threads required for the spell, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the object to which the spell will be anchored. The magician must achieve an Excellent result on this test or the anchoring does not take and the spell is wasted. The magician powers the anchored spell pattern by taking a number of permanent Damage Points equal to his Wound Threshold, receiving a Wound in the process. No armor protects against this damage. As this is a form of blood magic, the damage cannot be healed until the spell is triggered, expires or is dispelled.

Once successfully cast, the anchored spell remains in place for a year and a day, or until it is triggered or dispelled. Any character passing within 3 yards of the anchoring object may trigger the spell. A magician can dispel his own anchored spell by making a successful Spellcasting (6) Test.

Anchored spells created with this knack function as spell wards. Base the ward's game mechanics on the magician's abilities and the anchored spell, as follows:

Anchored Spell Ward

Detection Difficulty: Magician's Spellcasting step
Spell Defense: Magician's Spell Defense
Disarm Difficulty: Anchored spell's Dispel Difficulty
Trigger Condition: The gamemaster makes a Spellcasting Test for the ward against the Spell Defense of any character or creature passing within 3 yards of it. The step number for this test is equal to the Spellcasting step of the magician who created the ward. If the test succeeds, the anchored spell is triggered. Magicians may anchor spells with a password or other type of signal that allows individuals to pass the ward without triggering it.
Trap Initiative: Magician's Spellcasting step + 10
Trap Effect: Whatever the anchored spell's normal effect is. Use the Spellcasting step of the magician who anchored the spell. The ward's Effect step equals the spell's Effect step, and uses the base Willpower step of the magician.

Angelic Appearance

Discipline: Illusionist
Talent: Disguise Self
Rank: 7 **Strain**: 1

The Angelic Appearance talent knack allows an adept to use the illusion magic inherent in the Disguise Self talent to temporarily boost his Charisma. Each time the adept interacts with another character, he makes a Disguise Self Test against the target's Spell Defense. On a Good result, the adept receives a bonus to the next Interaction Test he makes against the target. A Good result grants a +1 bonus to the adept's Interaction Tests; an Excellent result grants a +2 bonus; an Extraordinary result grants the adept a +3 bonus.

Arcane Curses

Discipline: Wizard
Talent: Arcane Mutterings
Rank: 6 **Strain**: 1

The Arcane Curses talent knack enhances the effects of the Arcane Mutterings talent. An adept using this knack utters vague but vile curses at his enemies, then makes an Arcane Mutterings Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. On an Excellent result, the target characters believe that they have been cursed, in addition to the normal effects of the Arcane Mutterings talent. Those affected are extremely unnerved, becoming obviously nervous and distracted. They are considered Harried for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Arcane Mutterings rank (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408). Unlike the Arcane Muttering talent, the talent knack's effect requires no further concentration on the adept's part, and continues even if he stops mumbling.

Armor Beater

Discipline: Sky Raider, Swordmaster, Warrior
Talent: Melee Weapons
Rank: Sk9, Sw8, Wa7 **Strain**: 3

The Armor Beater talent knack lowers the result level required to inflict an Armor-Defeating Hit against a target by one level. For example, an adept requiring an Excellent result to inflict an Armor-Defeating Hit on his opponent, requires only a Good result when using this knack. If an Extraordinary result is needed, using the Armor Beater knack drops this requirement to an Excellent result.

Arrow Cutting

Discipline: Swordmaster
Talent: Riposte
Rank: 9 **Strain**: 2

The Arrow Cutting talent knack allows an adept to Riposte missiles, such as arrows and bolts, and thrown weapons, such as knives and spears. The adept makes a Riposte Test against his opponent's ranged combat Attack Test result. If the test succeeds, the missile is destroyed before it hits the adept or, if a throwing weapon, deflected harmlessly away from the adept. This knack does not direct the projectile back at the attacker, therefore the adept does not gain a return attack against his opponent.

Arrow Stop

Discipline: Archer
Talent: Missile Weapons
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 2

The Arrow Stop talent knack allows an adept to stop an arrow, bolt or other missile he has fired just as it hits the target, so as to impress the target with his skill. The adept makes a Missile Weapons Test against the target's Physical Defense. An Average or Good result misses the target. On an Excellent result, the arrow stops just as it nicks the target, who takes 1 Damage Point. No armor protects against this damage.

If his attack hits, the adept may immediately attempt to Make an Impression by making an Interaction Test against the target's Social Defense (see **Interaction Tests** in the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 92 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**).

Assault

Discipline: Air Sailor
Talent: Air Sailing
Rank: 6 **Strain**: 4

If the adept is the captain of an airship, the Assault talent knack gives him an advantage when attempting the Firing maneuver against one or more enemy airships (see the **Airships and Riverboats** chapter on p. 148 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). The adept makes an Air Sailing Test against his airship's Firepower step. If the test succeeds, he gains a +2 bonus to the airship's Firepower or Maneuverability Test to reflect the vessel's superior positioning. If the test fails, the adept suffers a –2 penalty to the Failure Modifier for the Firing maneuver to reflect the vessel's more vulnerable positioning.

Astral Spy

Discipline: Nethermancer
Talent: Orbiting Spy
Rank: 7 **Strain**: 1+ (see text)

The Astral Spy talent knack allows an adept to hide an orbiting spy in astral space, making it invisible to anyone without the ability to view or detect objects astrally. Using this knack causes the character 1 Strain Point of damage to conjure the spy, +1 additional Strain Point of damage for each Orbiting Spy Test made during the talent's duration.

Astral Tracking

Discipline: Scout
Talent: Tracking
Rank: 9 **Strain**: 2

The Astral Tracking talent knack allows an adept to follow a target character in astral space. The adept must be able to see into astral space, using the Astral Sight talent or a similar ability, as he makes a Tracking Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the adept sees faint astral tracks leading to the target. This knack otherwise works in the same way as the Tracking talent, p. 208.

Backbiter

Discipline: Archer
Talent: Bank Shot
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 3

The Backbiter talent knack allows an adept to ricochet a missile or thrown weapon, so that it hits a target from behind, bypassing any shield the target may be holding. The adept makes a Bank Shot Test in place of his ranged Attack Test. On a Good result, the target is struck in the back and loses the protection of his shield.

Bind Spirit

Discipline: Elementalist, Nethermancer
Talent: Summon
Rank: El5, Ne5 **Strain**: 2

The Bind Spirit talent knack allows an adept to place a spirit in an item's pattern, gaining constant access to the spirit's powers. Bind Spirit Tests are performed using the adept's Summon step.

See **Spirit Binding** in the **Enchanting** chapter, p. 275, for more information.

Boarding Action

Discipline: Sky Raider
Talent: Air Sailing
Rank: 8 **Strain**: 4

If the adept is the captain of an airship, the Boarding Action talent knack gives him an advantage when attempting a Board-

ing maneuver against an enemy airship (see the **Airships and Riverboats** chapter on p.148 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). The adept makes an Air Sailing Test against his airship's Maneuverability step. If the test succeeds, he gains a +2 bonus to the airship's Maneuverability Test to reflect the vessel's superior positioning. If the test fails, the adept suffers a –2 penalty to the Failure Modifier for the Boarding maneuver to reflect the vessel's more vulnerable positioning.

Bounce

Discipline: Warrior
Talent: Avoid Blow
Rank: 7 **Strain**: 2

The Bounce talent knack allows an adept to reduce the damage he suffers from a fall. The adept attempts to land on the sturdiest parts of his body, rolling as he hits the ground. The adept subtracts his Avoid Blow rank from the Falling Damage Test result, reducing any damage he takes from the fall.

Braiding Threads

Discipline: All
Talent: Thread Weaving
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 2

Normally, items that can have magical threads attached to them (thread items, such as weapons, armor and jewelry, and magical treasures) may only have a limited number of threads attached to them at any given time. If a new thread being attached to an item exceeds this limit, the lowest-ranked thread attached to that item is displaced and no longer functions. The Braiding Threads talent knack allows an adept to bypass these limits by "braiding" together several threads that can be attached to an object in the same way as a single thread. For example, if an adventuring group containing two Warriors and a Swordmaster find a magical sword that allows a single thread to be woven to it, all three adepts could utilize the sword's magic by using the Braiding Threads knack and attaching the resulting thread to the weapon.

To weave a braided thread with the Braiding Threads knack, all of the adepts making the attempt must possess both the Braiding Threads talent knack and the appropriate item pattern knowledge. The adepts need not learn the pattern knowledge as a group; an adept may pass on the pattern knowledge to the others. Each adept makes a separate Thread Weaving Test against the item's Weaving Difficulty, +1 for each additional character above the first braiding the thread. For example, three adepts attempting to braid a thread to the same sword would each add +2 to the Weaving Difficulty. All of the threads woven must be of the same rank, and each adept must pay the appropriate cost in Legend Points.

Once a braided thread has been successfully woven, it functions as a single thread for all practical purposes. It represents only one of the item's maximum number of threads but grants its benefits equally to all of the adepts who wove the braided thread. If another thread woven to the item displaces the braided thread, all of the adepts who wove the braided thread are disconnected from the item. To attach a higher-rank braided thread to an item, the same adepts who wove the initial thread must weave a new braided thread of the higher rank, as described previously. If the desired thread rank requires a Deed, all of the adepts must complete the Deed (either individually, or as a group). If the Deed is accomplished as a group, divide the Legend Point award for the Deed among the participants.

Braided threads cannot be "untangled" once they have been woven. No adept can add his own thread to a braided thread that has already been woven, and no adept can withdraw his thread from a braided thread. If one of the weavers of a braided thread dies, his thread fades without affecting the other weavers.

By the Fingernails

Discipline: Scout
Talent: Climbing
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 2

The By the Fingernails talent knack allows an adept to make a last-minute grab for another handhold should he fail a Climbing Test. The adept makes a second Climbing Test against the same Difficulty Number as the failed Climbing Test. If this test fails, he cannot attempt to use the knack again to save himself.

Calm Herd

Discipline: Beastmaster
Talent: Incite Stampede
Rank: 8 **Strain**: 2

The Calm Herd talent knack allows an adept to more easily calm a stampeding herd. The herd's size determines the minimum result level required (see **Incite Stampede** in the **Talents** chapter, p.189). The adept makes an Incite Stampede Test against the highest Social Defense among the stampeding animals. If the test succeeds, the animals are calmed down and the stampede is stopped.

Cat's Skill

Discipline: Beastmaster
Talent: Cat's Paw
Rank: 7 **Strain**: 2

The Cat's Skill talent knack gives an adept the balance and reflexes of a cat. The adept can make a Cat's Paw Test for actions involving jumping, climbing trees and maintaining balance. This knack also allows the adept to land safely on his feet after falling distances no greater than his Cat's Paw rank × 2 yards, avoiding taking Falling damage. If the distance fallen is greater than this, however, the adept is unable to compensate for the drop and takes Falling damage from the full height fallen (see the **Adventuring** chapter on p.107 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**).

Claw Riposte

Discipline: Swordmaster
Talent: Riposte
Rank: 7 **Strain**: 3

The Claw Riposte talent knack allows an adept to Riposte animal and creature attacks, as well as other unarmed attacks.

Claw Tool

Discipline: Beastmaster
Talent: Claw Shape
Rank: 4 **Strain**: 2 per minute

The Claw Tool talent knack allows an adept to use the claws created by use of the Claw Shape talent to cut ropes, carve wood, climb and perform other similar non-combat tasks. The adept gains a +2 bonus to Strength-only and Climbing Tests. He can revert his hands back to normal at any time.

Cosmetics

Discipline: Elementalist
Talent: Reshape Object
Rank: 7 **Strain**: 2 (see text)

The Cosmetics talent knack allows an adept to extend the effects of the Reshape Object talent to work on a small amount of living material, allowing him to remove scars, warts and other similar skin deformities. The adept must spend a Karma Point to use this talent knack, then makes a Reshape Object

Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the deformity is removed.

Covet Item

Discipline: Thief
Talent: Fence
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 2

The Covet Item talent knack allows an adept to convince a target character that he strongly desires an item. The adept uses this knack with the first Fence Test he makes against the target's Social Defense. On a Good result, the target feels a strong desire to purchase the item. Each successful Fence Test that the adept makes thereafter adds +10 percent to the price the target is willing to pay.

Create Orichalcum

Discipline: Elementalist, Weaponsmith
Talent: Thread Weaving
Rank: El7, We9 **Strain**: 2

The Create Orichalcum talent knack allows an adept to perform a ritual to create orichalcum. This is a time-intensive, but safer, alternative to the Create Orichalcum ability that Weaponsmiths can learn at Fourteenth Circle. Create Orichalcum Tests are performed using the adept's Thread Weaving step. See **Creating Orichalcum** in the **Enchanting** chapter, p. 281, for more information.

Create Armored Matrix Object

Discipline: Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, Weaponsmith, Wizard
Talent: Thread Weaving
Rank: El10, Il10, Ne10, We10, Wi10 **Strain**: 2

The Create Armored Matrix Object talent knack allows an adept to create armored spell matrix objects. Create Spell Matrix Object Tests are performed using the adept's Thread Weaving talent. See **Spell Matrix Objects** in the **Enchanting** chapter, p. 277, for more information. For Weaponsmiths, these objects are usually armor, weapons or shields.

Create Enhanced Matrix Object

Discipline: Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, Weaponsmith, Wizard
Talent: Thread Weaving
Rank: El6, Il6, Ne6, We6, Wi6 **Strain**: 2

The Create Enhanced Matrix Object talent knack allows an adept to create enhanced spell matrix objects. Create Spell Matrix Object Tests are performed using the adept's Thread Weaving talent. See **Spell Matrix Objects** in the **Enchanting** chapter, p. 277, for more information. For Weaponsmiths, these objects are usually armor, weapons or shields.

Create Shared Matrix Object

Discipline: Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, Weaponsmith, Wizard
Talent: Thread Weaving
Rank: El14, Il14, Ne14, We14, Wi14 **Strain**: 2

The Create Shared Matrix Object talent knack allows an adept to create shared spell matrix objects. Create Spell Matrix Object Tests are performed using the adept's Thread Weaving talent. See **Spell Matrix Objects** in the **Enchanting** chapter, p. 277, for more information. For Weaponsmiths, these objects are usually armor, weapons or shields.

Create Spell Matrix Object

Discipline: Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, Weaponsmith, Wizard
Talent: Thread Weaving
Rank: El3, Il3, Ne3, We3, Wi3 **Strain**: 2

The Create Spell Matrix Object talent knack allows an adept to create spell matrix objects. Create Spell Matrix Object Tests are performed using the adept's Thread Weaving talent. See **Spell Matrix Objects** in the **Enchanting** chapter, p. 277, for more information. For Weaponsmiths, these objects are usually armor, weapons or shields.

Create Thread Item

Discipline: Elementalist, Nethermancer, Weaponsmith, Wizard
Talent: Thread Weaving
Rank: El5, Ne7, We3, Wi7 **Strain**: 2

The Create Thread Item talent knack allows an adept to create thread items. Create Thread Item Tests are performed using the adept's Thread Weaving talent. See **Thread Items** in the **Enchanting** chapter, p. 278, for more information. For Weaponsmiths, these objects are usually armor, weapons or shields.

Creature Remains

Discipline: Beastmaster, Scout
Talent: Creature Analysis
Rank: Be5, Sc5 **Strain**: 1

The Creature Remains talent knack extends use of the Creature Analysis talent to allow an adept to identify a creature from certain trace evidence, such as its remains, lair or the remnants of victims. The adept studies the evidence, then makes a Creature Analysis Test against the creature's Spell Defense. On a Good result, he can identify the type of creature, and may ask the gamemaster a question of a type normally granted by a successful use of the Creature Analysis talent.

Deathbed

Discipline: Illusionist
Talent: Dead Fall
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 1 per minute

The Deathbed talent knack allows an adept to feign the effects of a horrible disease, appearing as if he were dying. The adept must achieve a Good result on his Dead Fall Test to allow this effect. The adept remains conscious and able to speak while maintaining the illusion. At any time during the talent's duration he may feign his own death, after which the effects of the Dead Fall talent work as normal.

Deathsight

Discipline: Nethermancer
Talent: Lifesight
Rank: 9 **Strain**: 3

The Deathsight talent knack allows an adept to see the strength and composition of undead Name-givers and Horror constructs. The adept must achieve a Good result on his Lifesight Test.

Deflect Blow

Discipline: Swordmaster, Warrior
Talent: Melee Weapons
Rank: Sw5, Wa5 **Strain**: 1

The Deflect Blow talent knack allows an adept to block melee attacks directed against him, thus increasing his Physical Defense. For each point added to the adept's Physical Defense, he suffers a –1 penalty to his Action Tests that round. The adept may improve his Physical Defense by a maximum number of points equal to his Melee Weapons rank. T'skrang Swordmasters or Warriors can use this knack instead of the rules for parrying with their tail weapon (see **Tail Attack** in the **Creating Characters** chapter, p. 50).

Defuse Mob

Discipline: Troubadour
Talent: Incite Mob
Rank: 8 **Strain**: 2

The Defuse Mob talent knack allows an adept to more easily calm and disperse a mob. The adept makes an Incite Mob Test against the highest Social Defense among the mob's members. The size of the mob determines the result level needed (see **Incite Mob** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 189). If the test succeeds, the mob returns to a calm state.

Diagnose

Discipline: Wizard
Talent: Astral Sight
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 2

The Diagnose talent knack allows an adept to determine if a subject is afflicted with any diseases or internal injuries, and to check the general state of the subject's health. The adept makes an Astral Sight Test against the target's Spell Defense. On a Good result, the adept detects any injuries, diseases, poisons, illnesses or other afflictions affecting the subject.

Disassociate

Discipline: Troubadour
Talent: Empathic Sense
Rank: 8 **Strain**: 2

The Disassociate talent knack allows an adept to dampen a character's intense negative emotions. The adept makes an Empathic Sense Test against the target's Spell Defense. On a Good result, the target's Attitude toward the adept improves by one level (see the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 90 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). The target still feels pain or anger or fear, but not as strongly as before.

The gamemaster determines any effects caused by the target's new Attitude.

Epic

Discipline: Troubadour
Talent: Emotion Song
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 1

The Epic talent knack allows an adept to use his Emotion Song talent over longer periods of time than normal. Indeed, some epic poems and ballads can keep an audience enthralled for days. Troubadours can also use the Epic knack in conjunction with the Tale ability to tell epic-scale stories (see the **Why the Troubadour Sings** chapter, p. 138).

The adept makes an Emotion Song Test once per hour, instead of every 30 minutes, of performance. At the end of the song or tale, the adept chooses the best result among all of his Emotion Song Tests to determine the affect of his performance on the audience. A failed test still ends an adept's performance; the adept chooses the best result up to that point to determine his success.

Explosive Flame Arrow

Discipline: Archer
Talent: Flame Arrow
Rank: 7 **Strain**: 4

The Explosive Flame Arrow talent knack allows an adept to create an explosive ball of flame when using the Flame Arrow talent. The adept makes his missile Attack Test as normal. If the test succeeds, the flame arrow bursts on impact with a blast radius equal to the adept's Flame Arrow rank in yards. The adept compares his Attack Test result against the Physical Defense of all characters within the blast radius. On a Good result, the character is affected by the explosion.

The adept makes a Flame Arrow Test in place of the Damage Test, but only those characters affected by the explosion take damage. The original target is affected, as normal.

Extend Range

Discipline: Archer
Talent: Missile Weapons
Rank: 8 **Strain**: 3

The Extend Range talent knack allows an adept to extend the effective range of a missile weapon. Each use of this knack doubles the range of the weapon for one missile Attack Test. For example, a short bow would gain the following Range statistics: Short 2–60, Medium 61–120, Long 121–240 yards.

Far Speaking

Discipline: Elementalist
Talent: Air Speaking
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 2

The Far Speaking talent knack allows an adept to extend the range of his Air Speaking talent. The adept makes an Air Speaking Test as normal, but the talent's range is increased to a number of yards equal to the Air Speaking Test result × 10 yards.

Faulty Bowyer

Discipline: Weaponsmith
Talent: Warp Missile
Rank: 7 **Strain**: 2

The Faulty Bowyer talent knack allows an adept to impair the effectiveness of a bow or crossbow. It does not work on other missile weapons, including blowpipes or slings. The adept makes a Warp Missile Test against the higher of the wielder's or the weapon's Spell Defense. On an Excellent result, the bowstring snaps. On an Extraordinary result, the weapon's frame cracks, severely damaging it and subtracting –3 from its Damage step. The bow must be repaired to remove this penalty.

An adept may attempt to use this knack only once against the same weapon.

Faulty Goods

Discipline: Weaponsmith
Talent: Haggle
Rank: 7 **Strain**: 2

The Faulty Goods talent knack allows an adept to get the upper hand when haggling by convincing a target character that his goods are of inferior quality. The adept uses this knack with the first Haggle Test he makes against the target's Social Defense. On a Good result, the adept points out illusory flaws in the goods, which in turn makes the target offer to sell the item for half its original price. Thereafter, both adept and target make Haggle Tests as normal.

Feinting Lunge

Discipline: Cavalryman
Talent: Charge
Rank: 6 **Strain**: 2 (see text)

When an adept is making a Charging attack against an opponent, he may declare that he is setting up his opponent to be struck by another character, designating a companion to gain the benefit of the Feinting Lunge talent knack. The adept must spend a Karma Point for the Charge, in addition to the Strain cost, to draw his opponent out of line with his blow or feint. The adept's attack does not have to be successful for his nominated ally to gain the benefit from this knack. The adept's companion gains a +3 bonus to the Damage Test he makes from his next Attack Test, if the attack is successful.

No one other than the designated companion benefits from this bonus. If the adept's opponent is able to take an action, or is attacked by anyone other than the adept before being struck by the nominated ally, this damage bonus is lost.

Feinting Retreat

Discipline: Cavalryman
Talent: Trick Riding
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 3

When an adept is using the Trick Riding talent to avoid an opponent's attack, he may declare that he is setting up his assailant to run into one of his companion's blows. The adept declares which companion gains a bonus before making his Trick Riding Test. If the test succeeds, the designated companion adds the adept's Trick Riding rank as a bonus to his next Attack Test against the adept's opponent.

If the adept's opponent is able to take an action, or is attacked by anyone other than the adept before being attacked by the nominated ally, the bonus is lost.

Fire Arrow

Discipline: Archer
Talent: Flame Arrow
Rank: 3 **Strain**: 1

The Fire Arrow talent knack engulfs the head of an arrow or bolt in flame. The adept does not make a Flame Arrow Test; instead, he gains a +2 bonus to the missile's normal Damage Test. The missile is not consumed by the use of this knack.

The Fire Arrow knack is often used to create flaming missiles to ignite flammable materials from afar.

Flaming Wounds

Discipline: Sky Raider
Talent: Fireblood
Rank: 7 **Strain**: 3

The Flaming Wounds talent knack allows an adept to use his Fireblood talent to heal a Wound rather than Damage Points taken in combat. The knack must be used during the same round that the Wound was inflicted, or it has no effect. Use of this talent knack costs the adept an available Recovery Test, as normal (see **Fireblood** in the **Talents** chapter, p.184). The adept makes a Fireblood Test against his own Wound Threshold. On a Good result, he heals one of the Wounds he received that round. He does not heal any Damage Points.

Use of the Flaming Wounds knack must be declared before the adept makes a Fireblood Test. All other conditions for use of the Fireblood talent apply, including the requirement for the adept to be in combat.

Flying Kick

Discipline: Sky Raider
Talent: Great Leap
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 2

The Flying Kick talent knack allows an adept to make a flying kick as an unarmed attack using his Great Leap talent. At least 3 yards must separate the adept and his opponent for the knack to work. The adept makes a Great Leap Test in place of an unarmed Attack Test against the target's Physical Defense. On a Good result, the adept leaps through the intervening distance to strike his opponent. The adept makes a Damage Test to determine how much damage he inflicts on his target, using a Damage step equal to his Strength step + 3.

The Great Leap Test result determines the maximum distance he leaps, as normal, and serves as the adept's Physical Defense for the remainder of the round, even if lower than his normal Physical Defense (see **Great Leap** in the **Talents** chapter, p.187).

Forge Arrow

Discipline: Weaponsmith
Talent: Forge Blade
Rank: 3 **Strain**: 2

The Forge Arrow talent knack allows an adept to enhance the damage inflicted by arrows, bolts, and other projectiles. The adept may forge a number of individual missiles equal to his Forge Blade rank. All of the projectiles must be of the same type. Unforged missiles are considered to have a Size equal to the weapon they are fired from, and a Damage step of 1. The adept makes a Forge Blade Test as normal. If the test succeeds, add a +1 bonus to the missile's Damage Test, when fired.

All standard restrictions and limitations for forging melee weapons also apply to forged missiles (see **Forge Blade** in the **Talents** chapter, p.185).

Gaping Wounds

Discipline: Illusionist, Nethermancer
Talent: Spellcasting
Rank: Il6, Ne7 **Strain**: 2

The Gaping Wound talent knack creates the illusion that a Wound is far worse than it truly is. The knack can only be used with spells that inflict damage on the target. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test as normal. If the result of the spell's Effect Test is sufficient to inflict a Wound on the target, it appears more severe than it should and looks very grotesque. The magician may make an immediate Intimidation Test against the target's Social Defense. If the target does not suffer a Wound, the knack has no effect.

Glide

Discipline: Air Sailor
Talent: Wind Catcher
Rank: 8 **Strain**: 2

The Glide talent knack allows an adept to glide through the air. For each yard of height given up, the adept can glide up to 3 yards horizontally. When gliding under normal conditions, the adept makes a Wind Catcher (6) Test—the Difficulty Number may be adjusted by the gamemaster to account for adverse conditions (strong winds, a lack of wind, and so on). If the test succeeds, the adept can glide for a maximum distance equal to his Wind Catcher Test result × 30 yards, provided he has sufficient elevation. If the test fails, the adept falls to the ground, taking Falling damage based on the height fallen (see the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 107 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). The Glide knack also reduces the damage an adept takes from falling. The adept subtracts his Wind Catcher rank from the result of the falling Damage Test (or tests, if falling from a sufficient height).

Halt Disease

Discipline: Elementalist
Talent: Cold Purify
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 2

The Halt Disease talent knack allows an adept to stop the progress of disease. The adept makes a Cold Purify Test against the Spell Defense of the disease. On a Good result, the effect of the disease is stopped. The victim does not heal any damage already inflicted; the knack merely prevents the disease ravaging him further.

Hard Glare

Discipline: Sky Raider
Talent: Steely Stare
Rank: 9 **Strain**: 4

The Hard Glare talent knack allows an adept to damage inanimate objects with his gaze. The adept makes a Steely Stare (13) Test. If the test succeeds, the adept can break delicate objects made of glass, crystal, pottery or thin wood by merely looking at them. An Average result is enough to crack glass or crystal; shattering wooden or ceramic objects requires an Excellent result.

The gamemaster determines if an object is delicate enough to be affected by this knack.

Head Butt

Discipline: Warrior
Talent: Unarmed Combat
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 2

The Head Butt talent knack allows an adept to strike an opponent with his head while engaged in unarmed combat. The

character must have made a successful Grappling attack against his opponent to use this knack (see **Grappling** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 411). The adept makes an Unarmed Combat Test as normal. If the test succeeds, he forgoes making a Damage Test in order to stun his opponent. On an Average or Good result, the target is Stunned for 1 round; on an Excellent result, the target is Stunned for 2 rounds; on an Extraordinary result, the target is Stunned for 3 rounds (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 409). On a Pathetic result, the attacker is himself Stunned for 1 round—he strikes a vulnerable part of his own head; always a risk with this type of brawling.

Heal Others

Discipline: Elementalist
Talent: Fire Heal
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 1+ (see text)

The Heal Others talent knack allows an adept to guide another character through the Fire Heal ritual. Both characters must be present at the ritual. The procedure for gaining bonus Recovery Tests is otherwise as described for the Fire Heal talent (see the **Talents** chapter, p. 184). The adept must achieve a Good result on his Fire Heal Test for the ritual to be successful. The adept does not gain any Recovery Tests from use of this knack, but as he must take part in the ritual, he is still exposed to the risks. If the test fails, both characters take damage and Wounds. Using this knack causes the adept a number of Strain Points of damage equal to the number of bonus Recovery Tests the other character is attempting to gain.

Here's the Deal

Discipline: Weaponsmith
Talent: Haggle
Rank: 7 **Strain**: 0

The Here's the Deal talent knack allows an adept to determine the value of an object by merely glancing at it. The adept makes

a Haggle Test against the item's Spell Defense. On a Good result, he knows the item's approximate value in silver pieces, within a 25 percent margin of error. The gamemaster should provide the adept with an estimated price range for the item, ranging from 75 to 125 percent of the item's actual value.

Hold Multiple Threads

Discipline: Wizard
Talent: Hold Thread
Rank: 8 **Strain**: 2+ (see text)

The Hold Multiple Threads talent knack allows a magician to hold more than one spell thread at a time. He can hold a maximum number of threads equal to the spell's Thread Number. After weaving the spell threads he wishes to hold, the magician makes a Hold Thread Test against the spell's Weaving Difficulty. If the test succeeds, the magician holds the threads as described for the Hold Thread talent (see the **Talents** chapter, p. 188). The magician takes 2 Strain Points of damage for each thread held.

Horror Analysis

Discipline: Beastmaster, Scout
Talent: Creature Analysis
Rank: Be7, Sc7 **Strain**: 1

The Horror Analysis talent knack extends use of the Creature Analysis talent to include Horrors, Horror constructs, and the remains of Horrors and their victims. Though Horrors are rarely exactly alike and often capable of elaborate deception, legendary heroes have occasionally found weaknesses to exploit in the physiology or habits of Horrors they have stalked and watched. The adept must achieve a Good result on a Creature Analysis Test against the Spell Defense of the Horror or construct being analyzed.

At the gamemaster's discretion, the adept may add his Horror Lore rank (if he knows this skill) as a bonus to his Creature Analysis Test when using this knack.

Identify Tracks

Discipline: Scout
Talent: Tracking
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 2

The Identify Tracks talent knack allows an adept to determine the composition of a group he is tracking. The adept makes his Tracking Test as normal. On a Good result, he learns the exact number of members and the distinct races that make up the target group. An Excellent or better result may provide the adept with even more information, at the gamemaster's discretion.

Improvised Missiles

Discipline: Thief
Talent: Throwing Weapons
Rank: 6 **Strain**: 1

The Improvised Missiles talent knack allows an adept to use an object, no bigger than 12 inches long, as a throwing weapon. The adept does not incur a penalty to his Throwing Weapons Test when hurling the improvised missile (see **Throwing Objects** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 412), but he must be able to lift the object. The adept makes a Throwing Weapons Test as normal. If the test succeeds, the adept makes a Damage Test for the weapon.

The gamemaster determines the Damage step of the improvised missile. Most objects will be Damage step 1, but some larger or heavier objects may be Damage step 2, or even 3. The improvised missiles hurled using this knack have the same range as a dagger.

Improvised Weapons

Discipline: Warrior
Talent: Melee Weapons
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 1

The Improvised Weapons talent knack allows an adept to wield objects not intended as weapons in melee combat. The adept does not incur a penalty to his Melee Weapons Test when hitting an opponent with the improvised weapon (see **Improvised Melee Weapons** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 410). The adept makes a Melee Weapons Test as normal. If the test succeeds, the adept makes a Damage Test for the weapon.

The gamemaster determines the Damage step of an improvised weapon, based on the size and material of the item being wielded, to a maximum of Damage step 7. Examples of suitable items include pens, pieces of wood, airship guide cables, uprooted marker stones, loaves of stale bread, suits of armor or even other Name-givers. The adept must be able to lift the item to wield it as a melee weapon.

Lasting Memory

Discipline: Illusionist
Talent: False Sight
Rank: 9 **Strain**: 2 (see text)

The Lasting Memory talent knack allows an adept to prolong the effect of the False Sight talent. The adept must spend a Karma Point when using this knack. The duration of the illusion masked by False Sight is increased by a number of time units—rounds, minutes, hours, days; whatever time unit the illusion's duration is derived from—equal to the adept's False Sight rank.

Liar

Discipline: Illusionist
Talent: Detect Falsehood
Rank: 7 **Strain**: 1

The Liar talent knack allows an adept to construct an elaborate lie engineered to work well against a target character. The adept must spend a Karma Point on his Detect Falsehood Test. On a Good or better result, the adept gains a bonus to the next Interaction Test he makes against the target, as long as it is associated with the original lie. A Good result gives a +1 bonus to his Interaction Test; an Excellent result gives a +2 bonus; an Extraordinary result gives the adept a +3 bonus.

Lift the Curtain

Discipline: Illusionist
Talent: Astral Sight
Rank: 7 **Strain**: 1 per minute

The Lift the Curtain talent knack allows an adept to reveal a small portion of astral space to other characters. The adept

makes an Astral Sight (6) Test as normal. If the test succeeds, a small portion of astral space becomes visible to those watching. The effect is hazy, reducing the effective range of the Astral Sight talent to 3 yards. Note that the knack's effect is illusory; it does not actually open a portal to or allow interaction with astral space.

Lightning Throw

Discipline: Thief
Talent: Throwing Weapons
Rank: 7 **Strain**: 1+ (see text)

The Lightning Throw talent knack allows an adept to throw multiple weapons in a single combat round. The adept may throw a maximum number of weapons equal to his Throwing Weapons rank. Each weapon must be Size 2 or smaller and all of them must be the same type. The adept makes a Throwing Weapons Test for each weapon thrown. If the test succeeds, the adept makes a Damage Test for the weapon.

The Strain cost for using this knack varies. The adept takes 1 Strain Point of damage for the first weapon thrown, 2 Strain Points of damage for the second, 3 Strain Points of damage for the third weapon thrown, and so on. This knack can be combined with the Improvised Missiles knack, as long as the adept pays the Strain costs for using both knacks.

Maintain Spell Threads

Discipline: Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, Wizard
Talent: Spellcasting
Rank: El7, Il5, Ne7, Wi5 **Strain**: 1+ (see text)

Normally, a magician must weave all of the threads for a spell, then cast the spell in the next round or lose the threads. The Maintain Spell Threads talent knack allows a magician to hold spell threads in a spell matrix until he is ready to cast the spell. Each round, the magician takes a number of Strain Points of damage equal to the number of threads he is holding.

The Maintain Spell Threads knack is often used when a magician wants to hold off casting a spell with only a few threads for one or two rounds. Wizards generally use this knack only until they learn the Hold Thread talent.

Matched Weapons

Discipline: Swordmaster
Talent: Second Weapon
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 0

The Matched Weapons talent knack allows an adept to use a second weapon of the same Size when using the Second Weapon talent, provided both weapons are small enough to be wielded in one hand. For example, the adept can use two broadswords with this knack, or a club in one hand and a dwarf sword in the other.

Mighty Throw

Discipline: Warrior
Talent: Unarmed Combat
Rank: 7 **Strain**: 2

The Mighty Throw talent knack allows an adept to grab an opponent and throw him through the air. The adept must be able to lift his opponent's weight. The adept makes an Unarmed Combat Test as normal to perform a Grappling attack against his opponent. On a Good result, the adept has grabbed the target, throwing him a number of feet equal to the Unarmed Combat Test result. The adept can hit another character with the thrown opponent if his Unarmed Combat Test result is enough to give him a Good result against the second target's Physical Defense.

When the thrown opponent lands, he takes Falling damage as if he had fallen from a height equal to the distance the adept would have thrown him, even if he was actually thrown a shorter distance (see the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 107 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). Anyone struck by a thrown opponent also suffers Falling damage, but only based on the actual distance the adept's opponent was thrown. Physical Armor protects against this damage. Thrown opponents are automatically Knocked Down when they land, unless they make a successful Knockdown Test against the Unarmed Combat Test result.

Mimic Music

Discipline: Troubadour
Talent: Mimic Voice
Rank: 6 **Strain**: 2

The Mimic Music talent knack allows an adept to mimic the sounds of various musical instruments. The adept cannot mimic music while talking or singing. Mimicking an instrument is done in the same manner as mimicking a voice (see **Mimic Voice** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 192), except that the adept makes the Mimic Voice Test against the Spell Defense of the person playing the instrument that he wishes to imitate. If the test succeeds, the adept may mimic the instrument at any time for a number of months equal to his Mimic Voice rank.

When performing music using this knack, the adept makes a Mimic Voice Test to determine the quality of his performance. If used in conjunction with the Emotion Song talent (and associated knacks), the adept gains a +1 bonus to his Emotion Song Test for each result level achieved on the Mimic Voice Test.

Mind Trick

Discipline: Illusionist
Talent: Mind Wave
Rank: 7 **Strain**: 1

The Mind Trick talent knack allows an adept to make a target character follow a simple order. The adept must spend a Karma Point on his Mind Wave Test. On a Good result, the adept issues a simple one or two word order to the target, who immediately follows the command for the duration of the talent.

The target remains unaware of the fact that his actions are being controlled by someone else until the talent's effect expires or is ended by a successful Willpower Test against the adept's Mind Wave step, which he makes each round.

Mountain Hoof

Discipline: Cavalryman
Talent: Trick Riding
Rank: 6 **Strain**: 2 per round (see text)

The Mountain Hoof talent knack allows an adept to safely ride his mount at extremely steep angles, up to a 60 degree slope. The Strain cost is taken by both rider and mount. The mount cannot be carrying more weight than its Carrying Capacity allows—including carrying the rider—and cannot drag anything behind it while traversing the slope (see **Encumbrance** in the **Creating Characters** chapter, p. 48, and **Animals and Mounts** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 456).

Name Spell

Discipline: Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, Wizard
Talent: Spellcasting
Rank: El7, Il6, Ne7, Wi5 **Strain**: 1+ (see text)

The Name Spell talent knack allows a magician to cast Named spells. The Strain cost varies, based on the spell's Circle. See **Named Spells** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 291, and **Creating Permanent Spell Patterns** in the **Enchanting** chapter, p. 275, for more information.

Offguard

Discipline: Thief
Talent: Picking Pockets
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 2

The Offguard talent knack allows an adept to distract a target while picking his pockets, making it harder for the theft to be noticed. The adept makes a Picking Pockets Test as normal. If the test succeeds, the adept makes another Picking Pockets Test against the target's Spell Defense. If this test succeeds, the target automatically fails to notice the theft. The same does not apply to any onlookers, however.

Orbiting Watcher

Discipline: Nethermancer
Talent: Orbiting Spy
Rank: 7 **Strain**: 1

The Orbiting Watcher talent knack allows an adept to place a spy spirit to watch a place, item or being. The adept makes an Orbiting Spy Test to summon the spirit, as normal, then makes a second Orbiting Spy Test against the Spell Defense of the place, item or being to be watched. If this test succeeds, the spy spirit remains with the target for the duration of the talent.

The spirit can communicate with the adept over a distance in miles equal to his Orbiting Spy rank.

Photographic Memory

Discipline: Wizard
Talent: Book Memory
Rank: 9 **Strain**: 3

The Photographic Memory talent knack allows an adept to remember a place exactly, enabling him to use his Evidence Analysis talent at a later time. The maximum area the adept can memorize the details of is equal to his Book Memory rank in yards in every dimension. The adept makes a Book Memory Test against the highest Spell Defense of any item or character (or the place itself) in the area he wishes to memorize. If the test succeeds, the adept successfully memorizes the details of the place.

Places memorized with this knack are not recalled using the Book Memory or Book Recall talents, and the information cannot be written down accurately. The image memorized counts toward the book limit that the adept can actively memorize, however. This may require him to "forget" a book he has memorized in order to keep the image of an area he wants to later analyze.

The adept envisions the place in his mind's eye, allowing him to use the Evidence Analysis talent to ask questions about the scene. This does not require any test on the adept's part to retrieve. However, the memory is not as good as actually being there. Reduce the number of questions the adept can ask using his Evidence Analysis talent by one. The adept may forget the memorized place at any time, thus freeing the "memory slot" for another place or a book.

Pin Down

Discipline: Warrior
Talent: Unarmed Combat
Rank: 3 **Strain**: 1

The Pin Down talent knack allows an adept to more easily grapple and hold down an opponent. The knack can be used only against a Knocked Down opponent. The adept makes an Unarmed Combat Test against the target as a Grappling attack. If the test succeeds, the adept pins the target down, immobilizing him. The only action the target can take is to fight free of the adept by making a successful Strength or Unarmed Combat Test against the adept's Unarmed Combat Test result. While pinned down, the target incurs a Knocked Down penalty to all of his Action Tests, including any attempts to break free (see **Grappling** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 411).

Pin Up

Discipline: Thief
Talent: Throwing Weapons
Rank: 6 **Strain**: 1

The Pin Up talent knack allows an adept to pin a target character to a wall or other structure with a thrown weapon. The target must be within 2 yards of a structure or wall and wearing clothing that can be suitably pinned. The adept must use a weapon that can feasibly pin someone, such as a dagger, knife, or spear. The adept makes a Throwing Weapons Test as normal. On a Good result, the weapon pins the target's clothing to the wall. The adept does not make a Damage Test; the target takes no damage from the attack. Instead, the target can only free himself by making a successful Strength Test against the attack's Damage step. While pinned the target is considered Harried (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408). If the adept makes a successful Called Shot, he can pin the target through flesh (most often hands or upper arms) rather than clothing. In this case, the adept makes a Damage Test for the weapon. If the target suffers a Wound, he is pinned, and requires a successful Strength Test to free himself. The knack can be combined with the Lightning Throw knack to pin a target with multiple weapons.

Placed Shot

Discipline: Archer
Talent: Missile Weapons
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 2 per attack

The Placed Shot talent knack allows an adept to use the Aggressive Attack combat option with a missile weapon (see **Combat Options** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 403). Using this knack limits his Combat Movement to 3 yards that round. The adept gains the benefits (and penalties) of a normal Aggressive Attack for each Missile Weapons Test he makes. The Strain cost for using this knack includes the Strain cost of the Aggressive Attack.

Placed Throw

Discipline: Thief
Talent: Throwing Weapons
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 2 per attack

The Placed Throw talent knack allows an adept to use the Aggressive Attack combat option with a thrown weapon (see **Combat Options** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 403). Using this knack limits his Combat Movement to 3 yards that round. The adept gains the benefits (and penalties) of a normal Aggressive Attack for each Throwing Weapons Test he makes. The Strain cost for using this knack includes the Strain cost of the Aggressive Attack.

Rapier Wit

Discipline: Troubadour
Talent: Resist Taunt
Rank: 8 **Strain**: 2

The Rapier Wit talent knack allows an adept to turn a taunt back on the originator of the remark. Whenever the adept is the target of a successful Taunt, he may use the Rapier Wit knack to counter the taunt with a witty verbal riposte. The adept makes a Resist Taunt Test as normal. On a Good result, the character making the original taunt suffers the results of the taunt himself. The Rapier Wit knack can only be attempted once per taunt.

Remember Conversation

Discipline: Wizard
Talent: Book Memory
Rank: 7 **Strain**: 2

The Remember Conversation talent knack allows an adept to remember conversations for later recall. The adept can memorize a number of hours of conversation equal to his Book Memory rank. The adept makes a Book Memory Test against the highest Spell Defense among all the speakers conversing. If the test succeeds, the adept successfully memorizes the conversation.

Conversations memorized with this knack act as normal books for purposes of recalling them with the Book Memory talent. Each conversation memorized counts toward the book limit that the adept can actively keep in memory, possibly requiring him to "forget" a book he has memorized. Forgotten conversations cannot be later recalled using the Book Recall talent.

Second Riposte

Discipline: Swordmaster
Talent: Second Weapon
Rank: 7 **Strain**: 4

The Second Riposte talent knack allows an adept to attempt another riposte against the same melee attack. The adept must be wielding two one-handed weapons. The adept makes a Second Weapon Test in place of a failed Riposte Test using his off-hand weapon. The single counterattack per round limit also applies to this talent knack (see **Riposte** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 197).

The Second Riposte knack can be used in conjunction with the Matched Weapons, but not the Claw Riposte, talent knack. T'skrang characters may use their tail weapon with this knack.

Setup

Discipline: Swordmaster
Talent: Maneuver
Rank: 6 **Strain**: 2

The Setup talent knack allows an adept to maneuver into a position that aids another character. The adept must choose the recipient when he makes his Maneuver Test. Both the adept and the recipient must avoid all attacks made against them by the target opponent during the round in which the adept uses the knack. If the adept and the recipient successfully avoid all of the target opponent's attacks, during the following round the recipient adds the adept's Maneuver rank as a bonus to any close combat Attack Tests he makes against that opponent. He does not gain a Damage Test bonus from this knack.

Shadow Hide

Discipline: Scout, Thief
Talent: Silent Walk
Rank: Sc5, Th3 **Strain**: 1

The Shadow Hide talent knack allows an adept to not only move quietly, but also to conceal himself in the nearby shadows. The adept makes a Silent Walk Test, the result of which becomes the Detection Difficulty for any Perception Tests made by those attempting to hear or see him moving. During this time the adept may move no faster than half his Movement rate without ending the talent.

The adept requires some shadow to hide in. Partial darkness is ideal (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 407), but any shadow is enough for the adept to use. The complete absence of shadow, such as being in bright light, or the effect of some light spells, will prevent the knack from being used and/or end the effect.

Share Sense

Discipline: Beastmaster
Talent: Borrow Sense
Rank: 7 **Strain**: 2

The Share Sense talent knack allows an adept to "swap" his own sense with that of the animal whose sense he is borrowing. The adept makes a Borrow Sense Test. If the test succeeds, the adept receives one of the target animal's senses—sight, smell, hearing, touch, or taste—in addition to his own, and the animal receives the adept's corresponding sense in return.

Signature Spells

Discipline: Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, Wizard
Talent: Spellcasting
Rank: El7, Il6, Ne7, Wi5 **Strain**: 1

The Signature Spells talent knack enables a magician to alter (but not eliminate) the cosmetic effects of his own spells, such as color, smell and sound. For example, the Signature Spells knack can change the blast effect of a Bouncing Blaster spell from orange to green or superimpose the sound of the explosion over booming laughter. This knack cannot change a spell's statistics or its required components. It merely allows the magician to customize the "style" of the spell to make it more his own.

Smooth Armor

Discipline: Weaponsmith
Talent: Forge Armor
Rank: 7 **Strain**: 4

The Smooth Armor talent knack allows an adept to reduce the Initiative Penalty of armor or shields. The adept makes a Forge Armor Test against a Difficulty Number equal to the armor's current Physical + Mystic Armor + Initiative Penalty + 9. Forge Armor Tests to smooth thread armor or shields are always made against the armor's normal statistics (without threads) and require a Good result. For example, the Difficulty Number for using the Smooth Armor knack on plate armor (Phys 9; Myst 0; Init 4) would be 22 (9 + 0 + 4 +9 = 22). If the test succeeds, subtract –1 from the armor or shield's Initiative Penalty. A set of armor or a shield's Initiative Penalty cannot be reduced to less than half the original penalty, rounding fractions down. A failed test result has no effect other than wasting time. A Pathetic result ruins normal armor and shields; a Rule of One result ruins even thread armor and shields (see the **Game Concepts** chapter, p. 18).

The Smooth Armor knack is otherwise subject to the same duration, restrictions and limitations as described for the Forge Armor talent (see the **Talents** chapter, p. 185). This knack cannot be used on living armor (see **Armor and Shields** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 439).

Songs of Inspiration

Discipline: Troubadour
Talent: Emotion Song
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 1+ (see text)

The Songs of Inspiration talent knack allows an adept to sing a song that boosts his companions' abilities. The knack can be used at any time, including during combat, and the adept's companions gain its benefits immediately. The adept must write a number of inspirational songs to sing when appropriate, creating a separate song for each type of activity he wishes to enhance. An adept can know a number of different inspirational songs equal to his Emotion Song rank. For example, an adept can write songs that boost his companions' abilities for Initiative, Attack or Damage Tests during combat, or even their abilities for Recovery Tests.

The adept makes an Emotion Song Test against the highest Social Defense among all of his companions, +1 for each addi-

tional character. He cannot choose to inspire only some of his companions—the knack affects everyone or no one. If the test fails, the song has no effect. If the test succeeds, all of the adept's companions gain a +1 bonus to the relevant Action Test for each result level on the Emotion Song Test. The adept takes a number of Strain Points of damage each round equal to the bonus.

The effect of the knack can be stopped by the adept at any time, but otherwise lasts for a number of rounds equal to his Emotion Song rank. For example, if a Troubadour with Emotion Song at Rank 4 makes an Emotion Song Test with an Excellent result, he takes 3 Strain Points of damage each round, for up to 4 rounds.

Spell Stacking

Discipline: Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, Wizard
Talent: Spellcasting
Rank: El9, Il8, Ne9, Wi7 **Strain**: 2+ (see text)

The Spell Stacking talent knack allows a magician to "stack" multiple spells and cast them as a single spell against a target character. The magician takes 2 Strain Points of damage for each spell in the stack. If the patterns for the spells to be stacked are stored in spell matrices, the magician first weaves the required spell threads for each spell, then makes a single Spellcasting Test against the highest Casting Difficulty among all the spells. On a Good result, the spells are cast successfully with normal effect; the magician makes a separate Effect Test for each spell that requires it. If the test fails, none of the spells have any effect. If a magician wishes to stack spells that are not stored in matrices, he may cast them using raw magic, but with the following modifications (see **Casting Raw Magic** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 289). The gamemaster makes a single Warping Test and a single Horror Mark Test, but combines the Circles of all of the spells in the stack to determine the "stacked" spell's effective Circle.

Spirit Flame

Discipline: Archer
Talent: Flame Arrow
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 4

The Spirit Flame talent knack allows an adept's flame arrow to bypass the target's physical armor. The adept makes a missile Attack Test as normal. On an Average result, the target's Physical Armor protects him as normal. On a Good result, the target's Mystic Armor protects him against the missile's Damage Test instead. Armor-Defeating Hits bypass the target's armor as normal.

Spirit Shield

Discipline: Nethermancer
Talent: Spirit Dodge
Rank: 9 **Strain**: 3

The Spirit Shield talent knack allows an adept to avoid the effects of a spell or magical ability, such as a Horror Power. The effect must be targeted specifically at the adept, not simply affecting an area he happens to occupy. When magically attacked, the adept makes a Spirit Dodge Test against the attacker's Spellcasting Test result. If the test succeeds, he avoids the spell or magical effect.

Subliminal Mutterings

Discipline: Wizard
Talent: Arcane Mutterings
Rank: 7 **Strain**: 2

The Subliminal Mutterings talent knack allows an adept to give simple commands to a target character. The adept makes an Arcane Mutterings Test, as normal. On a Good result, he may give the target a simple suggestion or order containing a number of words no greater than his Arcane Mutterings rank. The target will comply with the adept's command, as long as they are not injurious to himself.

Swab the Deck

Discipline: Air Sailor
Talent: Melee Weapons
Rank: 9 **Strain**: 3

When fighting aboard an airship, an adept can use the Swab the Deck talent knack to make use of his surroundings to gain an advantage in combat. The adept makes a Melee Weapons Test against his opponent's Physical Defense, as normal. On a Good result, he can try to unbalance his opponent by knocking him over a coiled rope or a barrel. The adept makes a Damage Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. If the target takes any damage from the attack, he also makes a Knockdown Test as if the adept was using the Attacking to Knockdown combat option against him (see **Combat Options** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 403). If the target receives a Wound in the attack, add +3 to the Difficulty Number for the Knockdown Test.

Swift Hoof

Discipline: Cavalryman
Talent: Trick Riding
Rank: 3 **Strain**: 2

The Swift Hoof talent knack allows an adept to goad his mount to an increased Movement rate in the round it is used. The adept makes a Trick Riding Test, the result of which is the maximum number of yards he may add to his mount's Combat Movement, and up to twice that amount if making a Full Movement. This knack can be used in the same round in which the character makes an Attack Test.

Swinging in the Rigging

Discipline: Air Sailor
Talent: Climbing
Rank: 3 **Strain**: 0

The Swinging in the Rigging talent knack allows an adept to swing from an airship's rigging to move around the ship, or from ship to ship. The adept makes a Climbing (8) Test, modified at the gamemaster's discretion for weather conditions (gusting winds, rain, and so on) and obstacles. On an Average result, the adept barely controls his swing and must make a second successful Climbing (8) Test to land safely. On a Good result, the adept can control the swing and land where he wishes. A Poor result requires the adept to make a successful Strength (10) Test to hold onto the rope. If this test fails, he falls from the rope, taking Falling damage based on the height fallen (see the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 107 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). A Pathetic result means the character falls with no opportunity to save himself.

Talent Linking

Discipline: All
Talent: Thread Weaving
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 2+ (see text)

The Talent Linking talent knack allows up to three members of the same Discipline to "link" their talents and so enhance the step number of another member of the same Discipline. All of the adepts must know the talent being enhanced. In addition, all participants must have line of sight to each other. When using this knack, an adept weaves a temporary thread to the pattern of another adept, enhancing one of the target adept's Talent Tests. Each "linking" adept makes a Thread Weaving Test against the target's talent step. If the test succeeds, a temporary thread is

woven to the target's pattern. Establishing this connection causes the linking adept 2 Strain Points of damage. The target adept gains a +1 bonus to his Talent Test for each result level on the Thread Weaving Test. If more than one adept is using this knack to enhance another adept's talent, add the bonuses for each test result together. The linking adept may maintain the thread for a number of rounds equal to his Thread Weaving rank, but this requires his concentration, and causes him 1 Strain Point of damage per round. No more than three "linked" threads may enhance the abilities of a target adept. If more than three linking adepts are using this knack to support another adept, use the three highest Thread Weaving Test results to determine the bonus.

The most common use of the Talent Linking knack is by guilds (such as Weaponsmith forges) made up of many members of a single Discipline. Groups performing ritual magic may also use the Talent Linking knack, but using it for this purpose requires blood magic. Each linking adept takes 5 permanent Damage Points to create the thread link, and the thread remains connected to the target adept's pattern for a year and a day. During this time, the damage cannot be healed. Each linking adept takes 2 Strain Points of damage each time the link is used. This damage can be healed normally. The use of the Talent Linking knack in ritual magic is generally confined to the Theran Empire, though rumors speak of its use among certain Nethermancer guilds and Horror cults in Barsaive.

Telling the Tale

Discipline: Troubadour
Talent: Emotion Song
Rank: 4 **Strain**: 0

The Telling the Tale talent knack allows an adept to tell stories using the Emotion Song talent. Tales told with this knack may affect the audience in a manner similar to songs sung with Emotion Song. The adept makes an Emotion Song Test in place of a Charisma or Storytelling Test when telling the story.

Thread Masking

Discipline: All
Talent: Thread Weaving
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 2

The Thread Masking talent knack allows an adept to conceal threads he has woven, increasing the difficulty of detecting and identifying those threads. When using this knack, the adept carefully weaves his thread into the natural warp and weft of astral space, using the surrounding astral energies to conceal the thread's presence from others with astral sight abilities. The adept makes a Thread Weaving Test against the thread's Weaving Difficulty. On a Good result, the adept weaves a masked thread. Masking a thread increases the result level needed to detect or identify the thread by one level.

A character normally requires an Excellent result on an Astral Sensing Test when examining an item's pattern to detect a thread connected to the item. To detect a masked thread, the character would require an Extraordinary result. Identifying the nature of a previously detected thread usually requires a Good result. Identifying the nature of a previously detected masked thread requires an Excellent result.

Translator

Discipline: Nethermancer
Talent: Spirit Talk
Rank: 7 **Strain**: 1 per minute

The Translator talent knack allows a target spirit to speak in the adept's language, if it is not normally able to. The adept makes a Spirit Talk Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. On a Good result, the spirit is able to talk in any language known to the adept, allowing bystanders to listen to and interact with the conversation as well. If the spirit is unable to communicate verbally, this knack has no effect.

Unraveling

Discipline: All
Talent: Thread Weaving
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 2+ (see text)

The Unraveling talent knack allows an adept to "unweave" the threads of a spell pattern, pulling apart the pattern and canceling the spell. Spell threads can be unraveled in this way because of their fragile and fairly delicate nature. The more robust and stable threads of True patterns can only be unraveled through the use of powerful talents or spells, such as Soul Shatter and Shatter Pattern. This knack is commonly learned and used by non-magician adepts who do not have access to the Dispel Magic spell, as well as by those adepts who often deal with hostile spells and magic (such as Thieves and Weaponsmiths).

An adept must be able to see the pattern clearly, using some form of astral perception ability, to unravel it. The adept makes a Thread Weaving Test against the spell's Weaving Difficulty for each thread required by the spell. If the spell does not require any threads, this step is ignored. Each Thread Weaving Test causes the adept 2 Strain Points of damage. Once the adept has unraveled the spell's threads (if any), he takes another 2 Strain Points of damage and makes a final Thread Weaving Test against the spell's Dispel Difficulty. If this test succeeds, the spell is broken and dispelled. If the test fails, the core of the spell remains intact and the spell continues unaffected. An adept who fails to completely unravel a spell cannot attempt to unravel that same spell again until he has increased his Thread Weaving rank. The Unraveling knack can be used only on complete spell patterns, not on patterns in the process of being formed. Thus, an adept cannot unravel the threads woven by a magician in the process of casting a spell. The knack can affect Named spells only if the adept has studied the spell's True pattern and knows its Key Knowledges (see **Dispelling Named Spells** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 292).

Vertical Jump

Discipline: Air Sailor, Sky Raider
Talent: Great Leap
Rank: Ai5, Sk5 **Strain**: 1

The Vertical Jump talent knack allows an adept to jump straight up from a standing position. The action requires no horizontal movement on the adept's part. The adept makes a Great Leap Test as normal, making a vertical jump to a maximum height equal to half the test result in yards. Sky Raiders and Air Sailors often use this knack to leap up from a deck into the airship's rigging, or from the ground to a rope or ladder trailed by an airship.

Water Mount

Discipline: Cavalryman
Talent: Spirit Mount
Rank: 9 **Strain**: 1 per round

The Water Mount talent knack grants an adept's spirit mount the ability to move across the surface of a body of water while carrying a rider. The mount travels at the same Movement rates it uses while on land.

Weave Element

Discipline: Elementalist, Weaponsmith
Talent: Thread Weaving
Rank: El3, We9 **Strain**: 2

The Weave Element talent knack allows an adept to infuse an item with the essence of one or more of the five True elements

(earth, air, fire, water and wood). Weave Element Tests are performed using the adept's Thread Weaving talent.

See **Weaving True Elements Into Patterns** in the **Enchanting** chapter, p. 274, for more information.

Weapon Scream

Discipline: Sky Raider
Talent: Melee Weapons
Rank: 6 **Strain**: 2

When an adept uses the Weapon Scream talent knack, his melee weapon makes a loud screeching sound in combat. The adept makes a Melee Weapons Test as normal. If he inflicts an Armor-Defeating Hit on his opponent, his weapon emits a howling scream. The adept may immediately make a Battle Shout Test against the target, even if he has previously made a Battle Shout or Battle Bellow Test that round.

Whispered Conversation

Discipline: Elementalist
Talent: Air Speaking
Rank: 6 **Strain**: 1

The Whispered Conversation talent knack allows an adept to talk privately to another character. The adept makes an Air Speaking Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target clearly hears the adept's whispered conversation. The effect lasts for a number of minutes equal to the adept's Air Speaking rank. The range of the talent knack is equal to the adept's Air Speaking Test result × 3 yards.

Wound Heal

Discipline: Elementalist
Talent: Fire Heal
Rank: 3 **Strain**: 2 (see text)

The Wound Heal talent knack allows an adept to heal a Wound with his Fire Heal ritual. An adept can only heal a single Wound using this knack, the equivalent of gaining 1 bonus Recovery Test. Each use of the Wound Heal knack requires the adept to perform an hour long Fire Heal ritual. The adept makes a Fire Heal Test against the result of a Step 8 Fire Intensity Test. If the test succeeds, the adept immediately heals 1 Wound. If the test fails, the adept suffers the normal consequences of a failed Fire Heal Test (see **Fire Heal** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 184). Regardless of the outcome, each use of this knack causes the adept 2 Strain Points of damage. An adept who also knows the Heal Others talent knack can use the Wound Heal knack to heal 1 Wound suffered by another character instead of giving him a bonus Recovery Test. If the test fails, both characters are affected, as noted in the Heal Others knack description.

Wound Share

Discipline: Cavalryman
Talent: Blood Share
Rank: 5 **Strain**: 2

The Wound Share talent knack allows an adept to transfer a Wound from his mount to himself. The adept cannot transfer a Wound to his mount with this knack, nor can he transfer a Wound to another character. The adept makes a Blood Share Test against his mount's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, one of the mount's Wounds is healed, and the adept develops a matching Wound in a similar location.

Skills

Not all people in the world are adepts. Some of us learn our trade the old-fashioned way.

• Harrok, Blacksmith •

Most people lack the magical talents of adepts, but can often accomplish the same tasks using non-magical abilities. In **Earthdawn**, these mundane abilities are called **skills**. Skills add a step bonus to one of your character's Attribute steps, giving him an advantage when taking actions, engaging in combat, and so on. Skills enable a character to perform certain physical actions and to make informed decisions about various courses of action during an adventure. This chapter describes the four types of skills available to characters in **Earthdawn**, and includes detailed descriptions for how each type of skill functions in the game.

Skills are similar to talents, except they do not require magic to learn and use. Instead, a character must invest considerable time, effort, and money into acquiring them. Though some skills—Spellcasting, for example—may use magic, such skills do not require the character to possess the inherent magic associated with a Discipline. Many talents can be used as skills, if a character so desires; this chapter lists those talents and explains how to use them as non-magical skills. For more information on using talents, see the **Talents** chapter, p. 166.

Because learning skills takes good old-fashioned physical and mental effort, skills take more effort to learn than talents. A character must spend money to pay an instructor, and take the time to train and practice in order to acquire a new skill or to improve a skill he already possesses.

Earthdawn characters can learn four types of skills: Artisan, General, Knowledge and Language. **Artisan skills** represent the arts and crafts practiced by every Name-giver; **General skills** allow your character to perform everyday actions; **Knowledge skills** represent how much your character knows about the world of **Earthdawn**; **Language skills** determine which spoken or written languages your character is fluent in. In this age of magic, skills are largely the domain of ordinary folk, though all adepts begin the game with a few skills and, over time, most adepts like to learn additional skills to supplement their magical talents. See **Spending Legend Points** in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 420, for more information.

Learning and Improving Skills

Skill ranks add a step bonus to one of the character's Attribute steps, shown in the skill's description. For example, a character with the Melee Weapons skill adds his skill rank to his Dexterity step to find that skill's step number. A character with a Dexterity step of 6 and Melee Weapons at Rank 5 would use Step 11 when wielding a melee weapon.

Any ranks that the player assigns to skills for his character during character creation reflect the assumption that the character picked up the skill during his adolescence. To add skill ranks later in life, the character must find and learn from a suitable tutor. If your character has the Legend Points required to gain an additional rank in a skill and access to a tutor or other source of training, he can improve that skill.

See **Improving Skill Ranks** in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 421, for more information.

Using Skills

When a character uses a skill, he will usually make a test to determine how successfully he used that skill. This test often replaces other types of test, including Attribute, Damage, Initiative, or Attack Tests. The step number used for the test is determined by adding an Attribute step to the skill rank. Knowledge skills use the character's Perception step; Artisan skills, the character's Charisma step; and General skills, the Attribute step listed with the skill description.

The Difficulty Number against which the test is made is usually based on the target's Social, Spell, or Physical Defense. Other Difficulty Numbers appear in the individual skill descriptions. References to "Step Number:", "Strain:" and "Action:" notations are as described for **Using Talents** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 166, and work in the same way.

Default Skill Use

Certain skills represent abilities that every character knows. The Default Skill Use system allows characters without knowledge of these skills to make an Attribute Test in place of a Skill Test to perform the actions normally allowed by these abilities.

Any skill with the "Default Use: Yes" notation can be used with the Attribute normally associated with that skill. The character makes an Attribute Test in place of a Skill Test. The minimum result level for the test is increased by one level, including other requirements associated with use of the skill (like Armor-Defeating Hits) to a maximum Extraordinary result level.

DEFAULT SKILL USE TABLE

Skill	Default Attribute
Animal Handling	Willpower
Avoid Blow	Dexterity
Bribery	Charisma
Climbing	Dexterity
Conversation	Charisma
Detect Weapon	Perception
Etiquette	Charisma
Flirting	Charisma
Haggle	Charisma
Melee Weapons	Dexterity
Missile Weapons	Dexterity
Research	Perception
Resist Taunt	Willpower
Seduction	Charisma
Slough Blame	Charisma
Streetwise	Perception
Swimming	Strength
Throwing Weapons	Dexterity
Tracking	Perception
Unarmed Combat	Dexterity
Wilderness Survival	Perception

For example, a character who does not know the Melee Weapons skill could still swing a sword and attack an opponent, because the skill defaults to the Dexterity Attribute. The character makes a Dexterity Test as his Melee Weapons Test, requiring a minimum Good result to hit an opponent.

Any requirements based on rank in the skill's description, such as duration or range, are considered to be equivalent to the character possessing the skill at Rank 1.

Only those skills listed in the Default Skill Use Table can be used with the rules for Default Skill Use, defaulting to the Attribute

step shown. The gamemaster may add or remove skills from this table as suits his **Earthdawn** game.

Moran, a dwarf Air Sailor, is negotiating for a better price on an item he wants from a local merchant. After determining whether the item is available to be bought, and a base price for it, Moran decides to attempt to bargain for the goods. He does not know the Haggle skill, but because it defaults to his Charisma Attribute, he can attempt to use it. Moran gets one chance to make a successful Charisma Test in place of a Haggle Test, but requires a Good result—one level higher than normal—to gain anything from the attempt. Smiling, the merchant listens to the dwarf's stumbling attempt at explaining why he should be paying less for the item.

Adepts and Default Skill Use Tests

Adepts gain Karma bonuses to Attribute-only Tests at different Discipline Circles. They may spend 1 Karma Point on skills where the Default Skill Use rules are applied—use of default skills is considered to be an Attribute-only Test. While the ability to use a Karma Point on the Skill Test improves the chance of succeeding, the character still requires a test result at least one level higher than the normal level needed for success.

Skill Tests

To make a Skill Test (usually referred to by the name of the skill, for instance, an Etiquette Test), the character rolls the Action dice indicated by the skill step against a target Difficulty Number. For the test to be successful, the result must be at least equal to the Difficulty Number. If the result exceeds the Difficulty Number by a suitable margin, the character may have achieved an advantageous result level, which would increase or otherwise beneficially change the effect of the character's skill use. The result level becomes particularly important when making Skill Tests for Knowledge skills (also called Knowledge Tests), because the result level can determine whether or not a character successfully uses a particular Knowledge skill.

Pathetic Results

A Pathetic result on a Skill Test usually denotes that something especially bad has occurred. This is always at the gamemaster's discretion, and he may choose to ignore such results entirely (see **The Rule of One** in the **Game Concepts** chapter, p. 18). Some suggested outcomes for a Pathetic result may be included with the skill description.

Related Tests

Some skills are intended for use in combat. The effects of these skills may cause damage to a target. After successfully using such a skill, the character makes a Damage Test to determine how many Damage Points his attack caused the target. Usually this test is based on the type of weapon the character is using, but sometimes the Skill Test will replace the normal Damage Test.

The effects of non-combat skills appear in the individual skill descriptions. Some skills allow a character to resist the effects of social actions made against the character—referred to as Interaction Tests. A successful test result allows the character to resist his opponent's social interaction, letting him ignore the effects of intimidation or persuasion attempts, or of taunts.

Artisan Skills

Of the four types of skills available in **Earthdawn**, **Artisan skills** are the least commonly used. They serve primarily to help define a character and as a way to prove him untainted by the Horrors.

Using Artisan Skills

Ever since the time when people discovered that those touched by the Horrors could not maintain the discipline to practice an art or craft, every adept has learned one. Only by constantly practicing his art or craft can an adept prove that the Horrors have not corrupted his power. Though they rarely do so, characters can use Artisan skills if the situation calls for it. For example, if the gamemaster decides that a character must create a sculpture or painting in order to advance the story, the character may use an appropriate Artisan skill to do so. See **Artisan**, p. 236, for some examples of typical Artisan skills.

Greeting Rituals

In many isolated regions of Barsaive, local inhabitants remain wary of the dangers posed by lingering Horrors. In such areas, inhabitants commonly require that strangers use their artisan skills to prove that they do not carry Horror taint. Consequently, player characters can expect many opportunities to demonstrate their artisan abilities.

A character using an Artisan skill as part of a greeting ritual should make his Artisan Skill Test against a Difficulty Number of 5. If the test succeeds, the character proves himself free of Horror taint and the locals will likely accept him.

Making an Impression

Gamemasters can also treat the Artisan Skill Test as a means of Making an Impression to determine how people respond to the character (see the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 93 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). The gamemaster compares the result of the character's Artisan Skill Test against the highest Social Defense among the gamemaster characters present. An Average result improves their Attitudes by one degree. A Pathetic result worsens their Attitude by one degree.

General Skills

General skills give your character certain abilities that allow him to perform certain actions. Your character might use the Acrobatic Strike skill to give him an edge in combat, or the Conversation skill to more easily worm vital information from someone. Characters in **Earthdawn** often end up in situations where they might wish to use a General skill—assuming, of course, that they have the time and money necessary to acquire it.

Many of the General skills described in this chapter have magical equivalents, available to adept characters as talents. Many skills and talents are similar in effect. It is important to note that there are differences. Although a skill and a talent often share the same name, characters using the "skilled" version use the rules presented in this chapter if there are differences.

Knowledge Skills

Your character has lived in the world of **Earthdawn** for his entire life, and so he will know more about the world of **Earthdawn** than you possibly can. **Knowledge skills** represent that experience.

In a game session, Knowledge skills come into play whenever something your character might know would help you make an informed choice about what to do next. Your character may know a tremendous amount about the world of **Earthdawn**, but you, the player, will only learn that knowledge when the story dictates the need. Knowledge skills serve two main purposes:

- They simulate your character's knowledge of the world. The gamemaster reveals or adds to this knowledge when it will advance the story.

- They allow you to further define your character, giving him unique quirks and interests.

USING KNOWLEDGE SKILLS

Your character uses his Knowledge skills to recall information that can help determine his next course of action. If your character's Knowledge skill does not exactly apply to the subject at hand, the gamemaster decides how the Knowledge skill relates to the current question or situation. The relationship of a Knowledge skill to the information needed falls into the following five categories.

Unrelated Knowledge

Unrelated Knowledge cannot be used to find facts. If a player wants to know what special attacks cadaver men can make, his character's knowledge of Theran cuisine is unrelated and cannot help him. Such a character does not know the required information about cadaver men.

General Knowledge

General Knowledge covers a wide range of information and cannot be easily applied to answer specific questions. A Knowledge skill is considered general if the same knowledge can provide answers to similar questions about several different topics. For example, a character with a Knowledge skill in Barsaive History might recall incidents of cadaver man attacks. The character can just as easily recall stories of dwarf bravery during siege, Theran romances among nobility, or the destruction of a kaer by the Horrors. Though a knowledge of Barsaive history might cover specifics such as cadaver men, it covers many other specifics equally well.

A character using a General Knowledge skill to answer a question must achieve an Extraordinary result to know useful information.

Somewhat Related Knowledge

A character attempting to apply **Somewhat Related Knowledge** skills might be able to answer a specific question, but connecting the information the skill provides to the question at hand requires a stretch. For example, a character who possesses a Knowledge skill in Military Tactics might know stories of cadaver man attacks, even though cadaver men do not function in military units. Because armies employ a wide variety of attack strategies, it is possible (though not likely) that a tactician may have patterned an attack on the furious assaults common to cadaver men.

A character using a Somewhat Related Knowledge skill must get at least an Excellent result to know the needed information.

Related Knowledge

Knowledge skills that fall into the **Related Knowledge** category cover the pertinent subject matter to the question at hand. For example, a character who studied undead creatures can accurately and comprehensively answer a question about the attacks of cadaver men because the study of the undead includes the study of cadaver men. However, since such study covers a wider range of topics than just the attack style of a single undead creature, the character might not be able to immediately think of the specific information he needs.

A character using a Knowledge skill in the Related Knowledge category requires at least a Good result to know the information needed. For example, a character with Knowledge skill in Horses has studied the appropriate field to answer a question on zebras. The subject matter (horses) is closely related to the subject of zebras, making the knowledge of horses a Related Field. The character requires a Good result when making Knowledge Tests related to horses.

Specific Knowledge

Knowledge considered **Specific Knowledge** covers the precise subject and question at hand, but only the subject and question at hand. For example, a character who studied undead creature attack forms would have specific knowledge of cadaver man attacks, but could not use that same Knowledge skill to describe any weaknesses of cadaver men.

A character using Specific Knowledge requires at least an Average result to know the needed information.

MAKING KNOWLEDGE TESTS

KNOWLEDGE TEST TABLE

Type of Information	Difficulty Number
General information	5
Detailed information	7
Intricate information	9
Obscure information	11

A Knowledge Test is a Skill Test, using the step number of the Knowledge skill (Rank + Perception) against a Difficulty Number determined by the type of information sought. Why does your character need to make a test to use his Knowledge skills? He either knows a fact or doesn't, right? Well, not exactly. A character's ability to use Knowledge skills depends not just on how much he knows, but also how he thinks.

You make a Knowledge Test to use your character's Knowledge skills for the following reasons. The Knowledge Test reflects how memory works under pressure. If you've ever taken an exam and missed a question to which you actually knew the answer, then you understand this point. Just when your character most needs the answer, nervous tension might make it elude him or make him forget the most important part. Your character cannot always drag the answer out of his memory when he needs it.

The Knowledge Test represents analytical thought and deduction as much as regurgitation of facts. Like all sentient beings, your character analyzes and rearranges known or presumed facts to form a new piece of information or conclusion. Under pressure, your character may not be able to make the necessary deductions or put all the pieces together in a logical progression in order to arrive at the information that would answer the question.

The Knowledge Test allows for the "Aha!" factor, those times when your character does a bit of inspired thinking or looks at a problem in a new way. These sorts of insights rarely occur in a predictable way or on a reliable timetable. To use a Knowledge skill, the character makes a Knowledge Test against a Difficulty Number based on the type of information being sought, as shown on the Knowledge Test Table. In most cases, an Average result on a Knowledge Test gets your character the needed information. The result level needed also depends on the relationship of the Knowledge skill to the information sought. See **Using Knowledge Skills**, p. 232, for information on determining the usefulness of Knowledge skills.

Achieving a greater result level than needed to remember information can increase the amount of information your character remembers about a topic. For each result level beyond the one required, your character can receive either more information or insight as to how the information relates to your character's current situation. How much, if any, additional information your character receives depends on the gamemaster's discretion.

Knowledge Skill Limits

Knowledge skills give your character facts, not abilities. They do not enable your character to perform an action. For example, knowledge of art does not make your character a painter; your character may know everything about every ship ever built and remain unable to sail one out of harbor. Knowledge skills let you determine what your character might want to do next; they do not necessarily enable your character to put a plan into action.

A character successfully using a Knowledge skill knows critical information applicable to his current situation. The gamemaster gives the pertinent information to the player, allowing the character to act knowledgeably. If the gamemaster considers the information the character is looking for unimportant to the adventure, using a Knowledge skill probably yields little information. Quite simply, players cannot expect the gamemaster to know or create and catalogue every possible fact about the world of **Earthdawn**.

Kricklen the Swordmaster discovers a heretofore unexpected interest in botany, especially flowers. Steve, Kricklen's player, purchases the Knowledge skill of Botany (flowers). During the game, the gamemaster describes an open meadow the characters cross on their way to an abandoned castle. Kricklen stops to examine some flowers. Steve asks the gamemaster if Kricklen knows what these flowers are, then makes a Knowledge Test. He gets a Good result. Heidi, the gamemaster, has four options. She quickly judges the situation and chooses what she feels is the best option at the moment.

1. *The gamemaster decides the investigation is not important to the story. Heidi says, "Steve, the meadow flowers are not important to the story. Kricklen can look at them, but I have no information to give you."*
2. *The gamemaster decides to withhold judgement on the importance of the question until later in the story. Heidi says, "Yes, Kricklen knows what the flowers are. If that fact is important to the story, Kricklen will already have gathered all the information he needs," and leaves the answer at that. She does not need to offer more specifics at this point.*
3. *The gamemaster may invite the player to provide details for the campaign world. Heidi says, "Kricklen knows what the flowers are. I haven't worked up the details, but they could be interesting. Steve, what sort of flowers did Kricklen find?" in this case, the gamemaster is asking the player to create details to flesh out the campaign. If Steve wants to add those details, he should work up descriptions of the meadow flowers for Heidi using words, pictures, or any other media. If Steve decides that these flowers possess special qualities—for example, flowers that enhance Charisma-based Tests—Heidi may accept, reject, or modify any of the mechanics Steve suggests.*
4. *If the gamemaster happens to have created details for the situation, she can describe them to the player. "White and crimson foxglove blossoms dominate the meadow, while gold three-petal angeline and blue and yellow goosewort lie in scattered clumps among the grass."*

Languages as Individual Skills

Optional Rule: Under the standard rules for language skills, the more languages a character speaks, the more fluent he becomes in all of them. These rules abstract and simplify languages in the **Earthdawn** game, and should be sufficient for most gamemasters. For those gamemasters who wish to use a more realistic system of Language Skills, we offer the following optional rule.

Each language has a Speak (Language) and a Read and Write (Language) Skill. These skills are Perception-based, and are independently learned and increased the same way as any other skill (see **Learning and Improving Skills**, p. 230). No tests are required to successfully learn the skill; the character need only spend the time training and pay the teacher's fee.

The character's rank in the skill reflects their fluency in the language. Generally speaking, a character with Rank 5 or higher in a language skill is considered fluent, and need not make Skill Tests to understand the language in question, though the gamemaster may require a test if he feels the situation warrants it—for example, the character encounters an obscure dialect or technical jargon.

When making tests using this optional rule, increase the Difficulty Numbers for simple concepts and sentences to 6, basic conversation to 10, technical or specialized jargon to 13, and abstract or complex discussions to 17.

Instead of starting with two ranks in the Speak Language skill and one rank in the Read and Write Language skill, characters receive the Speak Dwarf skill at Rank 6, the Speak (Racial Language) skill at Rank 5, and the Read and Write Dwarf skill at Rank 6.

The Speak Language and Read and Write Language talents do not otherwise change; they still work as described in the **Talents** chapter, on p. 201 and p. 196, respectively.

Language Skills

Language skills allow a character to speak, read, and write different languages. All characters begin the game with ranks in the Speak Language and Read and Write Language skills. Each rank in a language skill represents a language the character knows (see the **Talents** chapter, p. 166, for more information).

Learning new languages differs slightly from the process of learning other skills. To learn a new language, the character increases his rank in the appropriate skill as usual (see **Learning and Improving Skills**, p. 230). He must then spend at least one month studying with a teacher or native speaker of the language. If learning to read and write the language, the teacher must be literate in the language.

At the end of this time, he makes a Skill Test against the Learning Difficulty of the language. If the test succeeds, he learns the language. If the test fails, he may make an additional attempt after studying the language for another month.

Skill Descriptions

Acrobatic Strike

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: No **Strain**: 1

The Acrobatic Strike skill allows a character to perform flips, jumps, swings, or other physical maneuvers during combat, making him harder to hit. It is used as described for **Acrobatic Strike** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 168.

Acting

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

This skill can be used as an Artisan skill. The Acting skill allows a character to act out other personalities and persuade an audience that he is someone else. Actors can portray emotions they do not feel, persuading listeners and watchers that the emotions are genuine. Though the Acting skill does not allow a character to physically alter his appearance (the character must use the Disguise skill to do that), the character can mimic voice and speech patterns, copy gestures and movements, and convey energy, attitudes, and mannerisms appropriate to his role. The character makes an Acting Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the target believes the character to be the type of person he is portraying. If the character pretends to be a specific person whom the target knows, the character needs at least an Excellent result to convince the target of his authenticity.

When using the Acting skill during a theatrical performance, the character makes an Acting Test and compares the result against the Social Defense of each member of the audience; for large audiences, the gamemaster may choose to use the average Social Defense of the audience. The result level determines how much each audience member enjoys the performance.

Air Sailing

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Air Sailing skill allows a character to work the rigging, tiller, and oars of an airship. It is used as described for **Air Sailing** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 168.

Alchemy

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

Use of this skill requires an Alchemist's Kit or access to an Alchemist's Shop. The Alchemy skill includes an understanding of the magical principles and formulas used to create magical concoctions, the knowledge needed to gather ingredients, and the ability to test and analyze different potions a character might discover in the course of adventuring. Magicians may also use the Alchemy skill to make blood charms (see **Blood Charms** in the **Enchanting** chapter, p. 276, for details).

Gathering Ingredients

Most alchemical concoctions require natural herbs, roots, leaves, minerals and animal parts to be used in their creation. Gathering the materials usually requires a full day of work. To find and successfully gather rare ingredients, gamemasters may require the gatherer to make a successful Alchemy Test. The Difficulty Number is determined by the gamemaster, based on the rarity or scarcity of the ingredients being gathered. Characters may also purchase ingredients from herbalists or other alchemists at approximately 10 percent of the finished concoction's standard price. At the gamemaster's discretion, some concoctions may require exotic ingredients that characters must travel far and wide to find. Once a character has gathered the necessary ingredients, he may begin combining them. This task requires an additional full day's work in a suitably equipped shop or using an alchemist's kit (see **Adventuring Equipment** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 451).

Creating Potions or Salves

At the end of a potion's preparation time, the character makes an Alchemy Test against the appropriate Enchanting Difficulty as shown on the Healing Aid Table in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 451. If the test succeeds, the potion is finished and immediately usable. If the test fails, the potion is inert and useless. At the gamemaster's discretion, a Pathetic result may produce a critical mishap, such as an explosion or a poisonous potion. Gamemasters may allow player characters with the Alchemy skill to

create new potions with unique effects. Base the Difficulty Numbers for such potions on similar potions. Add +3 to the potion's Difficulty Number to reflect the difficulty of creating new potions. A character can create larger batches of potion by further increasing the test's Difficulty Number. For each extra dose desired, add +5 to the Difficulty Number.

Creating Poisons

Alchemists can also use natural ingredients to brew various poisons (see the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 121 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information on poisons and how they work). The base Difficulty Number for brewing a poison is equal to the higher of the poison's Spell Defense or step number. The amount of time required to gather ingredients and brew the poison is the same as for potions. Most alchemists working in cities will not sell poisons openly, because most local authorities frown on poison peddlers. Many alchemists, however, will sell them under the counter to favored or known customers. This is especially true in cities like Kratas, where the skills of a capable poisoner are constantly in demand. A character can create larger batches of poison by increasing the test's Difficulty Number. For each extra dose desired, add +5 to the Difficulty Number.

Analysis

A character who possesses an elixir of unknown properties may attempt to analyze it. This analysis requires only a few drops of the substance and about an hour's time for analysis. The gamemaster makes a secret Alchemy Test for the character against the Difficulty Number used to create the potion, or the higher of the substance's Spell Defense or step number if it is a poison. An Average or Good result reveals the potion's general purpose, such as for healing, harm, or an antidote. An Excellent result reveals the exact effects of the potion or poison. A Pathetic result tells the character that the concoction is something other than what it really is.

Animal Bond

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Animal Bond skill creates a bond of trust between a character and an animal, improving its Attitude towards him (see the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 90 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). It is used as described for **Animal Bond** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 168.

Animal Handling

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Default Use: Yes
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Animal Handling skill allows a character to work with domesticated animals; he might be a rider commanding horses, a driver urging mules to move, or a character getting attack dogs to attack. Making an animal perform any action beyond its normal activities requires the character to make an Animal Handling Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional animal. If the test succeeds, the animal (animals) performs the action requested of it.

The Animal Handling skill requires the character to have at least a Friendly level of trust with all of the animals being commanded; without that trust most animals will outright refuse to perform an action that puts them in mortal danger. Giving such a command breaks the bond of trust between the character and the animal, and the character cannot command that animal again until he re-establishes the trust between them; the animal's Attitude to the character drops to Neutral.

Animal Training

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Animal Training skill allows a character to train an animal to obey simple commands such as "scout ahead," "smell that," and "go home," as well as the more usual "stop," "heel," "fetch," and "kill." It is used as described for **Animal Training** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 169, except that each use requires a week of training.

Anticipate Blow

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: No
Action: No **Strain**: 1

The Anticipate Blow skill allows a character to better defend against an incoming attack. The character can use the Anticipate Blow skill against a single opponent in a given round. It is otherwise used as described for **Anticipate Blow** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 169.

Arcane Mutterings

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Arcane Mutterings skill allows a character to confuse others by uttering dire and largely incomprehensible warnings. Apart from the Strain cost, it is used as described for **Arcane Mutterings** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 170.

Artist

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

This skill can be used as an Artisan skill. Use of this skill requires Artisan Tools. Artists produce physical works of fine art that evoke an emotion in those who see it. To use the Artist skill, a character makes an Artist Test and records the test result. Later, an observer makes a Perception Test to determine how much meaning he gleans from the item of art. Increase the observer's Perception step by the artist's Artist rank; better artists earn higher appreciation. Contrary to popular belief, an observer cannot get more out of a work of art than the artist put into it. Treat any Perception Test result that is higher than the result of the original Artist Test as equal to the test result. Then compare the Perception Test result against the observing character's

Social Defense. The result level determines how well the character remembers the work of art. Higher result levels create a more memorable experience for the observer. Examples of the fine arts include painting, poetry (written), sculpture, and writing. A character may acquire the Artist skill multiple times to learn different types of art.

Vialaque is a Theran painter with the Artist skill at Rank 6. Vialaque paints what she personally judges to be one of her best works. After finishing the painting, she makes an Artist Test with a result of 17. Some time later, Poohrt the windling Thief acquires the painting, looking at it ostensibly to adjudge its merits before he tries to put a financial value on it. To make his Perception Test, Poohrt adds his Perception step of 6 to Vialaque's Artist rank of 6, ending up with Step 12. Poohrt makes his Perception Test to appreciate the painting with a result of 19, which is reduced to 17 because that is the "value" of the painting. Comparing the result of 17 against Poohrt's Social Defense of 5 results in an Extraordinary result. Poohrt thinks Vialaque's painting is the most memorable he has ever seen, far too good to be sold to a commoner! He decides to stash it away for the moment, in the hope of finding a worthy patron to whom he can sell it later—that is, if he can bear to part with it.

Artisan

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

This skill serves as a template for most Artisan skills. Use of this skill requires Artisan Tools. Each Artisan skill represents an art or craft practiced by the character. Practicing an Artisan skill, however, does not necessarily make a character an artist or entertainer. For example, a character with the Artisan skill of Canvas Painting may paint pictures every other day, but they may well lack the impact of a true artist's work.

The Difficulty Number for using most Artisan skills is usually 5 or 7, making it relatively easy for novice characters to make a successful Artisan Skill Test. This ease reflects the fact that most everyone in **Earthdawn** regularly practices an Artisan skill. The Typical Artisan Skill Table lists common Artisan skills, some of which are also General skills, described separately. As with Knowledge skills, players may invent any Artisan skill they please for their character, subject to gamemaster approval.

TYPICAL ARTISAN SKILL TABLE
Artist
Acting
Basket Weaving
Body Painting
Carving
Cooking
Craftsman
Craft Armor
Craft Weapon
Dancing
Embroidery
Entertainer
Juggling
Mapmaking
Musician
Poetry
Runic Carving
Sculpting
Singing
Storytelling
Tattooing
Wardrobe and Style

Avoid Blow

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: Yes
Action: No **Strain**: 1

The Avoid Blow skill allows a character to dodge blows directed at him in combat. The character can use the Avoid Blow skill against a single attack in a given round. It is otherwise used as described for **Avoid Blow** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 171.

Bardic Voice

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Bardic Voice skill allows a character to use his rich voice and persuasive abilities to charm others. It is used as described for **Bardic Voice** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 171.

Battle Shout

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: No
Action: No **Strain**: 1

Battle Shout allows a character to strongly intimidate a single foe. It is used as described for **Battle Shout** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 172.

Blade Juggle

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 1 (see text)

The Blade Juggle skill allows a character to create a whirling, flashing barrier of knives, daggers, or other bladed weapons between himself and his opponents. The character takes Strain during each round of juggling. If one of the blades is struck, it falls to the ground; the character does not make a Blade Juggle Test to hit his opponent.

It is otherwise used as described for **Blade Juggle** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 172.

Bribery

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: Yes
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

Though most societies publicly disapprove of bribes, those same societies harbor many members more than willing to take them. Bribery is the skill of discreetly buying favors. Characters who have this skill can use any number of successful methods to disguise the exchange. The character makes a Bribery Test against the target's Social Defense, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, the target will do the favor asked.

Small favors require a small amount of cash, for example, 5 silver pieces or the equivalent of a few hours' wages for each target. For large favors, the asking character must produce a bribe

equal to a day's earnings for the target. A character willing to offer larger-than-necessary bribes may receive a bonus to his Bribery Test, at the gamemaster's discretion.

Champion Challenge

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Champion Challenge skill allows a character to call out a formal challenge to the leader of an opposing group of characters, urging him to let single combat decide an impending battle.

Apart from the Strain cost, it is otherwise used as described for **Champion Challenge** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 175.

Charge

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Default Use: No
Action: No **Strain**: 0

The Charge skill allows a character to increase the damage inflicted by a Charging attack (see **Mounted Combat** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 413). It is used as described for **Charge** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 175.

Climbing

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: Yes
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Climbing skill allows a character to clamber up or down vertical surfaces and objects. It is used as described for **Climbing** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 176.

Cold Purify

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Cold Purify skill allows a character to create an improvised poultice to stop the effects of natural (not magical) poison. It is otherwise used as described for **Cold Purify** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 176.

Conceal Weapon

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Conceal Weapon skill allows a character to hide a weapon or other object somewhere on his body. The character uses sleight of hand to hide the weapon; this means the Size of the weapon has more of an effect on his ability to hide the weapon. The character subtracts the weapon's Size from the Detection Difficulty when using the Conceal Weapon skill.

It is otherwise used as described for **Conceal Weapon** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 176.

Conversation

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: Yes
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

Characters with the Conversation skill can hold their own in social conversations, using quips, timing, and other verbal abilities to make a favorable impression. The character makes a Conversation Test against the target's Social Defense, +1 for each additional target. If the test succeeds, the Attitude of the target character (characters) rises favorably by one degree, for example, from Neutral to Friendly.

This change in Attitude lasts for the duration of the conversation and for a number of minutes afterward equal to the character's Conversation rank. The target's Attitude cannot be raised further while the skill is in effect.

Craft Armor

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

This skill can be used as an Artisan skill. Use of this skill requires Forge Tools or access to a forge. Use of the Craft Armor skill allows a character to create new armor and shields. The character must carry out his work at a properly equipped forge. Forge tools (see **Adventuring Equipment** in the **Goods and Ser-**

vices chapter) can only be effectively employed in a forge. Outside of a forge, they can be used to make minor armor repairs, but can't be used to create. Creating armor in a poorly equipped forge might double or triple the time requirement, while a well-equipped forge may halve the time. The forge's quality and its effect on armor creation time is determined by the gamemaster.

Forging new armor takes considerable time and effort. To make new armor takes a number of weeks equal to the armor's Physical + Mystic Armor (half this time for shields). At the end of this period, the character makes a Craft Armor Test against a Difficulty Number equal to the armor's Physical + Mystic Armor + 6. The character may spend additional time working on the armor in order to reduce the target Difficulty Number. For each additional week the character spends working on the armor or shield, subtract –1 from the Difficulty Number. The maximum benefit gained from this is –3 to the Difficulty Number, for three additional weeks of effort.

Creating a set of hide armor (Phys 5; Myst 1) takes six weeks and requires a successful Craft Armor Test against a Difficulty Number of 12 (5 + 1 + 6 = 12). Creating a set of plate mail armor (Phys 9; Myst 0) takes nine weeks and requires a successful Craft Armor Test against a Difficulty Number of 15 (9 + 0 + 6 = 15). Creating a body shield (Phys 5; Myst 0) takes three weeks (5 + 0 = 5, 5 / 2 = 2.5, rounded up to 3) and requires a successful Craft Armor Test against a Difficulty Number of 11 (5 + 0 + 6 = 11).

If the character fails his Craft Armor Test, he has been unable to create the item successfully. He may try again from anew; only time has been wasted. A Pathetic result on the Craft Armor Test, however, ruins the armor or shield completely—both the materials and effort invested are wasted.

The prices for armor and shields are given in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 439. The material cost of creating a set of armor or a shield is generally half of the price shown on the Armor or Shield Table. Damaged armor and shields can be repaired using this skill, against a Difficulty Number equal to that required to create the item. A separate Craft Armor Test is required for each point of Physical or Mystic Armor rating repaired (see **Repairing Damaged Armor** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 442).

Weaponsmiths possess the ability to create armor and shields through the use of half-magic (see **Half-Magic** in **The Value of Strong Arms and Stronger Minds** chapter, p. 156).

Craftsman

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

This skill can be used as an Artisan skill. Use of this skill requires Craftsman Tools. Characters use Craftsman skills to make or repair items. The time required to make the item varies from a few hours for simple item, to weeks or even months for large or intricate items. The character makes a Craftsman Test against the Difficulty Number of making or repairing the item. Simple, everyday items have a Difficulty Number of 2; ordinary items have a Difficulty Number of 6; unusual or exotic items have a Difficulty Number of 9 or more. If the item is unusually complex, the result level required may also increase at the gamemaster's discretion.

The character can only make or repair an item if he has access to the proper tools and materials for the task. A successful test means the character has successfully made or repaired the item. A Pathetic result means the attempt failed miserably, destroying the item beyond salvation. If the test is unsuccessful but the result level is better than Poor, the character can try again; the only thing the character has lost in the first attempt is time.

Common crafts include Baker, Blacksmith, Cooper (barrel maker), Mason, Tailor and Woodworker. Less common crafts include Trapmaking (see the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 108 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information on traps and how they work).

Craft Weapon

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

This skill can be used as an Artisan skill. Use of this skill requires Forge Tools or access to a forge. Use of the Craft Weapon skill enables the character to create new weapons, including ammunition for missile weapons like arrows and crossbow bolts. The character must carry out his work at a properly equipped forge. Forge tools (see **Adventuring Equipment** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 451) can only be effectively employed in a forge. Outside of a forge, they can be used to make minor weapon repairs, but can't be used to create weapons. Creating weapons in a poorly equipped forge might double or triple the time requirement, while a well-equipped forge may halve the time. The forge's quality and its effect on weapon creation time is determined by the gamemaster.

Forging new weapons takes time and effort. Making a weapon takes a number of days equal to the weapon Size plus Damage step. At the end of this period, the character makes a Craft Weapon Test against a Difficulty Number equal to the weapon's Damage step + 6. The character may spend additional time working on the weapon in order to reduce the target Difficulty Number. For each additional day the character spends working on the weapon, subtract –1 from the Difficulty Number. The maximum benefit gained from this is –3 to the Difficulty Number, for three additional days of effort.

Creating a dagger (Size 1; Damage step 2) takes three days and requires a successful Craft Weapon Test against a Difficulty Number of 8 (2 + 6 = 8). Creating a broadsword (Size 3; Damage step 5) takes eight days and requires a successful Craft Weapon Test against a Difficulty Number of 11 (5 + 6 = 11). Creating a pole-axe (Size 6; Damage step 8) takes fourteen days and requires a successful Craft Weapon Test against a Difficulty Number of 14 (8 + 6 = 14).

If the character fails his Craft Weapon Test, he has been unable to create the item successfully. He may try again from anew; only time has been wasted. A Pathetic result on the Craft Weapon Test, however, ruins the weapon completely—both the materials and effort invested are wasted.

Bolts, arrows and other missiles are considered to be equivalent to the Size and Damage step of the missile weapon. This reflects the character having to forge the arrowhead, make the shaft, and then fletch the shaft with leather or feathers, requisite to the size of the weapon used to loose the missile. A successful Craft Weapon Test produces a number of missiles equivalent to that shown for purchase in the Missile Weapons Table (see the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 436).

Creating medium crossbow bolts (Size 4; Damage step 5) takes four days and requires a Craft Weapon Test against a Difficulty Number of 11 (5 + 6 = 11). A successful test result creates 15 bolts. Creating blowgun needles (Size 1; Damage step 1) takes one day and requires a Craft Weapon Test against a Difficulty Number of 7 (1 + 6 = 7). A successful test result creates 10 needles.

The prices for weapons are given in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 434. The material cost of creating a weapon is generally half of the price shown on the appropriate Weapon Table. Damaged weapons can be repaired using this skill, against a Difficulty

Number equal to that required to create the weapon. A separate Craft Weapon Test is required for each Damage step repaired (see **Repairing Damaged Weapons** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 439).

Weaponsmiths possess the ability to create weapons through the use of half-magic (see **Half-Magic** in **The Value of Strong Arms and Stronger Minds** chapter, p. 156). Archers possess the ability to create bows or crossbows and arrows or bolts through the use of half-magic (see **Half-Magic** in the **On the Path of the Archer** chapter, p. 75).

Creature Analysis

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Creature Analysis skill allows a character to gain information about a creature he is observing. It is used as described for **Creature Analysis** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 177.

Critical Hit

Step Number: Rank
Default Use: No
Action: No **Strain**: 1

The Critical Hit skill allows a character to target an opponent's vulnerable areas, increasing the damage inflicted by his attacks. Apart from the Strain cost, it is used as described for **Critical Hit** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 177.

Dead Fall

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Default Use: No
Action: No **Strain**: 1

The Dead Fall skill allows a character to feign the appearance of death. The Dead Fall skill does not use illusion magic, and relies on the character's control of his body and acting in a suitably realistic fashion. The result is similar enough to an illusion to require a Sensing or Disbelief Test to detect. Because shutting down the character's vital body functions for an extended period of time is hazardous, the character is not able to renew the effect without a pause to recover. He can only hope that those observing him quickly move along before they notice he is not really dead! It is otherwise used as described for **Dead Fall** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 177.

Detect Trap

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Detect Trap skill allows a character to detect traps of mechanical origin. This skill will not help the character to detect magical traps. It is otherwise used as described for **Detect Trap** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 178.

Detect Weapon

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: Yes
Action: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Detect Weapon skill allows a character to detect the presence of hidden weapons, concealed by normal means. Attempts to detect weapons concealed magically require one result level greater than normal. It is otherwise used as described for **Detect Weapon** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 178.

Disarm

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Disarm skill allows a character to use a combination of feints and flashing weapon play to knock an opponent's weapon from his hand. It is used as described for **Disarm** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 179.

Disarm Trap

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Disarm Trap skill allows a character to use deduction, logic, and a deft touch to render mechanical traps inoperative. This skill will not help the character to disarm magical traps. It is otherwise used as described for **Disarm Trap** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 179.

Disguise

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

Use of this skill requires a Disguise Kit. The Disguise skill allows a character to use costumes and make-up to disguise himself or another as a humanoid being of his choice, within certain limits. The disguised being can weigh no more than 150 percent, and not less than 75 percent, of the target character's body weight. The character may not vary the height, width, or length of any part of his body, limbs or torso, by more than 25 percent for the purposes of the disguise. The character requires access to a full make-up kit, clothing, jewelry, and other accoutrements for the disguise to be effective; it takes a minimum of 30 minutes to prepare the disguise.

The character makes a Disguise Test, the result of which becomes the Detection Difficulty for any attempts made to see through the disguise. Each use of Disguise lasts for a number of hours equal to the character's Disguise rank, or until the disguised character chooses to discard the costume. Note that the Disguise skill only alters appearance. If a disguised character is attempting to impersonate someone else, the character will likely need other abilities, such as the Acting skill or Mimic Voice talent or skill, to convince others of his false identity.

Down Strike

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Default Use: No
Action: No **Strain**: 1

The Down Strike skill allows a character to use the advantage of height to inflict additional damage on a target in close combat. It is used as described for **Down Strike** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 179.

Emotion Song

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Emotion Song skill allows a character to sing songs that arouse an audience to a basic emotion, such as fear, love, hate, happiness, anger, or joy. It is used as described for **Emotion Song** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 181.

Engaging Banter

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Engaging Banter skill allows a character to use his charming style and a touch of suggestion to distract another character. It is used as described for **Engaging Banter** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 182.

Entertainer

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

This skill can be used as an Artisan skill. Use of this skill may require a Musical Instrument. Entertainers are performing artists. To use the Entertainer skill, a character makes an Entertainer Test against the highest Social Defense of any observer of his work. The result level determines how much the observers enjoy the performance. An Average result indicates that 25 percent of the audience enjoy and remember the performance; a Good result affects 50 percent of the audience; an Excellent result affects 75 percent of the audience; an Extraordinary result means the entire audience appreciates the entertainer's performance.

If he wishes, a character may acquire the Entertainer skill multiple times to learn new types of performing arts. Examples include musician (one instrument), poet (spoken), singer, and storyteller.

Etiquette

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: Yes
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

Etiquette is the art of proper behavior in social situations. Etiquette is important; improper behavior may be punished by responses ranging from the scorn of nobles to a beheading at the hands of enraged ork scorchers. Characters should strive to avoid committing faux pas in the society of Barsaive.

To use the Etiquette skill, a character makes an Etiquette Test against the Difficulty of knowing the proper behavior for a given social situation. The base Difficulty Number is 5, with modifiers to that number as given in the Etiquette Table. For example, a commoner who attends a banquet for a noble of a different race being hosted by someone from a completely alien culture adds +9, for a final Difficulty Number of 14 (5 + 2 + 3 + 4 = 14).

ETIQUETTE TABLE

Situation	Difficulty Modifier
Current company of higher social standing	+2
Current company from different race or culture	+3
Surrounding culture completely alien	+4

The Etiquette Test result alters the reaction of observers. An Average result means observers believe that your character seems to possess the rudiments of proper behavior; a Good result means those same people fully approve of your character's manners; an Excellent result so impresses observers with your character's manners that their Attitude improves one degree, to a maximum of Friendly (see the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 90 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information on Attitudes and how they work).

The effects of the Etiquette Test lasts for as long as the character remains in that same social situation and for a maximum number of hours equal to the character's Etiquette rank.

Evaluate

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Evaluate skill gives a character a shrewd sense for the true market value of an object. The character examines the object and makes an Evaluate Test against the item's Spell Defense to detect whether it has hidden value that is not readily apparent to the casual observer. For magical items, an Excellent result will reveal that it is magical, but not the value of the item or the purpose of the item's magic.

Evidence Analysis

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 1

Equal parts observation and logic, the Evidence Analysis skill allows a character to examine physical evidence and determine the answers to questions relating to his investigation. The Evidence Analysis skill is limited in its scope to find out what has happened. The character can only find the answers to questions about the evidence analyzed that occurred within a maximum number of days equal to his Evidence Analysis rank. It is otherwise used as described for **Evidence Analysis** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 183.

False Shackles

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The False Shackles skill offers an advantage to a character who escapes his shackles but wishes to keep his escape secret. The character arranges his shackles so that they appear to be in place, mimicking the stance and movements of a bound prisoner. The character then makes a False Shackles Test, the result of which becomes the Detection Difficulty for attempts made by those checking to see if the character remains safely bound.

The effect lasts for a number of hours equal to the character's False Shackles rank, or until he does something obviously impossible for a bound character to accomplish.

Fast Grab

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Fast Grab skill allows a character to seize an item out of a target character's hand. The character makes a Fast Grab Test against the target's Physical Defense. If the target is holding the object with two hands, the character requires a Good result. If the test succeeds, the character snatches the object and may make an immediate Combat Movement away from the target, even if he has already moved this round. The character must be able to carry the object being snatched for the Fast Grab attempt to be successful.

Fast Hand

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Fast Hand skill uses sleight-of-hand to allow a character to move one or two small items from one place to another without being noticed. Apart from the Strain cost, it is used as described for **Fast Hand** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 183.

Fence

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Fence skill helps a character get a better price for stolen or illegal goods. It is used as described for **Fence** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 184.

First Impression

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The First Impression skill allows a character to favorably impress another character he has just met for the first time. It is used as described for **First Impression** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 184.

Fishing

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

Use of this skill requires a Fishing Kit. The Fishing skill allows a character to catch fish in lakes, rivers, or seas, using a variety of methods, including fishing nets and rods. The Difficulty Number for Fishing Tests ranges from 3 to 10, as determined by the gamemaster. Each use of the Fishing skill takes 4 hours. A character may make up to 2 Fishing Tests each day.

The result of the Fishing Test determines the amount of fish caught. Each result level provides enough fish to feed 1 person for 1 day. For example, a Good result provides enough food for 1 person for 2 days (or daily food for 2 people).

Flirting

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: Yes
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

A form of interaction with members of a character's preferred sex, the Flirting skill combines elements of flattery, intense attention, and clever word-play to affect another person. Flirtatious behavior accents conversations with hints of romance. The character makes a Flirting Test against the target's Social Defense. An Average result intrigues the target; he or she spends time with your character, trying to learn more about him or her. A Good result completely occupies the target character's attention; he spends almost all available time with your character, more or less ignoring anyone else who might be around. An Excellent result leaves a lasting impression on the target. He or she exhibits all the symptoms mentioned so far and will follow up on the relationship, seeking to continue and deepen it at a later time. An Extraordinary result smites the target with love. He or she has it bad; for one week the other character cannot get enough of yours. He or she thinks your character is the greatest.

The effect fades when the week ends, but another successful Flirting Test could start it all over again.

Forgery

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

Use of this skill requires a Writing Kit and Artisan Tools. Forgers create false papers, legal documents, and correspondence. A character with the Forgery skill might even forge artwork if he also has the appropriate Artist skill. For example, a character with the Forgery and Artist (Painter) skills could fake the work of a famous master. Creating a forgery takes two to five times as long as creating the original. For example, a letter jotted hastily in a few minutes might take nearly an hour to forge. The character makes a Forgery Test, the result of which becomes the Detection Difficulty for any attempts to detect the forgery.

Graceful Exit

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Graceful Exit skill allows a character to escape from combat by distracting his opponents. It is used as described for **Graceful Exit** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 187.

Great Leap

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: No **Strain**: 1

The Great Leap skill allows a character to jump great distances. The character makes a Great Leap Test, the result of which is the maximum distance he can travel horizontally, in feet. It is otherwise used as described for **Great Leap** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 187.

Haggle

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: Yes
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Haggle skill allows a character to drive a "hard bargain" when buying or selling goods. It is used as described for **Haggle** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 187.

Heartening Laugh

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Heartening Laugh skill allows a character to support friendly characters against fear and Intimidation. Apart from the Strain cost, it is used as described for **Heartening Laugh** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 187.

Hunting

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Hunting skill allows a character to hunt for game animals in wilderness areas. The Difficulty Number for Hunting Tests ranges from 5 to 12, based on the terrain, as determined by the gamemaster. Difficulty Numbers for hunting in various areas of Barsaive are shown on the Hunting Table. Some barren areas may not support wildlife at all; a character cannot successfully hunt for food in such an area.

HUNTING TABLE

Terrain	Difficulty Number
Woodlands	5
Jungles	7
Poison Forest	12
Blood Wood	10
Plains	7
Hinterlands	6
Mountains, lowland	5
Mountains, highland	8

Each use of the Hunting skill takes 4 hours. A character may make up to 2 Hunting Tests each day. The result level of the Hunting Test determines the amount of food captured. Each result level provides enough food to feed 1 person for 1 day. For example, an Excellent result provides enough food for 1 person for 3 days (or daily food for 3 people).

At the gamemaster's discretion, adept characters who follow certain Disciplines may gain a +1 to +3 bonus to Hunting Tests for creative use of their talents and half-magic abilities. For example, Beastmasters can gain a bonus if they use their Borrow Sense, Creature Analysis or Tracking talents. Scouts can gain a bonus for using their Tracking talent or their Enhance Senses ability.

Hypnotize

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Hypnotize skill allows a character to mesmerize another character, making him susceptible to persuasion. The character must speak in a language known to the target; even though he may use other accessories, such as flashy charms or baubles, the character must be understood for his attempt at hypnosis to have any chance of success. It is otherwise used as described for **Hypnotize** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 188.

Impressive Shot

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Impressive Shot skill allows a character to impress onlookers with a display of targeting accuracy. It is used as described for **Impressive Shot** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 188.

Impressive Strike

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Impressive Strike skill allows a character to impress onlookers with a display of close combat prowess. It is used as described for **Impressive Strike** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 188.

Knowledge

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

This skill serves as a template for all Knowledge skills. The Knowledge skill grants a character knowledge about a certain area. The precise definition of a Knowledge skill is determined by the player, keeping in mind that all Knowledge skills are subject to the gamemaster's approval. Ranks are assigned to separate Knowledge skills. A Knowledge skill may cover broad areas of knowledge, meaning that the character knows a little bit about a lot of things, or he may have more focused knowledge, giving him more detailed knowledge within a smaller area of expertise. While the area of expertise is determined by the player, the gamemaster determines how applicable the knowledge is to the question at hand.

The Typical Knowledge Skill Table lists some different Knowledge skills that might be appropriate or useful for characters. See **Knowledge Skills**, p. 231, for more information on how they work.

TYPICAL KNOWLEDGE SKILL TABLE

Alchemy and Potions
Ancient Weapons
Baking
Barsaive History
Botany
Court Dancing
Creature Lore
Discipline Lore
Farming
Horror Lore
Legends and Heroes
Military Organizations
Province History
Racial Lore
Scourge History
Trade Routes
Wild Animals

Lip Reading

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 2

The Lip Reading skill gives a character a discreet method of eavesdropping on another character's conversation. Apart from the Strain cost, it is used as described for **Lip Reading** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 191.

Lock Picking

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

Use of this skill requires Thieves' Picks and Tools. The Lock Picking skill allows a character to open locks. Use of this skill requires the character to use a set of lock picks (see **Adventuring Equipment** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 451), and is therefore restricted to opening only mundane locks. At the gamemaster's discretion, some magical locks may be opened with the Lock Picking skill, but require one result level higher for the test to be successful. On a Pathetic result, the character not only fails to open the lock, he irretrievably jams or breaks his lock picks in the lock. It is otherwise used as described for **Lock Picking** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 191.

Maneuver

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Maneuver skill allows a character to sacrifice his action to avoid his opponent's attacks, allowing him to move into a more advantageous position against that opponent. It is used as described for **Maneuver** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 191.

Mapmaking

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

This skill can be used as an Artisan skill. Use of this skill requires a Writing Kit and Artisan Tools. To get where they want to go and avoid unsafe spots, characters traveling over land need a map. The province of Barsaive covers a vast distance, and current maps of Barsaive show many uncharted areas. The Scourge altered Barsaive's geography by obliterating many towns and cities, forcing others to relocate and destroying landmarks and geographic features. In the time since the Scourge, no one has undertaken an expedition solely to map Barsaive, and so no reliable maps of post-Scourge Barsaive exist. Most available maps only indicate the major landmarks still in existence, such as the larger mountain ranges, the ruins of Parlainth, the Theran Empire outposts at Vivane and Sky Point, the Serpent River, Death's Sea, the larger cities of Iopos, Travar, Jerris, and Kratas, and the Kingdom of Throal. Some more expensive maps also show the main trade routes across the province, but most of these are commissioned by traders and are not for sale.

Most mapmakers in Barsaive draw their maps to be used with a device called **Shantaya's sextant**. Shantaya was an elven Troubadour who traveled across the province and mapped it in the years before the Scourge. As a way to standardize her work, she developed a device to chart distance and bearings using the maps she drew. By aligning the sextant with certain landmarks on the map, a traveler can determine the bearing and distance (in days walking or riding) to various places in Barsaive. The most prominent landmarks on the Shantaya maps are Throal, Sky Point, Wyrm Wood (now Blood Wood), Death's Sea, and the Dragon Mountains.

Mapmaking is a Craftsman skill that characters can learn as they might any other. Characters can create maps in two ways—by copying an existing map or drawing an original map. To draw an original map, a character must have traveled over the area he is mapping. To draw an original map, the character makes a Mapmaking (7) Test. To copy an existing map, the character makes a Mapmaking (5) Test. The result level of the test determines the quality of the map produced. An Average result yields a functional map with a few basic details and landmarks; a Good or Excellent result yields a map that characters can use with Shantaya's sextant; an Extraordinary result yields a highly accurate map that gives a +1 bonus to any Navigation Test made using it.

Melee Weapons

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: Yes
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

A character uses the Melee Weapons skill in close combat to make a melee attack against a target with a hand-held weapon, like a sword, axe, or dagger. It is used as described for **Melee Weapons** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 191.

Mimic Voice

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Mimic Voice skill allows a character to mimic any voice he hears. It is used as described for **Mimic Voice** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 192.

Missile Weapons

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: Yes
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

A character uses the Missile Weapons skill to make a missile attack against a target, using a bow, crossbow, or some other weapon that fires projectiles. It is used as described for **Missile Weapons** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 192.

Momentum Attack

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: No **Strain**: 1

The Momentum Attack skill allows a character to make an additional close combat attack while his opponent attempts to recover from the effects of his first blow. It is used as described for **Momentum Attack** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 192.

Mount Attack

Step Number: Rank
Default Use: No
Action: No **Strain**: 1

The Mount Attack skill allows a character to increase the accuracy of his mount's attacks. It is used as described for **Mount Attack** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 193.

Navigation

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

Use of this skill requires Navigation Charts. Navigators know how to read maps, chart courses, and even guide an airship safely through the skies; circumventing storms and turbulence, flying creatures, and other hazards.

To determine how accurately the character notices hazards or anticipates features along the journey, refer to the **Airships and Riverboats** chapter on p. 147 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**. In order to use the Navigation skill to pinpoint their

location, navigators must be able to see the sky and must possess a set of navigator's charts. Navigation most often means relying on the constellations of the Passions (see the **Passions and Questors** chapter, p. 460), the movement of the sun, and similar astrological phenomena for direction. Most maps have the constellations drawn around their borders for use with Shantaya's sextant and similar navigational tools. Consequently, characters can navigate most effectively on clear nights when the stars shine brightest.

A character must spend 1 hour determining where he thinks his current position is, then makes a Navigation Test against a Difficulty Number ranging from 5 (a crystal-clear night sky) to 12 (heavy cloud cover). Some suggested Difficulty Numbers for making Navigation Tests under various conditions are given in the Navigation Difficulty Number Table. A character cannot make a Navigation Test in severe rainstorms, violent storms, or blizzards, as he cannot feasibly observe anything under such extreme weather conditions. Characters also require accurate maps to determine the location of specific destinations. The Difficulty Number of a Navigation Test is increased by +1 to +5 if the character's map is incomplete or inaccurate, based on the quality of the map as determined by the gamemaster. For example, a fairly accurate map missing only a landmark or two might add +1 to the Difficulty Number. A hastily drawn map with scant detail might add +4 or +5 to the Difficulty Number.

NAVIGATION DIFFICULTY TABLE

Condition	Difficulty Number
Clear night sky, few obstructions blocking the character's view (on an open plain, for instance)	5
Scattered clouds and/or minor obstructions, such as low buildings	7
Partly cloudy or significant obstructions (trees, nearby mountains, and so on)	9
Overcast, heavy foliage or other conditions blocking the character's view of the sky	12

The Navigation Test result determines how accurately the character can plot his destination. An Average result gives a position that is accurate to within 10 miles; a Good result yields one accurate within 5 miles; an Excellent result, within 2 miles; an Extraordinary result places the navigator within a mile of his target location. On a Poor or worse result the character becomes lost (see **Getting Lost**, below).

Getting Lost

On a Poor result, the character inadvertently plots a destination 20 to 25 miles wide of his intended destination. The character only recognizes his mistake if he makes another Navigation Test that yields a better result or arrives at the destination and realizes that it is not the place he intended to travel to.

A Pathetic result positions the character more than 25 miles away from the intended destination. He is completely lost, but will be fiercely adamant that he knows "exactly" where he is. Any further Navigation Tests the character makes add +2 to the Difficulty Number—assuming the character can be convinced to make another test by his friends.

Physician

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

Use of this skill requires a Physician's Kit. The Physician skill allows a character to diagnose and prescribe treatments for injuries and diseases. The character spends half an hour examining the injury, then makes a Physician Test against the condition's Difficulty Number. If the test succeeds, the physician learns what the exact problem is and how to treat it. The patient adds the character's Physician rank as a bonus to the next Recovery Test he makes. The Physician Treatment Table shows suggested Difficulty Numbers for diagnosing common ailments, in order of seriousness. The gamemaster determines the Difficulty Number for other ailments.

PHYSICIAN TREATMENT TABLE

Ailment	Difficulty Number
Common Cold	4
Wounds	5
Influenza	6
Mild Poison	6
Broken Bones	8
Strong Poison	11
Black Death	15

Poohrt, the windling Thief, suffers a Wound during his most recent adventure. Fortunately for him, a character with knowledge of Physician at Rank 3 is in the area. This character successfully diagnoses the windlings condition—a nasty Wound—and so Poohrt gains a +3 bonus to his next Recovery Test.

Picking Pockets

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Picking Pockets skill combines a deft touch with sleight of hand to allow a character to remove an item from the pocket or pouch of another character. It is used as described for **Picking Pockets** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 195.

Pilot Boat

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Pilot Boat skill represents the art of maneuvering the fire-engine powered t'skrang riverboats along the Serpent River. It allows the character to understand the workings of the riverboat and assist those piloting the vessel. The character piloting the riverboat may guide the ship in combat or near a port by making a Pilot Boat Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the maneuver being performed. When docking a riverboat, use a Difficulty Number of 5. Difficulty Numbers for maneuvering in combat vary from 5 to as high as 15 (see the **Airships and Riverboats** chapter on p. 148 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for riverboat combat rules and appropriate Difficulty Numbers).

If a character is supervising the fire engine on a t'skrang riverboat, he may use the Pilot Boat skill to augment the speed of the vessel. A character must have at least Rank 5 in Pilot Boat before he may attempt this. The Difficulty Number for this test is the vessel's Speed step (usually 7). To increase the speed of the boat, the character makes a Pilot Boat Test. For each result level achieved above Average, the character improves the Speed step of the vessel by +1 for a number of rounds equal to his Pilot Boat rank (see the **Airships and Riverboats** chapter on p. 145 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information on ship Attributes).

Piloting riverboats appears to most people to be part science, part magic. Though riverboat crews occasionally take on laborers without knowledge of Pilot Boat, these crew members usually end up performing all the nastiest chores. Riverboat crew officers usually possess Rank 4 in Pilot Boat, and captains Rank 7. Because of the highly-secretive nature of fire engines, most t'skrang look suspiciously on non-t'skrang with more than Rank 2 or 3 in the Pilot Boat skill.

Pin

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Pin skill allows a character to corner an opponent by making a rapid series of whirling attacks or threatening gestures, thus restricting the opponent's movement. It is used as described for **Pin** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 195.

Quickblade

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: No **Strain**: 2

The Quickblade skill allows a character to make agile darting thrusts or cuts with his melee weapon. Unlike the talent, Initiative penalties from armor and shields apply to the Quickblade skill. It is otherwise used as described for **Quickblade** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 195.

Read and Write Language

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Read and Write Language skill allows a character to learn to read and write different languages. See **Language Skills**, p. 233, for details on how the skill differs from the talent. It is otherwise used as described for **Read and Write Language** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 196.

Read and Write Magic

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Read and Write Magic skill allows a character to read and write magical writing, such as that found on scrolls, or magical glyphs. The Read and Write Magic skill does not allow the character to learn spells. It is otherwise used as described for **Read and Write Magic** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 197.

Read River

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Read River skill allows a character to guide a riverboat through the often treacherous waters of a river, which can be filled with sandbars, deceptive currents, and hidden reefs. To determine how accurately the character notices hazards or anticipates features along the river, refer to the **Airships and Riverboats** chapter on p. 147 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**. Read River can also be used to track another riverboat along the river, identify approaching ships, and anticipate features of the river such as towns, t'skrang villages, or good places to fish. To track another riverboat or notice an approaching ship, the character makes a Read River Test against the target riverboat captain's Pilot Boat or Sailing step, modified at the gamemaster's discretion.

Research

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: Yes
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Research skill allows characters to find information through study and investigation. This includes research at libraries and following up on rumors and legends.

RESEARCH TABLE

Type of Information	Difficulty Number
General information	5
Detailed information	7
Intricate information	9
Obscure information	11

The character makes a Research Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the type of information being sought. The gamemaster may use the guidelines for creating Difficulty Numbers in the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 86 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**, or he may use the numbers suggested in the Research Table. The result level of the Research Test determines how much information a character obtains. A Good or better result often turns up more detailed information than the character initially sought.

At the Great Library of Throal, Jerreck is studying the legend of Jalendale, an abandoned kaer rumored to be full of magical treasure. Based on the nature of the information he is seeking, the Difficulty Number for his Research Test is 7. Jerreck rolls a 15, giving him an Excellent result. Jerreck had only been searching for the kaer's general location, but the gamemaster decides that an Excellent result earns a bonus. Jerreck learns not only the general location of the kaer, but also its specific location, and the fact that it lies near an area rumored to hold a tribe of ork scorchers.

A character may also research the legend of an item to gain general knowledge of what abilities have been attributed to the item during its history. Information gained in this way is rarely completely accurate, for legends often exaggerate events in favor of heroes.

Me'gana is researching the legend of Kegel's Sword. In a book contained in the Great Library of Throal, she learns that during a battle, "a bolt of flame leapt from the blade's tip." Now Me'gana knows that the sword has some kind of flame ability, though perhaps not exactly the one described in the legend.

Resist Taunt

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Default Use: Yes
Action: No **Strain**: 1

The Resist Taunt skill allows a character to resist the effects of attacks directed against his Social Defense. The character can use the Resist Taunt skill only once per round. It is otherwise used as described for **Resist Taunt** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 197.

Rhetoric

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Rhetoric skill allows a character to discern the true intentions of a Name-giver with whom they are conversing with for at least ten minutes. When told that a player character is using Rhetoric, the gamemaster makes a secret Rhetoric Test on the player's behalf against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the gamemaster reveals to the player the true feelings of the target character about the matter being discussed. "The character doesn't know what to feel," or "The character hasn't made any plans yet," are both valid answers, though if the character is leaning one way or another on an issue, the gamemaster should specify which. If the test fails, the gamemaster should give the player an inaccurate reading.

The gamemaster may rule that player characters cannot use Rhetoric against each other. If gamemaster characters use Rheto-

ric on player characters, the gamemaster character may learn the gist of out-of-character comments made by the players about their own character's intentions.

A character with Rhetoric may substitute his Rhetoric step for his Social Defense when targeted by another character using Rhetoric or the skills of Acting, Disguise, Flirting or Seduction.

Riposte

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: No **Strain**: 2

The Riposte skill allows a character to block an opponent's melee attack, possibly turning it back on his erstwhile attacker. The character can use the Riposte skill only once each round. It is otherwise used as described for **Riposte** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 197.

Rushing Attack

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0 (see text)

The Rushing Attack skill allows a character to move his Full Movement rate while also making an attack that round. It is used as described for **Rushing Attack** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 198.

Sailing

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Sailing skill enables a character to sail (or help sail) any watercraft, whether muscle-powered (by rowing, rather than sailing) or wind-powered, but not fire-powered, like the legendary t'skrang riverboats (see **Pilot Boat**, p. 244). The character makes a Sailing Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster, based on the condition of the water. Sailing over a smooth lake has a Difficulty Number of 3; a turbulent river has a Difficulty Number of 7; sailing through a fierce storm at sea has a Difficulty Number of 13. If the test succeeds, the character sails, or helps sail, the ship safely for the lower of a number of hours equal to his Sailing rank, or until the conditions change or the ship docks.

Second Attack

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: No **Strain**: 2

The Second Attack skill allows a character to make an additional close combat or ranged attack in the same round. Apart from the Strain cost, it is used as described for **Second Attack** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 199.

Second Weapon

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: No **Strain**: 1

The Second Weapon skill allows a character to attack with two different weapons during the same round. It is used as described for **Second Weapon** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 199.

Seduction

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: Yes
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

Characters use the Seduction skill to convince members of their preferred sex to become romantically involved with them. In addition to making a successful Seduction Test, seduction requires convincing roleplaying. A seduction has four stages: First Impression, Intriguing Conversation, Move To Intimacy, and the Suggestion.

First Impression can be a glance, a striking outfit, a dramatic entrance, an opening line—all the pieces that fit together to make a good impression. To make a successful First Impression, a character needs an Average result.

Intriguing Conversation requires wit, flattery, a willingness to reveal hints about oneself, and the ability to pick up and respond to cues from the target. The object of Intriguing Conversation is to make the target feel special, like the most important and attractive person in the room, at the same time presenting your character as an attractive partner. To be successful, Intriguing Conversation requires a Good result. Achieving an Average result does not mean your character's Intriguing Conversation failed to produce the desired effect, however; it just prolongs the process.

With a **Move to Intimacy**, your character begins to get more personal with the target character, gradually altering tone of voice, body language and the subjects of conversation to reveal even more about himself, learn more about the target, and develop a deeper rapport. A successful Move to Intimacy requires a Good result. As with Intriguing Conversation, achieving an Average result does not mean the attempt to Move to Intimacy failed, it just prolongs the process.

The **Suggestion** occurs when your character suggests to the target character just how your character would like this encounter to end. A successful Suggestion requires an Excellent result. Your character gets only one chance to make the Suggestion.

At each stage, the character makes a Seduction Test against the target's Social Defense. For each result level above that required for success, the character gains a +1 bonus to all Seduction Tests made during the next stage of the process.

A successful seduction creates other effects beyond satisfying the immediate suggestion. The seduced character's Attitude toward your character improves by two degrees for the next 24 hours, and permanently improves by one degree as long as your character does not behave badly toward or betray the seduced character.

Shackle Shrug

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Shackle Shrug skill allows a character to escape from bonds around his hands or feet by gradually straining against them and using extraordinary flexibility to extricate his wrists or ankles. The character makes a Shackle Shrug Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the type of binding. Twine or string has a Difficulty Number of 5; rope tied by an inexperienced captor has a Difficulty Number of 7; rope tied by an experienced jailer has a Difficulty Number of 9; steel shackles have a Difficulty Number of 11. Magical shackles cannot be overcome with the Shackle Shrug skill. Because it is easier to escape from shackles that bind the wrists than those around the ankles, add +2 to the Difficulty Number if the character is bound around the feet.

These Difficulty Numbers assume the character succeeds at his attempt to break free of his shackles within the first half hour. For every additional half hour that a character spends working at his bonds, reduce the Difficulty Number by –1 (to a maximum

of –3). The character may attempt to break free of his restraints (wrist or feet) a number of times equal to his Shackle Shrug rank. Should he fail all of his attempts, or on any Pathetic result, he cannot attempt to escape his bonds again until he increases his Shackle Shrug rank.

Shield Charge

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Default Use: No
Action: No **Strain**: 1

The Shield Charge skill allows a character to bash an opponent with a shield. It is used as described for **Shield Charge** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 200.

Silent Walk

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Silent Walk skill allows a character to muffle the sound of his passage by careful and cautious movement. The Silent Walk skill requires a character to actively focus on avoiding making any noise, requiring him to take an action when moving. It is otherwise used as described for **Silent Walk** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 201.

Slough Blame

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: Yes
Action: Yes **Strain**: 2

The Slough Blame skill allows a character to temporarily divert suspicion and blame from one character to another. Apart from the Strain cost, it is used as described for **Slough Blame** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 201.

Speak Language

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Speak Language skill allows a character to learn to communicate with others using different languages. See **Language Skills**, p. 233, for details on how the skill differs from the talent. It is otherwise used as described for **Speak Language** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 201.

Spellcasting

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Spellcasting skill allows a character to cast spells under certain conditions. Most often, the Spellcasting skill is used by non-magician adepts with matrix objects or magical items that contain matrices, such as a spell sword or a spell matrix staff. It can also be learned by non-adept characters for use with similar items. The skill functions as described for **Spellcasting** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 202. However, the Spellcasting skill imposes additional restrictions on the character which limit its use when compared to the Spellcasting talent.

The Spellcasting skill allows non-magician adepts (but not non-adept characters) to use raw magic to cast spells they have learned with the Read and Write Magic talent. Any adept doing so faces the standard risks of casting raw magic. See **Spellcasting Methods** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 287, for more information. The Spellcasting skill does not allow characters to weave threads for spells, however. Characters must possess knowledge of the appropriate Thread Weaving talent to weave spell threads. This restriction means that non-magicians using the Spellcasting skill can only cast spells that do not require threads. See **Casting Spells** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 285, for more information.

The Spellcasting skill does not allow a character to attune spell matrices. The character requires knowledge of the appropriate Thread Weaving talent to achieve this. Even non-magician adepts using the Spellcasting skill with matrix objects must have their matrices attuned for them by a magician.

Streetwise

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: Yes
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

A character with the Streetwise skill knows the ins and outs of urban environments, particularly the seedier side of cities. A successful Streetwise Test allows the character to seem to be an "insider" who can be trusted, at least a little, by another street character. The Streetwise skill also acts as a Knowledge skill, giving a character knowledge of the current street culture. The character makes a Streetwise Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, the target or group trust the character, who can then attempt an Interaction Test. At the gamemaster's discretion, a Pathetic result may put the character in an undesirable position in many places.

A character may also make Streetwise Tests to ask about the location of the local black market or any other illegal operation; the Streetwise skill can also allow the character to spot a con game or scam. To ask such questions, the character makes a Streetwise Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, he gets the answer to his question. Higher result levels provide better or more information. When a character uses his Streetwise skill to make a Knowledge Test, the gamemaster determines the Difficulty Number.

Sure Mount

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Default Use: No
Action: No **Strain**: 0

The Sure Mount skill helps a character avoid being dismounted. It is used as described for **Sure Mount** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 205.

Surprise Strike

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Default Use: No
Action: No **Strain**: 1

The Surprise Strike skill allows a character to take advantage of the element of surprise, increasing the damage of his attacks. It is used as described for **Surprise Strike** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 205.

Swift Kick

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: No **Strain**: 1

The Swift Kick skill allows a character to make a bonus unarmed attack against an opponent. It is used as described for **Swift Kick** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 205.

Swimming

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Default Use: Yes (see text)
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0+ (see text)

All t'skrang, and many other Name-giver races who live near water, learn to swim as a method of movement, but also as part of their basic survival skills. Characters use the Swimming skill to move through the water. The character makes a Swimming Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the condition of the water around him, as given in the Water Condition Table. Each successful Swimming Test allows the character to swim for one minute. A character can move at a rate equal to 10% of his Full Movement during this time; halve this rate if the character is swimming against the current. Adverse water conditions may also affect the character's movement, at the gamemaster's discretion.

WATER CONDITION TABLE

Water Condition	Difficulty Number
Calm water	4
Small waves	5
Slow river current	7
Moderate river current	9
Major river current	13
Open ocean	15

Obsidimen cannot swim. If an obsidiman falls into the water he sinks and must find some other way to quickly climb out. Obsidimen never possess knowledge of the Swimming skill. Windlings only swim if they have no other option, as getting their wings wet cripples their flying ability. Windlings never use Swimming as a Default Skill, although intrepid members of this race can learn it. Windlings who do learn to swim make their Swimming Tests at one level higher for success, requiring a Good or better result in most cases.

Trolls can swim, but because of their heavy weight it is much harder for them. Their Swimming Tests are made at one level higher for success, generally requiring an Excellent result for untrained swimmers, or a Good result for those who have learned to swim. T'skrang are at home in the water. All t'skrang make Swimming Tests at one level less for success. This means most t'skrang require an Average result for "untrained" swimmers, or a Poor result for those who have learned the Swimming skill. Also, a t'skrang character can move at a rate equal to 20% of his Full Movement when swimming; halve this rate if the character is swimming against the current.

Swimming is a strenuous activity. For every 10 minutes spent swimming, the character must make a Toughness (12) Test. If the test fails, the character takes 2 Strain Points of damage. A character can carry only a limited amount of weight while swimming, equal to 10 percent of his Carrying Capacity. For every additional 10 percent of Carrying Capacity carried, the character incurs a –1 penalty to his Swimming Tests.

Characters who fail their Swimming Test make no appreciable progress, and begin to sink beneath the water. Next round, the character makes another Swimming Test. If the test succeeds, he has recovered (treading water) and can make further Swimming Tests as normal. If the test fails, the character makes another Swimming Test in the following round, this time requiring a Good result to recover. If this test fails, he must make a third and final Swimming Test the following round, requiring an Excellent result to recover. If the character fails this final test, he begins to drown.

Drowning

Characters who cannot breathe underwater will eventually drown if they become trapped beneath the surface of the water, or if they fail their Swimming Tests. A character can hold his breath for a number of rounds equal to his Toughness value. T'skrang possess gills, which allow them to breathe underwater for a number of minutes equal to their Toughness value.

As soon as he runs out of breath, he begins to take damage from drowning. At this point, the gamemaster makes a Damage Test each round to determine how much damage is inflicted on the character. In the first round of drowning, the character takes Step 4 damage. Each round thereafter, the Damage step is increased by +2 steps until the character dies, is rescued, or somehow reaches the surface of the water. No armor protects against this damage.

Tactics

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Tactics skill enables a character to direct combat to the advantage of his soldiers. In order for the "commanding" character to effectively use the Tactics skill, his troops must be at least Loyal to him. The commander decides whether his troops are taking the *offensive* or the *defensive*, then makes a Tactics Test against the opposing commander's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, and his troops were on the offensive, they gain a +1 bonus to their Attack or Damage Tests (as determined by the commander) for each result level achieved; if on the defensive, they add +1 to their Physical or Spell Defense (as determined by the commander) for each result level achieved. A Pathetic result works to the enemy's advantage; the character completely fails to read the situation and his own troops suffer a –1 penalty to their Attack or Damage Tests, or Physical or Spell Defense, as appropriate.

A character may command a maximum number of troops equal to his Tactics rank × 10. If several characters are attempting to command the same group of soldiers, only the highest result level is used to determine the bonus. Each use of the skill lasts for a number of minutes equal to the character's Tactics rank. Tactics can only be used on gamemaster characters; player characters do not benefit from using this skill or having it used on them.

Tame Mount

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Tame Mount skill allows a character to tame an animal. Apart from the Strain cost, it is used as described for **Tame Mount** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 206.

Taunt

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Taunt skill allows a character to insult and humiliate a target character, thereby distracting him. This requires the character to spend an action throwing insults at the target, or making openly snide remarks about him. It is otherwise used as described for **Taunt** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 206.

Throwing Weapons

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: Yes
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

A character uses the Throwing Weapons skill in ranged combat to make a thrown attack against a target, by hurling a rock, dagger, spear, or other object. It is used as described for **Throwing Weapons** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 207.

Tracking

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: Yes
Action: Yes **Strain**: 1

The Tracking skill allows a character to follow the trails left by people and animals across great distances, using his senses—in particular, sight and smell—to find traces of their passage. The character can follow a trail for an hour before requiring another Tracking Test. It is used as described for **Tracking** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 208.

Trading

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

Merchants use the Trading skill to obtain items or to determine if certain goods are available for sale. The Difficulty Number to obtain an item is based on the merchant's location: an unusual item is easier to obtain in a city, like Travar, than in a remote village in the hinterlands of Barsaive. The Purchase Difficulty Table shows the base Difficulty Number for obtaining an item in a particular type of location. For example, while only a small town, Haven is well-known as being a place where one can purchase almost anything, given sufficient cash. It's proximity to the adventuring Mecca of ruined Parlainth ensures a steady supply of goods from the many caravans traveling to the town, as they meet the demands of the large number of adventurers. Haven is considered to be a city for the purposes of purchasing goods. These numbers serve as guidelines only, and may be modified by the gamemaster. Some places may allow for goods to be bought at a lower Purchase Difficulty than given in the Purchase Difficulty Table, below.

The merchant makes a Trading Test against the item's Purchase Difficulty. If the test succeeds, then the goods are available; the merchant has the item on hand and will sell it to the character. Both the merchant and the customer may use the Haggle talent or skill to settle on a final sale price (see the description for **Haggle** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 187).

The Difficulty Numbers given in the Purchase Difficulty Table refer to items with an Average Availability Rating. The Availability Rating of an item can raise or lower the minimum result level required for the merchant's Trading Test to determine whether the item is available for purchase (see **Purchasing Goods** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 432, for more information on Availability Ratings and how they work).

PURCHASE DIFFICULTY TABLE

Location	Difficulty Number
Capital city	5
City	6
Town	8
Village	10

Other in-game situations may affect the base Purchase Difficulty. The gamemaster determines any Difficulty Number modifiers for purchasing goods based on the circumstances of his campaign. For example, a trade route is currently under threat from a tribe of ork scorchers. Because of the danger involved with traveling this route, three caravans bound for Jerris stop in the town of Ghe. While there, the merchants offer some of their goods to the people living there. As a result, the gamemaster decides to temporarily lower the base Purchase Difficulty from 8 (for a town) to 6.

Trample

Step Number: Rank
Default Use: No
Action: No **Strain**: 1

The Trample skill allows an adept to increase the damage inflicted by his mount's attacks. It is used as described for **Trample** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 208.

Trap Initiative

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: No (see text) **Strain**: 1

The Trap Initiative skill allows a character to react more quickly to avoid mechanical traps. Against magical traps, the character must achieve a Good result when comparing his Initiative Test result against the trap's Initiative.

It is otherwise used as described for **Trap Initiative** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 208.

Trick Riding

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: No **Strain**: 1

The Trick Riding skill allows a character to perform mounted acrobatics. This skill can only be used to avoid one attack made against the rider or his mount each round. It is otherwise used as described for **Trick Riding** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 208.

Unarmed Combat

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: Yes
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

A character uses the Unarmed Combat skill in close combat when making an unarmed attack against a target with his hands, feet, or another part of his body, or to make a Grappling attack against an opponent in an attempt to restrain him. It is used as described for **Unarmed Combat** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 209.

Unmount

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Default Use: No
Action: No **Strain**: 0

The Unmount skill improves a character's ability to knock an opponent from his mount. It is used as described for **Unmount** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 209.

Weapon Breaker

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Default Use: No
Action: No **Strain**: 1

The Weapon Breaker skill allows a character to crack and shatter an opponent's weapon. Apart from the Strain cost and step number, it is otherwise used as described for **Weapon Breaker** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 210.

Wheeling Attack

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: Yes **Strain**: 1

A mounted character using the Wheeling Attack skill goads his mount to full speed, allowing him to make a Charging attack, then use the Splitting Movement combat option to move away, covering a maximum distance that round equal to his mount's Full Movement rate. Apart from the Strain cost (which applies only to the rider), it is otherwise used as described for **Wheeling Attack** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 211.

Wheeling Defense

Step Number: Rank + Dexterity
Default Use: No
Action: No **Strain**: 1

A mounted character uses the Wheeling Defense skill to urge his mount into a whirling circle, confusing his attackers by presenting a constantly moving target. It is used as described for **Wheeling Defense** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 211.

Wilderness Survival

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Default Use: Yes
Action: Yes **Strain**: 0

The Wilderness Survival skill allows a character to survive in the wild. The character is able to locate or build shelter, start a fire, find water, or forage for edible vegetation such as berries, roots, fruits, mushrooms and other plants. The character makes a Wilderness Survival Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster, taking into account the weather and environment. If the test succeeds, the character completes the task (finds food or water, makes a shelter, and so on). Each use of the Wilderness Survival skill takes 4 hours. A character may make 2 such tests per day. This means he may sometimes need to make difficult survival decisions—food or water? shelter or food?

Food

The Wilderness Survival skill allows a character to forage for food. However, this skill does not give a character any special advantages for hunting, fishing, or tracking—these are separate skills in their own right (see **Fishing**, **Hunting**, and **Tracking** on p. 241, p. 242, and p. 248, respectively).

FORAGING TABLE

Terrain	Difficulty Number
Woodlands	5
Jungles	7
Poison Forest	12
Blood Wood	10
Plains	6
Hinterlands	7
Mountains, lowland	6
Mountains, highland	7

The Difficulty Number for Wilderness Survival Tests ranges from 6 to 12, based on the terrain, as determined by the gamemaster. Some typical Difficulty Numbers for foraging in different areas of Barsaive are shown on the Foraging Table. Some barren areas may not support any plant or animal at all; a character cannot successfully forage in a barren area. The result level of the Wilderness Survival Test determines the amount of food found. An Average or Good result finds sufficient food for 1 person for 1 day; an Excellent result for 2 days (or daily food for 2 people); an Extraordinary result finds enough food for 1 person for 3 days (or daily food for 3 people).

Finding food is one thing; working out whether it is safe to eat is another. The Wilderness Survival skill enables characters to distinguish between edible and non-edible plants or animals, tell which parts of a plant or animal can be eaten and properly prepare various plants or the meat from various animals to make them fit for consumption. Identifying or preparing edible plants or animals requires a successful Wilderness Survival (6) Test.

Shelter

Unless characters carry tents or tarps with them, they will need to find or build shelter when traveling through the wild. Natural shelters include caves, rock formations, fallen trees, or anything else that can block the wind and/or offer some sort of protection from the elements. Characters can also make lean-tos or tents. Finding or building a shelter requires a successful Wilderness Survival Test against a Difficulty Number of 6. If the test succeeds, the character finds or builds a shelter that provides adequate protection for himself only from light rain, wind or snow. High winds and severe storms, such as are common in the upper regions of Barsaive's mountain ranges, require sturdier shelter. To find or build suitable shelter in such conditions requires a successful test against a Difficulty Number of 9.

Water

Generally, a Name-giver character requires a minimum of 1 quart of water each day to remain healthy. Unfortunately, not all the water found in the wilderness is safe to drink. Characters should therefore take precautions before drinking from any untested water source. In areas without obvious sources of water, characters must find alternative water sources. This requires a successful Wilderness Survival Test against a Difficulty Number of 7, but can rise as high as a Difficulty Number of 12 in some particularly barren areas. The result level of the Wilderness Survival Test determines the amount of water found. An Average or Good result locates adequate water for 1 person for 1 day; an Excellent result for 2 days (or daily water for 2 people); an Extraordinary result locates adequate water for 1 person for 3 days (or daily water for 3 people).

Once water is found, characters need to ensure that it is safe to drink. For the most part, water from running brooks, streams, or rivers is clean enough for drinking, though characters may wish to purify it just to be safe. Standing water, such as that found in ponds, puddles or even small lakes, is more likely to be tainted than running water, but it is safe more often than not. The most effective method of purifying water is by using the Purify Water spell (see the **Elementalism Spells** chapter, p. 296). This spell can purify even the most polluted, stagnant water. Characters can also purify water by boiling it, which sterilizes water tainted by disease.

Wound Balance

Step Number: Rank + Strength
Default Use: No
Action: No **Strain**: 0

The Wound Balance skill improves a character's ability to resist being knocked down when hurt. It is used as described for **Wound Balance** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 212.

WORKINGS OF MAGIC

Magic is the key to our civilization and the source of our greatest challenge. Without magic, our world would be far more primitive, but at least we wouldn't have faced the Scourge.

• Mestoph, Elven Nethermancer •

Magic is at the heart of the **Earthdawn** game. It is the source of the characters' abilities and it is the Horrors' path to the world. Magic is a part of everyday life in **Earthdawn**. It is used to light villages and towns at night, as well as to battle the remnants of the Horrors. Heroes use magic to become legends, while the Horrors and those who serve them use it to spread their corruption and evil over the world. As the history of Barsaive and the rest of the world unfolds, magic will play a central role.

This chapter describes how magic came to the world, the theory behind how it works, and how characters can manipulate it to their advantage. It describes **astral space**, the parallel realm from which adepts draw their magical power. It also provides information on one type of magic, **blood magic**. Blood magic is a special use of magic that allows characters to strengthen their magic-wielding powers.

Later chapters are devoted to other types of magic: **thread magic,** which allows characters to use the magical treasures scattered across Barsaive; and **spell magic**, which allows characters to shape and power spells by drawing magical energy from astral space to the physical plane; and **enchanting**, which allows characters to create magical items.

One other type of magic, **summoning**, allows characters to summon and interact with spirits and elementals. This type of magic, along with information on spirits, is covered in the **Spirits** chapter on p. 358 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium.**

THE CYCLE OF MAGIC

Over the course of time, the magic level of the world grows and subsides, at times imbuing the denizens of the world with magical abilities, at other times not.

The positive side of this magical cycle is that for periods of up to 5,000 years the world is magically active. On the negative side, the surge of magical energy enables dreadful creatures from astral space to cross into the physical world. These creatures are collectively known as the Horrors. At the peak of the magical cycle, the Horrors cross into the physical world, laying waste to the land in an orgy of destruction known as the Scourge.

Sages across Barsaive theorize that this cresting of the magic cycle has occurred at least one other time in the past, bringing an earlier Scourge. According to the few documents remaining from that time, the level of magic dropped steadily after that Scourge ended, eventually disappearing altogether. Scholars in Barsaive projected that the same thing would happen during the most recent Scourge; the world's magic level would fade, driving the Horrors back to their native astral domain. To their surprise, the Scourge ended earlier than predicted, and instead of steadily ebbing away, the magic level stopped dropping and remained steady.

The magic level has remained stable and relatively high for the past 90 years. Many scholars have devoted their lives to unraveling this mystery. Others believe that the workings of magic and the Universe are beyond our ken, and we shouldn't even attempt to comprehend its deeper ways. Though debate over the ambient magical energy of the world rages on, one thing remains true. The magic level of the world has stabilized, and it is possible that this age of magic will endure for all time.

The following extract is from the Writings of Jaron, *a magical treatise dated 435 TH. Both the Eternal Library of Thera and the Great Library of Throal still consider this work the* definitive *explanation of magic.*

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

MAGIC IN OUR WORLD

When discussing the workings of magic, one must first consider the role that magic plays in our lives. Magic is a part of all things, animate and inanimate. Its energies permeate us and everything around us.

My fellow scholars call this age of powerful, ever-present magic the Age of Magical Thought. They contend that magic is such a fundamental part of our daily existence that it pervades our every thought and action. Building on that principle, they argue that as the magic of our world affects our thoughts and actions, so too do our actions and thoughts affect the magic of our world.

This basic tenet explains the existence of heroes. As those adventuring men and women we call heroes learn to use magic to perform their valiant deeds, their understanding of magic grows. As their understanding of magic grows, they learn to use ever more powerful magics to reach their goals. As ordinary people hear of and admire their deeds as actions worthy of heroes, these heroes continue to behave more like other, legendary heroes. Magic affects our actions and thoughts, and our thoughts and actions affect magic.

The workings of magic in our world are diverse and complex. I endeavor to explain them here to the best of my understanding, in the hope that my attempt leads others to an even greater understanding of magic than my own.

To fully understand the use of magic in our world, it is necessary to explore the theoretical foundation of how magic interacts with the world. Understanding magical theory requires a grasp of six key ideas. These are patterns, True patterns, Names and Name-giving, Pattern Knowledge, pattern items, and threads. The first five apply mostly to heroes using magical treasure. While threads play a part in the use of magical treasure, they are also used by magicians to cast spells. Each of these concepts is described below.

PATTERNS

Our world is alive with magical energy, which is ordered into **patterns**. Every person, place, and thing has a pattern. A pattern can be viewed as a magical blueprint for what the pattern represents (like a builder's plan for a house). Patterns not only reflect physical nature, but metaphysical nature as well—how a person, place, or thing is formed by and interacts with the magical world. Any being that wants to use magical energy to cast spells or use other magical abilities must form a tiny part of magical energy into a pattern. The pattern holds the form of the magical ability, defining its structure and use.

Everything in the world can be connected to magical energy through its pattern. Patterns are static in nature, however. Left to themselves, they do not change over time. A pattern only changes by interacting with the magical energies of the world (and other patterns) in significant ways. When a pattern interacts with magic in an important way, the pattern grows in complexity and power.

True Patterns

As stated above, everything in the world has a pattern, and as a pattern interacts with magic in significant ways, it grows in power and complexity. If the magical interaction is significant enough, it creates a **True pattern**.

In contrast to common patterns, a True pattern identifies an entity, place, or object as a unique individual, separate from others of its type. This is most easily demonstrated using people as an example. My brother and I are both dwarfs, but each of us is a unique individual with our own knowledge, mind, and spirit; each of us has a unique True pattern. Each True pattern represents only one specific person, place, or thing. Likewise, each person, place, or thing can have only one True pattern.

A person's True pattern defines his abilities, talents, skills, knowledge, psychology, and history. The same holds true for places and things; everything that defines that place or thing from the moment of its creation up to the present moment is woven into its True pattern.

A True pattern also defines everything magically important about the individual; what the individual has done or can do that is important to magic, and what magic has done or can do that is important to the individual. In brief, the True pattern of a person, place, or thing is the sum total of its interactions with magic.

Because True patterns represent things that interact with magic, they are dynamic, changing as they continue to interact with the magical energies of the world.

Names and Naming

The difference between patterns and True patterns is largely a matter of degree, but one thing that all True patterns have that common patterns do not is a **Name**.

You may have a name for the stand of common trees behind your house such as "the grove" or "those trees out back," but there is nothing magically important about those trees. The stand has its own pattern and like everything else in the world is inherently magical, but the inherent magic is so weak you do not notice it.

Giving something a Name (called **Naming**) focuses the world's magical forces into a True pattern. From that moment on the Named person, place, or thing is magically important in the world. Naming only occurs in conjunction with the interaction of magic and a person, place, or thing.

This magic can be introduced deliberately with a ritual (such as a child's coming-of-age Naming ritual), or introduced accidentally. The use of powerful magic near a person, place, or thing might also spontaneously Name something.

Returning to the grove of trees behind your home, let's say that one terrible night a pack of gate hounds chases the wounded hero Samaran into that grove of trees. There, despite all the courage, strength, and magic he can muster, Samaran is slain. The death of a great hero is a sufficiently powerful event to focus the forces of magic and give the nameless grove of trees a Name. The no-longer-ordinary stand of trees becomes Samaran's Demise. It now has a Name, and therefore a True pattern.

The following information describes those things most likely to be Named.

People

As intelligent, aware beings who are Name-givers, people must always have a Name. After all, how can one give a Name without having one? By definition, all Name-givers have Names.

People can be Named, and re-Named, at various stages of their lives. In many cultures Naming occurs just after birth, usually as part of a spiritual ritual. Some cultures allow a child to choose a new Name upon reaching majority, including such Naming in a coming-of-age ceremony. In other cultures, a person can choose to be re-Named at any time as a symbol of a new beginning or a new stage of life.

Naming a person forms his True pattern. If that person is re-Named, his True pattern changes; the power of the magical energy focused on him alters much of what he previously was. This change is more than symbolic because, as described above, a person's True pattern defines his interactions with magic, including any magical talents he may have. If the True pattern changes, those abilities disappear. The person may also lose the teachings of his chosen Discipline, as well as any special abilities or protection it brought him. The re-Named person can begin again, and learn an entirely new Discipline (or relearn the old one) but who and what the person was is gone. He has a new Name, and has become a new person.

Because re-Naming changes virtually everything about the person, very few people choose to be re-Named. More often, people take on nicknames, monikers, and the like. While these additional titles help shape and define a person's True pattern, they do not truly re-Name the person.

Legends tell of spells and abilities that allow people to be re-Named without losing what they were, but these remain merely tales.

Places

A place is usually Named for its association with an important event or powerful magic. Many cultures have specific Named places for birth and death (usually different places, but not always) to keep from having scores of individually Named places scattered all over town serving the same purpose.

The site of a major battle might be Named, as might the place of a subsequent surrender or treaty signing. A husband and wife might Name the place where they first met. The site of weddings is often Named, for the same reasons as the places of birth and death.

A place where people regularly work powerful magic is often Named. The Naming of such a place contributes to its power, making any magical workings there even stronger. A magician often Names his inner sanctum or workplace for this reason.

Places where powerful magic was used, even if only once, can also be Named, though they rarely are. Such a place might be the site of a great battle fought with magic or simply the spot on which a magician stood to cast a high-level spell. Typically only the highest-ranked spells (Fourteenth or Fifteenth Circle) are powerful enough to create a Name, and only dragons and very powerful magicians can cast them.

A great temptation exists to Name places in honor of a powerful individual or creature. Such Naming is discouraged because Naming a place for its association to a person builds an echo of that individual's True pattern into the True pattern of the place. Knowledgeable magicians or adepts can use this association to gain insight into the individual's True pattern, and use that insight to gain an advantage over the individual.

Things

Important items and objects are commonly Named when created. Creation of many magical items demands a Name, since Naming focuses the magical forces to create the item's True pattern. Without its Name, the legendary weapon Fireheart would be a simple broadsword, and Ork-Cleaver nothing more than a well-made dwarf axe.

Non-magical items can also be Named, usually by a person who wants to link personal items more strongly to himself. For example, an ordinary person aspiring to become a Warrior might Name his weapon. This is a heroic thing to do, and the self-confidence such an act would inspire might spur the person to perform

heroic deeds. As with places, this kind of Naming also poses a disadvantage; the item becomes associated with the individual, and that association can be taken advantage of.

PATTERN KNOWLEDGE

As previously mentioned, a True pattern defines everything about the history and magical interactions of a person, place, or thing. This information is known as the **Pattern Knowledge**, and consists of three basic, intertwined parts:

- The Name associated with the pattern, usually what we would refer to as a proper noun.
- A history of that pattern; its interactions with magic, significant events, and important behaviors.
- Rules or ways in which the pattern uses, is affected by, or interacts with magic.

The Pattern Knowledge of a True pattern is made up of **Key Knowledges**. Each Key Knowledge represents one specific piece of information about the True pattern. Together, all the Key Knowledges of a True pattern form its Pattern Knowledge. Only rarely can the entire Pattern Knowledge of a True pattern be learned; most True patterns have too many Key Knowledges to be learned in the course of a single lifetime.

The Name of a True pattern is always one of the Key Knowledges, but otherwise Key Knowledges can take many forms. For example, the Key Knowledges of a certain place might include the Name of the last person to die in that place, the date the place was built, or the winner of a battle fought there. The Key Knowledges of a person might include his place of birth, his strong hatred for another person, or the Name of his favorite weapon.

PATTERN ITEMS

People and places with True patterns may become associated with items that reflect the knowledge stored in their patterns. Usually, these are personal possessions or items directly associated with the person or place. These items are called **pattern items**. Objects cannot have pattern items associated with their True pattern; an object is its own pattern item.

Troubadours sing many stories of unusual pattern items, items that seem to have little connection with the person or place they represent. Troubadours sing about these items because they are the exception rather than the rule. Most pattern items are common, familiar objects transformed because of their importance to a person or place.

Proximity to or association with a True pattern is what infuses an item with the magic making it a pattern item. Because the vagaries of magic are responsible, a magician or adept rarely controls which items become pattern items.

Magical study and examination of the pattern item yields insights into the True pattern that influenced it. Think of a pattern item as a window through which the True pattern is viewed. Though restricted, such a view can enable a magician or adept to grasp the Key Knowledges of a True pattern.

Because a pattern item contains a bit of a True pattern's Pattern Knowledge, anyone trying to affect the True pattern must have a pattern item. The pattern item serves as a material source of Key Knowledge, and as a connection to the True pattern.

There are three classes of pattern items: Minor, Major, and Core pattern items. Each is described below.

Minor Pattern Items

The weakest of the three types, **Minor pattern items** are also the most difficult to use because their link to the True pattern is so tenuous. A Minor pattern item has no distinctive physical appearance. The proper magical inquiry will reveal its magical nature, but it has no increased resistance to damage or any other special properties.

Minor pattern items are almost always created spontaneously by the whims of magic. These objects gain magical power through constant proximity to the use of magic. They often seem to be peripheral elements; personal possessions, minor features of a place, and so on. A magician's walking stick might become a Minor pattern item, as might a stone from a tavern where a questor of Garlen regularly performs healing for travelers and townsfolk. Minor pattern items tend to be physically important to the person or place, but rarely have any other importance.

Major Pattern Items

Major pattern items have a stronger connection to the True pattern. The stronger, more direct magical link between the True pattern and the pattern item makes them easier to use to gain knowledge about the True pattern. Major pattern items are also more resistant to damage than that same item would be if it lacked magical energy. For example, books serving as pattern items might singe but not burn, or vials might only crack under conditions that would normally shatter them. Though it takes more effort to destroy them, Major pattern items are not indestructible.

Major pattern items are almost always deliberately created. They rarely occur spontaneously, and only then in connection with significant events or magics. A Minor pattern item can become a Major pattern item if it gains greater significance in relation to its True pattern. This only happens if the Minor pattern item has existed for at least one season (three months) prior to the transformation and has remained in contact with or in proximity to the True pattern.

Major pattern items are almost always items of psychological importance to the person or place; a favorite weapon, a coat of arms signifying a great hall, and so on.

Core Pattern Items

Core pattern items have the strongest connection to the True pattern. Like Major pattern items, they are rarely created spontaneously, but their creation invariably marks a significant

event or turning point in the life of the person or place. Magical energy is most concentrated in Core pattern items, and they prove the most easily and effectively used for accessing a Key Knowledge of the True pattern.

Core pattern items are as durable as Major pattern items, with two additional magical advantages. The first is the aura of luck that seems to surround them. If it is possible to save a Core pattern item from destruction, events often seem to arrange themselves in a way that saves the item.

As its second advantage, if a Core pattern item is destroyed, the True pattern it reflects will act upon the magical energies in the world to recreate the item. Recreating the item takes anywhere from a few days to a year and a day (averaging three to seven months). A Core pattern item may appear anywhere after the magical world recreates it.

Major pattern items can transform into Core pattern items, but only if the item continually grows in importance to the person or place and has existed for at least a year and a day. Core pattern items have intrinsic spiritual significance for the person or place, representing who or what they are in almost every respect. For example, a king's crown could be a Core pattern item for the king to whom it belongs.

Threads

The magical energy flowing through our world can be separated into strands called **threads**. Threads can be woven into an existing pattern, whether the pattern of a spell, magical item, or ability, to power and strengthen that pattern. The magical energy fed into the pattern through the woven thread enhances the pattern and increases its potential.

Magicians use threads to supply the power needed for their more complex spells. Adepts also use threads to activate magical items' special powers and capabilities. In this case, knowledge of an item's history—its Pattern Knowledge—is key to the actual weaving of the threads. Without that knowledge, an adept cannot weave the thread that will give the item power, and the item remains inert. The use of threads in this manner, giving power to complex spells and magical items, is called **thread magic**.

Threads are created from the magical energies of astral space using the mystical talent of thread weaving. Each magical Discipline has its own variation of this talent that reflects the unique nature of that Discipline.

Each talent a hero possesses has a pattern that is part of his True pattern. As the hero becomes more experienced or more legendary, he weaves more threads to the talent, increasing that talent's potential. As each talent pattern is strengthened, the hero's True pattern becomes stronger and more durable.

Astral Space

Any discussion of magic must include an explanation of **astral space**. Astral space is a limitless region that coexists with the physical world. Though both realms exist on different planes, the astral and physical worlds are intricately connected and interdependent; neither could exist without the other. The biggest difference between the way our world looks to us and the way it appears astrally is that, when viewed from astral space, we perceive the glow emanating from all living beings—a glow that represents their life energy. Living beings include not only people and animals, but also plant life, elemental air, earth, fire, water, and wood, and the magical energy of the world itself.

At the same time that the dimension of astral space mirrors the physical world, the astral realm functions as a world unto itself, subject to its own laws of reality. As a result of its paradoxical nature, astral space remains the source of much conjecture and speculation among even the most knowledgeable scholars and magicians across Barsaive and the Theran Empire.

Astral space also serves as a gateway between the physical world, the netherworlds, and the elemental planes. It is the cosmic fabric that binds together all worlds, and the medium through which magical energies travel. Whether astral space is the actual source of that power or simply a conduit for magical energy is only one of the countless mysteries that the astral realm continues to hold for Name-givers.

The people and creatures who use magic do so by drawing energy from astral space into the physical world. In order to do this, however, they must be able to perceive astral space, an ability known as **astral perception**. Only through astral perception can magical energy be manipulated, as magical energy is only visible in astral space. All the talents available to characters in **Earthdawn** are magical in nature and allow adepts to perceive and manipulate magical energy.

The Nature of Astral Space

Astral space has no native landscape of its own. It has no ground or sky, and no source of illumination such as the sun. Without its ties to Barsaive and the rest of the physical world, astral space would appear as a limitless void of inky black. It would contain nothing to see, nothing to hear, nothing to feel. Any being appearing within this void would be lost in an ocean of darkness. The interdependence of the astral and physical worlds, however, provides the astral realm with features that mirror the features of the physical realm. Every location in astral space directly corresponds with some physical location, because everything in the physical world possesses an astral imprint that reflects the physical object's pattern. In other words, astral space is like a giant mirror held up to the physical world. Though astral space does contain some apparently featureless areas where the void—known as the deep astral or high astral—seems to exist, these areas are simply the astral imprints of extremely bleak physical locations.

There is another effect of the interconnection of the physical and astral worlds. During the approximately 400 years of time known as the Scourge, the Horrors roamed the physical world, leaving it ravaged and scarred, populated by twisted creatures, and a pale reflection of its former splendor. Because the astral world is a reflection of the physical world, the harm the Horrors did to the physical plane was reflected in astral space. Because the Horrors are astral in nature, they also damaged the fabric of astral space itself.

While every living thing and inanimate object that exists within physical reality possesses an astral counterpart, astral space contains objects and living things that exist only within astral space itself, with no physical representations. Indeed, some parts of astral space—specifically the various realms known collectively as the netherworlds—seem to exist outside the "standard" astral/physical continuum and contain features that have no counterparts in the physical world.

The Astral Landscape

On viewing (or entering) astral space, an adept sees the astral imprints of all the people, physical objects and creatures that lie within his sight. In addition, the adept sees astral creatures, such as spirits and Horrors, and any other astral patterns. These astral imprints, creatures and patterns comprise the astral landscape.

Other features of the astral landscape include the ever-present tufts and swirls of astral energy and the areas of magical corruption left by the Horrors. Astral energy rarely impedes a character's movement or perception. It usually appears as lightly shimmering wisps eddying in and around everything. Occasionally, a bit of energy swirls together, forms a spell pattern and is unleashed moments later. This phenomenon is created when magicians cast spells (for more information, see **Observing Spellcasting** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 286).

In contrast, the magical corruption present in astral space, one of the more devastating after-effects of the Scourge, may seriously affect astral explorers. This pollution may obscure a Name-giver's vision and perception, cause him damage and impede his magical abilities. For rules on these effects, see **Astral Regions**, p. 256. The nature of the astral landscape precludes physical beings (including Name-givers) from using their senses of smell, taste and touch.

Astral and Physical Forms

All Name-givers, creatures, living things and inanimate objects exist in either astral or physical form. The only exceptions to this rule are dual-natured Horrors, which simultaneously exist in both physical and astral forms. In fact, the physical and astral bodies of a dual-natured Horror can actually work independently of one another, though most are connected in some way. This dual nature makes such entities extremely powerful and especially difficult to kill, because it enables most of them to forge new physical bodies to replace destroyed ones and create new astral forms by simply entering astral space.

A specific subject's place of origin (physical world or astral plane) most often determines whether it possesses a physical or astral form. Normally, physical beings cannot directly affect or interact with objects or beings in astral space, though some spells and certain magical powers allow them to do so. Likewise, astral beings cannot normally interact with objects or beings in the physical world without the use of magic spells or powers. Because Name-givers rarely enter astral space, most everything and everyone characters are likely to encounter in **Earthdawn** possess physical forms.

The forms of creatures and objects can be changed from astral to physical or from physical to astral. When a character from the physical world enters astral space, his physical form merges with his astral imprint to create an astral form. When the character returns to the physical world, he reverts to his physical form—which is mirrored by his astral imprint, since all things in the physical world are reflected in the astral. This means that physical objects can be taken into astral space, just as creatures from astral space can enter the physical world. This also means that physical objects and beings can be left in astral space (perhaps the perfect hiding place), and astral objects or beings can be trapped in the physical world.

Subjects are usually identified by their current forms. The term **physical beings** is used to denote both naturally physical beings such as Name-givers as well as astral creatures that have assumed physical forms, such as manifested spirits. Likewise, the term **astral beings** is used to denote native denizens of astral space as well as Name-givers that have assumed astral forms.

Astral Imprints

There are two distinct types of astral imprints: those of inanimate objects, and those of living beings and magical items. The magical energy of living beings and magical items provide their astral imprints with considerably more substance than those of inanimate objects. Inanimate astral imprints typically possess form but no true substance. The astral imprint of a book can be seen, but the pages of the imprint cannot be turned. An adept may look through the astral imprint of a window, but not the imprints of opaque physical objects. The astral imprints of walls, dead trees, or any non-magical objects created by Name-givers appear nearly identical to their physical counterparts. Though an astral imprint resembles the physical object that produces it, most astral imprints appear nearly colorless and tend to blend into a dull mass when viewed by a casual observer.

Because the astral imprints of inanimate physical objects are insubstantial, astral beings (including Name-givers in astral space) can pass through most of them. However, the sensation of passing through the astral imprint of solid matter (or at least what a character recognizes as solid matter) is very disconcerting and confusing to most Name-givers. For this reason, most Name-givers in astral space prefer to walk around imprints of solid obstacles rather than through them. To reflect this disorientation, any Name-giver who passes through an astral imprint of solid matter suffers a –2 penalty to all Action Tests he makes within two minutes of passing through the imprint. Spirits, Horrors and other astral entities do not suffer this penalty.

In contrast to the dull, insubstantial imprints of inanimate objects, the astral imprints of living things, such as plants, animals and Name-givers, displays a distinctive aura. These auras glow with an ethereal nature and give living imprints vivid appearances. The imprints of Name-givers display particularly strong auras because of the intricate details of their True patterns. The imprint of the earth produces an aura as well, because the entire world is a living entity. It produces a fairly constant glow that resembles twilight. This aura provides light in almost all areas of astral space, except in areas completely enclosed by the astral imprints of inanimate matter.

The imprints of living things also possess substance. Since they are "solid," astral beings cannot pass through them. Because the earth also has a living imprint, astral beings cannot penetrate through ground level in astral space. They may pass through the imprints of freestanding rocks or cobblestone roads, and may even venture below ground through caves, tunnels, or mine shafts where the living earth has been removed. The imprint of the earth itself, however, blocks their passage. This was one of the main reasons that so many Name-givers built their kaers below ground. The surrounding earth created a solid imprint that served as a barrier in astral space. This earth, further protected by wards and elemental earth, created astral barriers that saved hundreds of thousands of Name-givers from the Horrors even during the worst of the Scourge. In the same manner, obsidimen were protected from the Scourge by their Liferocks, living stones that also reflect a living astral imprint.

Magical items and spells also produce vibrant, "living" astral imprints. All magical items are created by directly investing them with magical energy, and so they create astral imprints with auras and substance. Spells reflect living astral imprints in the same way. Most spell imprints take on shapes that reflect their functions. Pattern items also possess living imprints, because they contain parts of True patterns and are invested with magical energy.

Because of the nature of astral imprints, it is relatively easy to determine whether an item is "magical"—if it displays a living

aura, it is magical. The aura does not usually give any clue as to the nature of that magic, only that magic is present in some form. To learn about the nature of the magic, you must study its pattern. This process is described later, under **Astral Sensing**.

True to Form

Because a living thing's astral imprint reflects its pattern, the astral imprint naturally resembles the thing's truest form. While they have no effect on a living being's pattern, illusory spells or abilities mask both the being's physical form and astral imprint until Sensed or Disbelived (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions** in the **Illusionism Spells** chapter, p. 322) or their effect expires.

Generally, only two situations produce discrepancies between the true physical appearance and the astral imprint of a living being. The first is a radical change in the being's physical form, such as the loss of a limb. In such cases, the astral imprint will simultaneously reflect the change and the being's original appearance. For example, the imprint might retain a ethereal, ghostlike vestige of the amputated limb.

The second situation occurs when a thing or being's pattern is directly altered. In this case, the subject's astral imprint and its physical appearance would reflect the change in its pattern. In such a scenario, the being's astral imprint would become a blurred combination of the altered and original imprint, forcing any viewer to focus on one or the other. Altering the pattern of a living thing requires extremely powerful magic.

The astral imprint of a living being's pattern often offers clues to the nature of the person. The more magic a person uses, the more complex his pattern, and the more significant his astral imprint will be. The astral imprint of a farmer who uses half-magic to increase his yields and care for his land will be more complex than the pattern of a merchant who uses no magic at all. The pattern of a multiple-Discipline adept will show greater interweaving and denser latticework effects than the astral imprint of a single-Discipline adept's pattern.

Astral Regions

The corruption of astral space significantly handicaps magicians and astral travelers. Magicians who cast raw magic in corrupted regions of astral space risk injury or even death, fates that also threaten astral travelers and beings who move through such areas.

The mere sight of these corrupted areas proves blood-curdling to most astral beings because looking at these Horror-tainted regions is tantamount to gazing into madness. The astral landscape of these regions appears physically warped—stretched and smeared as if reality were no more than a delicate painting that a Horror could transform with the wipe of a bloody hand.

In game terms, astral regions fall into four classifications: Safe, Open, Tainted and Corrupt.

Safe regions are areas of astral space untouched by Horrors. Only areas surrounding unbreached kaers are considered Safe. Astral beings who pass through Safe areas suffer no ill effects. Additionally, Horrors tend to avoid Safe regions, a phenomenon that suggests the powers of Horrors may be weaker in these areas.

Open regions correspond to areas in the physical world where Horrors simply passed through or performed only minor magic. The scant attention these Horrors paid to the area or the small amount of torment they caused only slightly warped the astral landscape in these regions. Typically, the astral landscapes of Open regions appear creased and wrinkled, like a sketch crumpled and only partially smoothed out. Most of astral space is comprised of Open regions.

Tainted regions correspond to places where the Horrors caused great suffering and torment. As a result, large clouds of poisoned astral energies pollute these regions, and the landscapes are twisted and warped almost beyond recognition.

Corrupt regions are the most dangerous regions of astral space. These areas correspond to the places where Horrors committed terrible atrocities, possibly scarring the astral landscape forever. Dark and violent emotions emanate from these areas in overwhelming surges.

The foul energies in Corrupt regions may corrupt the use of magic by an adept. Spells may affect characters other than their targets, the spellcaster may suffer Warping damage, and so on (for more information on Warping damage, see the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 289). The gamemaster determines the exact effect of magical corruption, which can occur whenever an adept achieves an Average or worse result on magical tests in a Corrupt region.

> *The Warrior Jefro is walking through the astral space corresponding to Parlainth (most definitely a Corrupt region) when he encounters a Horror, which he decides to smite using his Melee Weapons talent. Jefro makes his Attack Test against the Horror's Physical Defense of 12 and achieves a result of 14—an Average result. The attack hits the Horror, but Jefro suffers Warping damage. If Jefro's Attack Test had yielded a Good result, he would have avoided any negative effects of using his magically powered talent in the Corrupt region.*

A Corrupt region almost invariably indicates the presence of a Horror lurking nearby that is likely to notice any use of magic in the area. If the gamemaster chooses, whenever an adept uses a talent or magical ability (including spending Karma Points) in a Corrupt region of astral space, the gamemaster may make a Perception Test for any nearby Horrors against the adept's Spell Defense (subject to the normal modifiers for astral perception). If the test succeeds, the Horror notices the use of magic and investigates.

Effects of Astral Corruption on Astral Sensing

Astral corruption obscures astral sensing. When a character makes an Astral Sensing Test (as described on p. 257), the Difficulty Number is modified based on the level of astral corruption present, as shown on the Astral Sensing Table.

ASTRAL SENSING TABLE

Region Type	Difficulty Modifier
Safe	NA
Open	+2
Tainted	+5
Corrupt	+12

Astral Sensing

Astral perception can be a dangerous activity. To fully perceive astral space, a character (or being) must concentrate on forming an image of himself in astral space. This astral form can be noticed by creatures who inhabit astral space, as well as by others actively perceiving astral space, making the character vulnerable to astral attacks.

In addition, the polluted nature of astral space is a very unnerving sight for most viewers, and magicians perceiving astral space can become disoriented quickly. Many tales tell of those who attempted to view astral space directly and ended up either insane or dead at the hands of the Horrors. The presence of the Horrors alone discourages most characters from even attempting astral perception. Fortunately, the talents, spells, and abilities characters use provide a limited type of astral perception called **astral sensing**. Astral sensing allows a viewer to sense the magical energies and astral imprints of people, places, and things present in astral space, but does not force him to see astral space itself. Most adepts—especially those who follow the magician Disciplines—use astral sensing, and it often provides an adept with his first glance into astral space.

Astral sensing can be performed using one of four methods: the windling Astral-Sensitive Sight racial ability; the Astral Sight talent; the Astral Sense spell; and Thread Sight, a limited form of astral sight granted by the Thread Weaving talent. These methods provide varying degrees of detail when viewing astral space. Specific rules for using each of these methods are provided below.

Using Astral Sensing

Astral sensing is used to detect the astral imprints of spell effects, wards, astral creatures, magical items, even people and animals. Astral sensing enables an adept to determine if a given object is magical, and may help the character discover information about the nature of a subject by closely studying its magical pattern.

Note that studying a magic item with astral sensing is different from studying it to learn Key Knowledges. Adepts must use the Item History and Weapon History talents (see the **Talents** chapter, p. 211), or the Thread Sight ability (see **Thread Sight**, p. 259) to learn a pattern's Key Knowledges. For more information on learning Key Knowledges, see the **Thread Magic** chapter, p. 264.

The first stage of astral sensing is to successfully perceive astral space and the imprints of nearby objects. The character makes an Astral Sensing (6) Test—the Spell Defense of astral space. This base difficulty is modified by the classification of astral space, as shown in the Astral Sensing Table. If the test succeeds, the character sees the astral imprint of everything within the range of the astral sensing ability being used. The character can tell whether the imprint is a magical or mundane object, and can also determine the classification of astral space in the area. If the test fails to beat the modified target number, but still exceeds the base target Difficulty Number of 6, the character knows that the failure was because of astral interference or corruption.

Non-magical or non-living objects only partially obscure the imprints of objects behind them, due to their insubstantial nature. If the character achieves a Good result on his initial Astral Sensing Test, he can sense the imprint of an object that would otherwise be obscured.

> *While searching the ruins of an old kaer, the elven Nethermancer Mestoph finds a small secret door. Mestoph has already encountered numerous traps while exploring this kaer, so he decides to use astral sensing to check for any magical traps protecting the door. The player makes an Astral Sight Test with a result of 13—an Excellent result against a Difficulty Number of 6, the Spell Defense of astral space. Mestoph successfully perceives astral space and the imprint of the door. He also notices that there is no corruption—astral space in the kaer is "safe." There are no magical imprints in astral space at the door, but he does detect the imprint of a small magical presence behind the door with his Excellent result.*

While detecting the astral imprints of nearby objects is generally sufficient, sometimes an adept wishes to study an object's pattern in greater detail. To do this, he makes a second Astral Sensing test against the Spell Defense of the object. A successful result means the character can see the object's pattern, and may learn things about the subject based on what he sees.

The character may examine the pattern more closely by making additional Astral Sensing Tests. Each test must yield a higher result than the previous test to provide more detail. If any subsequent test fails to equal or exceed the target's Spell Defense, the character has lost sight of the pattern and must start over.

Astral sensing abilities do not normally enable an adept to detect the imprints or patterns of subjects hidden behind or within other magical objects (such as enchanted chests). To detect a subject hidden in this manner, the adept must achieve an Excellent result or better on an Astral Sensing Test against the masking object's Spell Defense.

> *After opening the secret door, Mestoph discovers a cubby hole that contains a small chest, which Mestoph concludes is the source of the magical presence. He picks up the chest and hears something small shift about inside, suggesting that the chest holds some valuable and perhaps even magical item. Unfortunately, the chest is magically sealed, so Mestoph decides to make a second Astral Sensing Test to try and see what is inside. The test yields a 22, an Average result against the chest's Spell Defense of 20. Mestoph can see the pattern of the magical seal on the chest, but fails to learn anything about the object inside. If the test result was 34 or higher—an Excellent result—he would have seen the astral imprint of the object inside.*

In all cases of astral sensing through another object, success only allows the adept to sense the astral *imprint* of the hidden object. The adept cannnot examine the object's pattern—the masking pattern interferes with in-depth examination.

Patterns in Astral Space

Adepts may encounter several types of magical patterns during their adventures. Living creatures such as Name-givers and Horrors, magical items, and spells and other magical abilities (including dragon or Horror powers) all possess different types of patterns. Each type of pattern appears slightly different from the others, just as each individual pattern differs from others of the same type. These types of patterns only obscure astral sensing of other imprints and patterns if they are specifically designed to do so.

When viewed astrally, the pattern of any living subject—adept, creature, or non-adept Name-giver—appears in the same form as the subject's astral imprint. The imprint is roughly the same size and shape as the subject. A subject's pattern, however is much more complex and provides much more information about the subject. For example, an adept's astral imprint is the same size and shape as the adept, has a glowing presence that swirls around the imprint, but provides no other information about the adept. On the other hand, the adept's pattern might show the adept's Discipline, any threads woven to the adept's pattern, and signs of injury or blood magic use.

While the patterns of most Name-givers and creatures occupy the entire astral imprints of their subjects, the pattern of a magical item may occupy only a small portion of the item's imprint. This phenomenon usually results from the method used to enchant the item. The astral imprint of a magical sword, for example, will

be shaped like a sword, but its pattern may occupy only the hilt of the imprint.

Spells and other magical abilities produce the most unusual type of patterns. (As it is used here, the term "magical abilities" includes talents, dragon and Horror powers, and unusual magical effects such as the corruption of the Blood Wood and the existence of life within the Poison Forest.) Patterns produced by these magical abilities most often resemble clouds of magical energy that encompass the spell or ability's area of effect and represent its effect. For example, the pattern of a Chilling Circle spell would appear as a cloud of astral energy that radiates out 5 yards from the magician who cast the spell. The pattern of a Mind Dagger spell might appear as a dagger of astral energy that flies from the caster to the target.

Astral sensing allows adepts to view the patterns of spells cast during combat, but most adepts use it to detect and study the patterns of extended-duration spell effects, such as those produced by magical traps or wards. The patterns of these magical effects usually appear as small pockets of astral energy. Close examination of such a pattern may reveal its effect, the type of spell, its Circle, or even clues about the magician who cast the spell.

When using an astral sensing ability to study the pattern of a spell, the adept makes an Astral Sensing Test against the spell's Spell Defense, which is the same as the spell's Dispel Difficulty.

The gamemaster determines the specific details of a subject's pattern, based on the subject's nature. He also determines what information a character can learn from studying a subject's pattern, based on the result of the Astral Sense test.

Astral Sensing Methods

To illustrate the differences between each of the four astral sensing methods—windling Astral-Sensitive Sight, the Astral Sight talent, the Astral Sense spell, and Thread Sight—each of the following sections includes an example of an adept using one of the methods to examine the same magical item: an enchanted dagger that contains a small shard of orichalcum in its pommel. The orichalcum shard is from the ruins of Kaer Jalendale, where Lorm the troll (the wielder of Lorm's Axe) died. This orichalcum shard, now used to power the dagger, possesses great magical power and also traces of the corruptive powers of the Horror that claimed Kaer Jalendale.

Astral-Sensitive Sight

Astral-Sensitive Sight allows windlings (as well as dragons and Horrors) to look into astral space from the physical world and view the astral imprints of nearby subjects. The ability also enables windlings to view astral patterns with great precision, giving them a significant advantage over other magicians and scholars, who must resort to other techniques for studying astral space.

Astral-Sensitive Sight has a maximum range of 10 yards. The step number for Astral Sensing Tests made with Astral-Sensitive Sight is the character's Perception step. If the character's Discipline allows, he may use Karma on the test. Astral-Sensitive Sight cannot be augmented by any other means.

The precision and clarity of Astral-Sensitive Sight offers ample compensation for its limited range and power. Other astral sensing abilities may enable an adept to detect and observe subjects with higher Spell Defense ratings, but Astral-Sensitive Sight is more sensitive and will usually reveal more details of a subject's pattern. For example, details that would normally be visible on an Excellent result may be visible to Astral-Sensitive sight on an Average result. The gamemaster determines the specific benefits of Astral-Sensitive Sight, based on the needs of his game.

Bryn decides to use his Astral-Sensitive Sight to study the enchanted dagger, so he makes a Perception Test. The test yields a result of 18, more than enough to sense the dagger's imprint. Bryn first sees the dagger's astral imprint, which follows the exact same proportions as the dagger itself. At the far end of the dagger's hilt lies the blade's pattern, a glowing diamond-shaped aura of astral energy trapped within the orichalcum shard. The diamond's border seems to be formed of teeth that shift in their places as if loose in a creature's mouth. Within the diamond's border, storm clouds twist and bend, breathing out red streamers reminiscent of winds. Four lightning bolts snake inward from each point on the diamond to form a cross at its center. Each quadrant of the diamond contains different features. Bryn is drawn to one of the quadrants, where the cloud streamers meld into a writhing mass of thorny vines. In the center of the diamond lies a small point of blackness, roiling with a raw power that bleeds out into each quadrant.

Astral Sight Talent

Like Astral-Sensitive Sight, the **Astral Sight** talent enables characters to look into astral space and directly view astral imprints and patterns. Though not as precise as Astral-Sensitive Sight, the Astral Sight talent is perhaps the best overall method of astral sensing available in **Earthdawn**. The talent enables adepts to view the patterns of subjects with high Spell Defense ratings and detect considerable detail in a pattern. In addition, because Astral Sight is a talent, a character may improve his Astral Sight rank over time, which allows him to detect more obscure magical patterns.

Of course, the Astral Sight talent is not without its drawbacks. First, an adept takes 1 Strain Point of damage each time he uses the talent. The effect of the talent lasts for a number of rounds equal to the character's Astral Sight rank. As a result, using the talent for extended examinations of magical patterns can be quite taxing. After detecting a pattern, an adept can make subsequent Astral Sight Tests to see more details in the pattern, as described above under **Using Astral Sensing**. These tests do not cause the character additional Strain if they are performed during the talent's duration. When the duration expires, or if any of the subsequent tests fail to equal or exceed the subject's Spell Defense, the character loses sight of the pattern and must make a new Astral Sight Test to redetect the pattern, taking 1 Strain Point in the process.

During his initial astral examination of the dagger, Mestoph sees the orichalcum shard in the dagger's astral imprint and realizes that it contains the dagger's pattern. Mestoph then makes another Astral Sight Test to study the pattern. The test yields a result of 19, a Good result. Mestoph sees the form of a diamond, which contains storm clouds seemingly made up of faces, all twisted in pain. The diamond's border is lined with teeth that seem to bleed a dark, evil-looking green substance that pools into a disk shape at the lower end of the diamond. At the diamond's opposite end, several teeth enlarge and extend outward in a row of spikes. Small human forms, writhing in agony, are trapped between each pair of teeth.

Astral Sense Spell

The **Astral Sense** spell enables an adept to detect and study magical presences in astral space. While the spell has a range of 60 yards and a duration of 10 or more minutes, the view of the subject's pattern the spell provides is not as effective for studying patterns as either Astral-Sensitive Sight or the Astral Sight talent. Adepts using Astral-Sensitive Sight and the Astral Sight talent actually see the item's astral imprint and pattern. The Astral Sense spell puts an image of the imprint and pattern in their minds. Because the information is essentially second-hand, like seeing a photograph rather than the object itself, certain details simply cannot be discerned.

To detect astral patterns with the Astral Sense spell, an adept makes a Spellcasting (6) Test—the Spell Defense of astral space.

If successful, the adept makes an Effect Test, detecting the pattern of one creature, object or magical effect with a Spell Defense no greater than the Effect Test result. Only one pattern may be detected per Effect Test, which means that an adept must make several Effect Tests to detect all the patterns within range of the spell. Once a pattern has been detected, the adept can focus the spell on that pattern, making subsequent Effect Tests to see more detail. As described above under **Using Astral Sensing**, each test must yield a higher result than the previous test to provide more detail.

For more information on the Astral Sense spell, see the **Wizardry Spells** chapter, p. 374.

Ardiss Foarr uses the Astral Sense spell to study the dagger. He successfully casts the spell, and after a few moments of scanning the area he sense the dagger's pattern with an Effect Test of 13, an Average result. The dagger's pattern, emanating from the orichalcum shard in the blade's pommel, appears to him as a simple diamond shape, long and slender, with a cross set into its interior. The boundaries of the diamond are made up of jagged teeth of various shapes and sizes, shiny ebony daggers tinged with green. He sees four eerie, green lightning bolts snaking inward from each point on the diamond and forming a cross and a dark point in the diamond's center. The diamond's quadrants are filled with dark storm clouds, as well as lines that Ardiss believes might represent high winds.

Thread Sight

Adepts receive **Thread Sight** along with the Thread Weaving talent (p. 207). Generally, characters use Thread Sight to see the patterns of items in order to weave threads to them. Like the Astral Sense spell, Thread Sight gives the user a mental picture of the pattern, but with even less precision. Thread Sight does not allow an adept to see detail in or glean information from a pattern. It simply allows an adept to sense enough of the pattern to weave threads to it. Using Thread Sight in this manner does not require a separate test—it takes place as part of the adept's Thread Weaving Test. Thread Sight cannot be used to sense the magical patterns of creatures, Name-givers, or other magical auras.

Confident that it is safe to use the dagger, Ardiss Foarr decides to weave a Rank 1 thread to its pattern. Ardiss has already learned the Key Knowledge required, so he simply makes a Thread Weaving Test against the dagger's Weaving Difficulty. As he does so, an image of the dagger's pattern forms in his mind. Using his Thread Sight, Ardiss sees the pattern's simple diamond shape, long and slender, with a cross in its center.

Blood Magic

Blood magic is a special type of magic that draws its power from small sacrifices, usually a small amount of blood. The sacrifice is represented by the character taking (sacrificing) a few Damage Points to strengthen the magic of a talent, ability, or promise.

Blood magic offers a vivid reminder of the torments people inflicted on themselves in the days before and during the Scourge. As a result, ordinary citizens often feel deeply suspicious of adepts who use blood magic. Most Barsaivians work hard at putting the devastation of the Horrors out of their minds, and choose to reject everything that blood magic represents—even its potential for helping those still battling the remnants of the Horrors.

Those who accept blood magic as a necessary means to achieve the greater good of destroying the Horrors often refer to this practice as "life magic" to stress the positive aspect of this magic and cultivate tolerance among the mainstream for those magicians who use it.

A third faction has seen blood magic used for both good and evil. Though places like the Blood Wood offer an ever-present example of blood magic gone horribly wrong, others have benefited from life magic and suffered no ill effects. These individuals agree that blood magic offers great power, but also stress that such power demands great responsibility of those who would use it.

Characters in **Earthdawn** may use blood magic in a variety of ways. Characters most commonly use blood magic to power certain talents, spells, knacks, blood charms and living armor. Characters may also use blood magic to enhance their talents or abilities, swear oaths or perform rituals. Characters may even use a special form of blood magic, known as **sacrifice magic**, to perform heroic feats, lay curses, or create True patterns.

Every use of blood magic requires a character to make a sacrifice, which may take the form of Strain, permanent damage, one or more Wounds, or even his life. Unless otherwise noted, a character taking a Wound as required by certain uses of blood magic need not make a Knockdown Test for that Wound. The sacrifice required for the different uses of blood magic appears in the descriptions in this section.

Strain damage suffered as a result of blood magic is recorded and healed in the same manner as other damage (see **Effects of Injury** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 402). Permanent damage, however, is recorded separately, in the Blood Magic space on the Character Record Sheet. Permanent damage is not healed by standard Recovery Tests, and is not counted as damage for the purposes of healing Wounds, increasing talent ranks, or other situations where the character must be uninjured.

Blood Wounds

Many types of blood magic cause permanent damage that may only be healed under certain conditions. In addition to this damage, some blood magic can cause a **Blood Wound** that can only be healed after a certain length of time, or by the use of a magical healing potion. Unless specifically noted, any Wound caused by the use of any form of blood magic is considered to be a Blood Wound, and can be healed after a year and a day.

Blood Wounds, like other long-term blood magic damage, do not prevent the character from increasing his talent ranks or advancing to new Circles, nor do they impact the character's Action Tests. Blood Wounds are otherwise treated as normal Wounds, affecting the character's ability to heal damage (see **Wounds** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 403).

Use of a healing potion (or other similar healing aids) does not automatically heal a Blood Wound and may only be attempted after all other normal Wounds (for example, those inflicted in combat) have been healed. A single dose of healing potion will heal only one Blood Wound. The character drinks the potion, and makes a Recovery (24) Test—the Spell Defense of a Blood Wound; the healing potion's +8 bonus is applied to this Recovery Test, as normal. If the test succeeds, the Wound heals, leaving a runic scar. If the test fails, the Blood Wound remains, but the potion works normally, healing a number of Damage Points equal to the Recovery Test result, minus the number of Wounds (including Blood Wounds) the character currently has.

Using a healing potion in this manner does not heal any other damage the character may have; the potion's magic is entirely consumed in the attempt to heal the Blood Wound. Some legends say that questors can heal Blood Wounds, but no evidence has yet been found to substantiate these tales.

The runic scar from a healed Blood Wound is permanent, though it may be concealed with clothing, make-up, or illusionism magic. Reading a runic scar using the Read and Write Magic talent reveals the reason for the Blood Wound scar.

Common Blood Magic

The following are all examples of "common" blood magic, practiced by adepts across Barsaive. Because the details vary from use to use, only a general overview is provided here.

Powering Talents, Spells and Knacks

Many **Earthdawn** talents, talent knacks, spells, and Discipline abilities require blood magic in their use. The specific requirements are noted in the talent, spell, or ability description. Most blood magic in this category only causes Strain, but some abilities cause permanent damage.

Powering Blood Charms and Living Armor

Blood magic is also used to power blood charms and certain types of living armor. These applications of blood magic usually cause the user permanent damage that cannot be healed until the item is used or removed.

Pushing Talents and Abilities

Characters are sometimes called on to perform acts of heroism beyond even their extraordinary abilities. In these instances a character may temporarily enhance, or "push," one of his talents or abilities by using blood magic to tap into the power of his own life force.

A character gains a +1 bonus to a single Action Test by taking a number of Strain Points of damage equal to his Toughness step. The character may heal this damage normally.

A character gains a +3 bonus to a single Action Test by inflicting a physical Wound on himself and drawing blood (for example, slicing his hand with a knife). The resulting damage may be healed normally, but the Blood Wound leaves a noticeable scar and may not be healed for a year and a day. The Wound may otherwise be healed in the same manner as other Blood Wounds (see **Blood Wounds**, p. 259). For example, a Sky Raider using this form of blood magic cuts himself with a large knife. The Sky Raider has a Wound Threshold of 12, so he takes 12 Damage Points and a Blood Wound. The Sky Raider can heal the 12 points of damage normally, but the Blood Wound cannot be healed until a year and a day has passed.

The character takes the damage immediately after performing the enhanced test, and any damage resulting from the test is applied at the same time. It is possible for a character to suffer additional Wounds or even die from pushing himself too hard. After a character has pushed a talent or ability, he cannot push that talent or ability again until the resulting damage is healed. The Wound caused by the stronger push need not be healed before another push. Characters may combine a blood magic push with a dying act (see **Dying Act**, p. 262).

Ritual Blood Magic

In ritual blood magic, a character draws magical power from a donor's blood. In this rarely used form of blood magic, the power derived from the donor's blood is used to create specific effects rather than enhancing other uses of magic. Examples of ritual blood magic include the Nethermancer spells Create Life and Alter Life.

Blood Oaths

Blood oaths are one of the most significant uses of blood magic in **Earthdawn**. When swearing a blood oath, characters use blood magic to seal a promise. A character may swear a blood oath with any other character who holds at least an Unfriendly attitude towards him, though some blood oaths require a more favorable attitude. With the gamemaster's permission, two player characters may swear a blood oath between themselves.

Blood oaths can only be sworn between two characters at a time. There is one exception to this rule: a group of adepts can swear an oath of blood peace to their group as a whole as part of the ceremony to create a group pattern (see **Thread Magic and Group True Patterns** in the **Thread Magic** chapter, p. 270). If two characters wish to swear a blood oath with three dwarfs, for example, each character would have to complete the oath three times, once with each dwarf.

Blood oaths must be sworn voluntarily, but if a character swears a blood oath while under the influence of magical charms, spells or drugs (including strong drink) he is considered to have done so voluntarily. Blood oaths possess great power—regardless of intent or circumstance, magic binds those who swear such pledges.

While blood oaths typically involve an even exchange of abilities or deeds, equally binding vows, or unceasing and active loyalty to one another, they may also be used to strike other important bargains. Legends speak of scoundrels who somehow deceived others into swearing unevenly advantageous blood oaths, but these bounders always fared badly as a result. Blood magic always punishes the unjust user.

Most blood oaths last for a year and a day. At the end of the oath's duration, it may be renewed. Details on the duration and renewal terms of the different types of blood oaths are included with the descriptions below.

Blood Peace

A **blood peace oath** seals a truce between two characters. Any two living characters may swear a blood peace oath. A character may swear separate blood peace oaths with as many characters as he wishes, limited only by the number of points of damage the character must take for each oath.

To swear blood peace, each character draws blood from their dominant weapon arm (t'skrang draw blood from their tails), suffering 2 permanent Damage Points. This damage cannot be healed as long as the blood peace remains in effect and can never be healed if a character violates the oath.

Each character presses his weapon into the other character's blood, and swears the oath as the blood dries on the weapon. The exact wording of the oath varies according to area, but all versions include the elements contained in the following example.

> *"As the sun shines upon the earth, so shall light illuminate my deeds. All people shall see that I mean no harm to [other character's name]. I shall take no action to bring harm to him or those of his blood, or by inaction allow harm to befall [other character's name] or those of his blood."*
>
> *"As the moon shines upon the earth, so shall light illuminate my intent. All people shall see that I honor my promise."*

By swearing a blood peace oath, two characters promise that they will never harm one another or allow harm to come to the other through inaction. A character who violates a blood peace oath releases the other from the vow. In addition, the violator suffers a Blood Wound on the part of his body he drew blood from. This Wound lasts for a year and a day from the time it appears, and may be healed as described under **Blood Wounds**, p. 259.

If both characters keep their vow for a year and a day, the Damage Points taken for swearing the blood peace may be healed as normal damage. In addition, the scar on each character's body from which he drew the blood for the oath becomes the color of gold or silver. Each character adds +1 to his Death Rating as long as both characters maintain their vow of peace. The characters lose this Death Rating bonus if either breaks the vow, but neither suffers any additional penalty for breaking the blood peace after the duration ends.

If they choose, the characters may re-swear the blood peace oath after the first year and a day. If the oath is re-sworn, the two permanent Damage Points may not be healed, and breaking the oath will cause a Blood Wound, as described above. While simply maintaining the blood peace may seem more advantageous than re-swearing the oath, re-swearing the oath represents a stronger commitment between the characters. Characters may continue to renew blood peace oaths indefinitely, but the +1 bonus to the characters' Death Rating is only applied once.

Blood Promise

Characters who swear a **blood promise oath** pledge to perform certain dangerous or heroic deeds. Any two living Namegiver characters with at least Unfriendly attitudes toward each other may swear a blood promise oath. Characters may only swear one blood promise at a time.

To swear a blood promise, each character cuts their forehead, and their chest over the heart, drawing blood. Each character takes 4 permanent Damage Points, which cannot be healed until both parties fulfill their promise. The damage becomes permanent for characters who do not fulfill their sworn promise within a year and a day.

Each character wipes the blood from his forehead with his left hand and the blood from his chest with his right hand. Facing each other, the characters press their hands together, mixing the blood. As the blood dries on their hands, the characters state their Names and recite their promises to each other.

The characters should state their promises as similarly as possible. Each character must describe his pledged deed, identifying a talent or skill he will use while accomplishing it. The characters must also state the time period, not exceeding a year and a day, within which they must perform their deeds and meet after fulfilling their promises.

Delthrien, the elven Archer, finds himself negotiating with Filtch, a windling Thief of poor reputation. Delthrien needs Winter Fury, a magical arrow hidden somewhere in the caverns belonging to the dragon Icewing. Filtch needs bits of three magical plants—olis eye, moonreed and floating palm, all rumored to grow in the Mist Swamps. Filtch knows the secrets of Icewing's caverns, but he refuses to sell his knowledge or lead a team. He also does not want to go mucking about in a marsh, so Filtch and Delthrien strike a deal. They agree to swear a blood promise and make the following oaths:

"I, Delthrien, elven Archer, promise to travel to the Mist Swamps. There I shall obtain leaves from three magical plants: olis eye, moonreed and floating palm. I shall be diligent in my efforts in the swamps. I shall slay the dangerous beasts that dwell there with my True Shot. I shall not tarry nor accept any other deed until I have secured the leaves. I shall find these before the start of winter season. I shall then return to this tavern and deliver the leaves to Filtch the Thief. With Filtch I mix my blood in promise."

"I, Filtch, windling Thief, promise to travel to the caverns of the dragon Icewing. I shall use my Silent Walk to tread through his caverns more softly than snow falling on a quiet night, and there I shall obtain the arrow Winter Fury. I shall be diligent in my efforts. I shall not tarry nor accept any other deed until I have secured Winter Fury. I shall find the arrow before the start of winter season. I shall then return to this tavern and deliver Winter Fury to Delthrien the Archer. With Delthrien I mix my blood in promise."

The blood magic of the oath supports the talent or skill named in the blood promise by granting a +1 bonus to it. In the example above, Delthrien would gain a +1 bonus to his True Shot talent, while Filtch would gain a +1 bonus to his Silent Walk talent. The bonus lasts for the duration of the promise, or until the promise is broken. The character applies the bonus whenever he uses the talent for the duration of the oath, whether the character is using the talent to fulfill the promise or for some other purpose. The characters must fulfill the promise within the agreed time or the oath is violated.

If a character violates a blood promise oath he manifests two Blood Wounds, one on the forehead, the other on the chest. These Wounds last for a year and a day from the time the blood promise is broken, and will not heal naturally during this time. A character may attempt to heal the Blood Wound with a healing potion as described above.

If both characters keep their promise, the skin (or scales or rock) on the characters' chests from which they drew blood becomes the color of rubies or emeralds. When they meet after fulfilling the promise, the characters may immediately heal the 4 Damage Points that making the promise cost them. If they choose to heal this damage, they lose the bonus to the talents used to fulfill the blood promise. The characters may instead agree to heal only 2 Damage Points and make the increase to the talents used in their blood promise permanent. The remaining 2 Damage Points can never be healed. Subtract –2 from each character's Death and Unconsciousness Rating.

Blood Sworn

The most potent blood magic oath is the **blood sworn oath**. Only characters with Loyal attitudes toward each other may be blood sworn. Each character must have demonstrated the depth of his loyalty to the other at least three times by taking considerable risks for the benefit of the other character or otherwise behaving in a manner generally recognized as loyal. At least three years of loyal behavior must pass between the first loyal action and when the characters become blood sworn. A character may be blood sworn to only one other character.

The characters begin the blood sworn ritual by cutting their forehead, and their chests over the heart, drawing blood. This causes 4 permanent Damage Points that can never be healed. Each character subtracts –4 from his Death and Unconsciousness Ratings.

One character wipes the blood from his forehead with his left hand and presses his blood-smeared hand to the forehead cut of the other character while reciting the first part of the oath. The other character repeats this gesture and the oath. The first character then wipes the blood from his chest with his right hand and gently presses that hand against the cut in the other character's chest while reciting the second part of the oath. The second character repeats the gesture and the oath. The exact wording of the oath varies according to area, but all include the same elements as the following example:

First Oath

"As the sun rises each day, I shall think of you. As the stars shine each night, so shall you be constantly in my

thoughts. As night follows day, so closely shall we share our separate lives. I shall know you as completely as you shall know me. This I swear to you."

Second Oath

"As the blood of my heart touches yours, so shall I touch your feelings. As your heart beats against my hand, so shall your feelings touch mine. My loyalty shall be yours. My courage shall be yours. The strength of my heart shall flow through your veins. When there is need, I shall be strong for both of us. This I swear to you. We are blood sworn."

The blood sworn oath lasts for a lifetime. Blood sworn characters must be loyal to each other, protect each other and serve each other for the rest of their lives. As with all blood oaths, the gamemaster determines whether the characters fulfill their oath. A blood sworn character who violates his oath receives seven Blood Wounds that last for three years and three days after the oath is broken. After this time, six of the Wounds can be healed normally. One of the Blood Wounds, usually over the heart, remains unhealed. No known magic can heal this final Wound. The character may attempt to heal the other six Blood Wounds using healing potions as described above.

Blood sworn characters who remain loyal friends gain several advantages for the duration of their friendship. First, each character adds +2 to one Attribute value and +1 to a second Attribute value. This increase cannot be applied to Toughness. They also do not count toward the limits for Attribute improvement (see the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 420). Second, each character gains +1 rank in the Blood Share talent, even if the character is not an adept. Blood sworn characters use the talent to transfer damage between themselves, rather than between a character and a mount. This version of the talent can only be used to transfer damage between the blood sworn characters. If a character already possesses the Blood Share talent, he gains it again as a separate talent. Characters can purchase ranks for this version of the Blood Share talent, but these ranks do not count toward the requirements for Circle advancement.

The Blood Share between two blood sworn characters provides more power than the ordinary talent by enabling one character to raise his friend from the dead. The character's rank in the blood sworn version of the Blood Share talent must equal or exceed the number of days his friend has been dead. One use of the talent must reduce the damage to the deceased to less than his Death Rating. The character cannot try again. Using this talent to raise a dead friend permanently reduces both characters' Death Ratings by –1. Finally, blood sworn characters add +1 rank to their Thought Link and Empathic Sense talents when using them to communicate with each other. If the characters do not possess the Thought Link or Empathic Sense talents, they gain them at Rank 1, but cannot increase the rank of these talents and may only use them to communicate with the person to whom they are blood sworn. For blood sworn characters, the range of Thought Link is 100 yards, and adds a +3 rank bonus to the talent rank to determine the range in miles of the Empathic Sense talent between two blood sworn characters.

Sacrifice Magic

Sacrifice magic is the most extreme form of blood magic practiced by player characters. All sacrifice magic must be performed by characters who are conscious and capable of action. A character sacrifices his own life, channeling his entire life force into a single magical act. There is no known means to restore life to someone who dies through the use of sacrifice magic. Even magical life-restoring methods such as last chance salves and death cheat charms have no effect.

The following text describes some of the possible uses of sacrifice magic. As always, the gamemaster has the final say on the effects of any specific act of self-sacrifice and may modify or expand on the effects described here.

Dying Act

A **dying act** is a final, heroic feat aided by sacrifice magic. The character must declare his intention to perform a dying act and describe the act before performing it. On his next action, the character rolls his step dice for the test and adds 1 Karma die for each Karma Point he has remaining. After the character performs the action, he dies. Once a character makes the Dying Act Test, he cannot turn back. Whether or not the test succeeds, he dies.

If a character declares his intention to perform a dying act but changes his mind before making the Dying Act Test, he immediately suffers 3 Blood Wounds which will not heal for a year and a day. The character may attempt to heal these wounds with healing potions, however, as described above. Characters may also push talents or abilities while performing dying acts.

Dying Curse

Characters may use sacrifice magic to pronounce a **dying curse** on an enemy, a place, or an item. Treat all dying curses as Major curses (see **Curses** in the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 110 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). The step number of a dying curse equals the cursing character's Thread Weaving or Perception step, whichever is higher.

Possible curse effects include reducing the target's skills, talents, or attributes, scarring or transforming the target, blighting areas of land, or diminishing the usefulness of a weapon or other magical item. A dying curse may also seal off a specific location (usually where the character died) in the same way as a magical trap or ward. In these cases, the curse's Detection Difficulty, Disarming Difficulty or other appropriate characteristic equals the higher of the cursing character's Thread Weaving or Perception step. Curses need not take effect immediately; the effects may not occur for years or even generations after their pronouncement. The cursing player and the gamemaster should work together to come up with a suitable curse effect. After the curse is pronounced, the character using the dying curse dies.

Dying Legacy

When creating a **dying legacy**, a character uses sacrifice magic to create a True pattern. The True pattern may belong to an item or a place (usually the place where the character dies). Characters typically invoke dying legacies to imbue some item with the True pattern needed to make it a Legendary item. Many Legendary items were created through dying legacies during the early days of the Scourge, when numerous adepts died fighting Horrors.

To create a dying legacy, a character declares his intention to do so and describes the legacy. When the character dies, the True pattern forms. The Key Knowledges and Deeds associated with a True pattern created by a dying legacy will always be associated with the character who created the pattern and the manner of that character's death. For example, a character mortally wounded by a Horror may use a dying legacy to create a True pattern for his sword before he dies. One of the Key Knowledges for the sword will include the Name of the Horror that slew the character. Similarly, one of the sword's Deeds will involve defeating the Horror.

A character may also use a dying legacy to impart a True pattern to a particular place. The place must be intimately associated with the character, such as his birthplace, home or the site of his death. This True pattern means that the place will develop pattern items, and characters learning the appropriate Key Knowledges may weave threads to the place. See the **Thread Magic** chapter, p. 264, for more information on Key Knowledges, Legendary and pattern items.

Dying Oath

A dying character can also use sacrifice magic to extract a **dying oath** from another character, usually to perform a specific deed such as avenging the dying character or finishing a task or quest that the dying character is forced to leave undone. The

dying oath binds the surviving character to perform the deed and provides that character with additional ability to do so.

Both characters must willingly and knowingly enter into the dying oath. Once the surviving character has sworn the oath, the character calling for the oath dies.

The surviving character receives the dying character's remaining Karma Points. The player marks these points in a separate place on the surviving character's record sheet, as these Karma Points may only be used for tests related specifically to the task that the character has sworn to perform. This Karma may be used for any test that the surviving character performs to fulfill the oath, even if the character cannot normally spend Karma Points on those tests. These Karma Points cannot be replenished after they have been spent, and once the oath is fulfilled the points are lost.

The surviving character must fulfill his oath within a year and a day. If a character fails to fulfill a dying oath, he loses the Karma Points he received from the oath. In addition, the character loses the ability to regain any Karma Points for a year and a day.

Familiars

Many legends describe creatures and spirits that serve adepts. Known as **familiars**, these companions most commonly serve magician adepts, but adepts of any Discipline may acquire a familiar. For example, Beastmasters often acquire animal familiars from among the creatures loyal to them, and many Cavalrymen perform a familiar ritual with their mounts that strengthens the bond between mount and rider.

Almost any non-Name-giver creature or spirit can become a familiar, provided that the creature or spirit is well disposed toward the character. Named spirits and sapient creatures (such as dragons) cannot become familiars. Some rumors claim that mad and corrupt magicians have chosen unintelligent Horrors as familiars, but no evidence supports such claims.

Acquiring a Familiar

To acquire a familiar, an adept first must find the creature or spirit that will become the familiar. The potential familiar must be well-disposed toward the adept and willing to undergo the familiar ritual. In game terms, the creature or spirit must have the equivalent of a Loyal attitude toward the character. Adepts may use the Animal Bond talent to develop a relationship with an appropriate animal.

A spirit may only become a familiar if the magician who chose it has established a working relationship with the spirit through repeated summoning, and has treated the spirit with respect in all instances. A magician cannot choose as a familiar any spirit with whom he has engaged in a Contest of Wills (see the **Spirits** chapter on p. 358 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**).

After choosing the creature or spirit, the adept swears a blood oath to declare his intent to take the creature or spirit as his familiar. The adept formally Names the familiar, and cuts his chest over the heart, drawing blood. The cut causes 4 permanent Damage Points, which cannot be healed as long as the familiar bond continues. The adept then uses his right hand to mark the familiar's head with his blood, swearing to protect and care for the familiar in exchange for the familiar's aid and service. The exact oath varies according to the adept's Discipline and training, but most include the following elements:

> *"I (adept's Name), take you (familiar's Name), to be my companion. As I now offer my blood, so do I swear to give my aid and protection. My loyalty and patronage shall be yours. Our strength and our thoughts will be as one. This I do swear, now and forever."*

An adept may bond only one familiar at any time. The magic of the familiar bond lasts until the adept or familiar breaks the blood oath or dies. An adept may break the blood oath by allowing the familiar to come to harm or by failing to take proper care of the familiar. As with other blood oaths, the gamemaster determines whether or not a character has broken the oath.

An adept who breaks a familiar blood oath suffers 3 Blood Wounds that cannot be healed for a year and a day. He may attempt to heal these wounds with healing potions as described above. At the gamemaster's discretion, the adept may re-establish the familiar bond if he makes sufficient reparation for his mistake, but a familiar will never return to a master who deliberately abused or mistreated it. An adept cannot bond with a new familiar until he has healed any Wounds caused by breaking a previous familiar blood oath.

Benefits of a Familiar

The familiar bond grants the character and his familiar several benefits. The master gains a special version of the Blood Share talent at Rank 1, which may only be used to transfer damage between the master and the familiar. This talent may be increased as a First Circle talent, but does not count for circle advancement. If the master uses this ability to transfer an amount of damage that exceeds the familiar's Death Rating, he automatically breaks the familiar blood oath and suffers the standard consequences when the familiar dies. Magicians with spirit familiars may also use this ability, but the spirit must be physically manifest and touching the adept. Spirit familiars unable to manifest cannot offer this ability to their masters. The familiar bond also creates a mental link between master and familiar. The master learns a special version of the Thought Link talent at Rank 1, which may only be used to communicate with his familiar. This talent may be increased as a First Circle talent, but does not count for Circle advancement. This ability enables both master and familiar to sense the general feelings and location of the other, including if the other is in danger. More detailed information can be gained with a successful Thought Link Test.

In addition to the Blood Share and Thought Link abilities, characters with familiars may purchase other "bonus" talents for use with their familiars. These talents are purchased and increased as First Circle talents, but do not count toward Circle advancement (just like talents learned through Versatility). Masters can purchase the Animal Possession talent for use with the familiar only. The talent allows the master's spirit to possess the familiar and use its senses. The Animal Possession talent has no effect on spirit familiars. A magician may use his familiar as an additional spell matrix by purchasing an additional Spell Matrix talent. To use the spell stored in the familiar's matrix, the familiar must be within 2 yards of the magician. The spell matrix possesses all of the usual spell matrix characteristics and limitations (see **Spell Matrix Talent** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 282).

Additionally, the familiar bond creates a link between the patterns of the familiar and master. This link enables the master to weave threads to his familiar's pattern, improving the familiar's abilities and his own as if they were minor pattern items for each other. Any improvements in talents or abilities the master gains in this manner apply only when he is dealing with the familiar. For example, a magician who weaves a thread to his familiar and attaches it to his Spellcasting talent gains the rank increase only when casting spells on his familiar, which makes using certain beneficial spells on the familiar easier.

The pattern link may also be a drawback, however. Anyone who gains access to a character's familiar can use it to weave threads to that character's pattern as if the familiar were a minor pattern item. This bond lasts only while the familiar lives, but the bond remains even after the blood oath uniting the master and familiar has expired. See the **Thread Magic** chapter, p. 268, for more information on pattern items and thread magic.

Thread Magic

Humans have a phrase, "Knowledge is power." As usual they miss the mark. Knowledge alone is not sufficient. You need training in the rigors of magical thought. In particular, you must know how to use threads. Threads connect what you know to the magic contained in what you know. Threads are what turn your knowledge into power.

• Del Rieka, Dwarf Wizard, to his Apprentice •

One of the unique applications of the workings of magic in **Earthdawn** is the use of thread magic. Thread magic is the process by which a thread of magical energy is woven to an existing True pattern, thereby strengthening and enhancing that pattern. Magicians of higher Circles can weave threads to any True pattern, such as those possessed by any Named person, place, or thing.

These rules cover weaving threads to magical items, as well as the more complex process of weaving threads to Named people and places. These rules also address a special use of thread magic, group patterns.

Before delving into the information presented here, players and gamemasters may find it helpful to re-read and review **Magic in Our World** in the **Workings of Magic** chapter, p. 251.

Nature of Threads

Thread magic enables characters to manipulate magic using strands of magical energy called threads. Two types of magical threads exist: spell threads and pattern threads. Characters create both types of threads using the Thread Weaving talent, and both share certain traits. Spell threads represent finite strands of magical energy that are used to power certain spells. As described later in the **Spell Magic** chapter (p. 283), most spell patterns are too complex to fit entirely in a spell matrix. In such cases, a magician must complete a spell's pattern before he can cast the spell. Completing a spell's pattern is accomplished by weaving spell threads into the pattern of the spell. Unlike pattern threads, all spell threads offer the same quantity and quality of magical energy, regardless of the Circle of the magician, his Thread Weaving rank, or the Circle of the spell.

Characters use pattern threads to connect the magical patterns of two or more people, places or things. Two types of pattern threads exist: temporary threads and permanent threads. To weave temporary pattern threads, a character performs an act of will to create the thread and usually suffers a number of Strain Points of damage in order to use the thread. Temporary threads are primarily used with talent knacks based on the **Thread Weaving** talent (see the **Talent Knacks** chapter, p. 213).

The rules presented in this chapter discuss permanent threads, the type created when weaving threads to magical treasure or pattern items.

Threads and Legend Points

Weaving permanent threads requires a character to spend a number of Legend Points based on the type of item the thread is being woven to and the rank of the thread being woven. This expenditure of Legend Points creates the permanent thread.

Characters should take the Legend Point cost required to weave permanent pattern threads into careful consideration for two reasons. First, any Legend Points spent to weave permanent pattern threads reduces the number of Current Legend Points available for the character to increase their talent and skills ranks. Second, unless specifically noted, Legend Points spent on a permanent pattern thread can never be recovered—even if the thread is unwoven, displaced or otherwise destroyed. Though weaving permanent pattern threads does offer significant advantages, the character must consider that he may spend the Legend Points and ultimately have nothing to show for it.

Using Thread Magic

To use thread magic, the character must first obtain a Key Knowledge of the subject. As described in the **Workings of Magic** chapter (p. 253), Key Knowledges are pieces of information or knowledge that allow a character to better understand the nature of a subject's True pattern. Key Knowledges are held within pattern items, items that reflect the knowledge stored in a subject's True pattern. Magical items are their own pattern item. Named people and places, on the other hand, have separate pattern items. Once someone has obtained a pattern item, he can learn the Key Knowledge it holds.

Having obtained a pattern item pertaining to a particular True pattern and learning its Key Knowledge, a character can create a thread connecting his True pattern to the target True pattern. This thread carries magical energy from the target's True pattern to the character's, making his talents more powerful when interacting with the target True pattern. Alternatively, a character can use the threads he creates to bolster the strength of the True pattern to which his thread is connected.

Each character must perform the following basic steps to use thread magic:

1. Obtain the Key Knowledge.
2. Spend a number of Legend Points based on the rank of the thread being woven.
3. Make a Thread Weaving Test against a Difficulty Number based on the rank of the thread.

How each step relates to different uses of thread magic is described in greater detail later in this chapter.

Limits on Threads

At any one time, a character can have a maximum number of threads active (attached to True patterns of people, places, or items) equal to his Thread Weaving rank. This limit does not include spell threads, as those are temporary. The character's Thread Weaving rank also marks the maximum rank to which he can increase any of his threads.

> *Jerreck knows the Thread Weaving talent at Rank 4. Until he increases his Thread Weaving rank, Jerreck can have a maximum of four threads active at any one time (connected to four different items). None of those threads may be higher than Rank 4.*

Threads woven to a character's abilities do not count toward the limit set by the optional **Rule of Three** (see the **Game Concepts** chapter, p. 18).

Losing Threads

All of the threads a character currently has active are usually lost when that character dies. Most magical effects that bring a character back to life (like the Life Check talent, or Death Cheat blood charm) actually prevent the character from dying in the first place, so there is no risk of losing threads.

When a character loses an item to which he has woven a thread, the thread remains active until someone else weaves a thread to that item and effectively disconnects the character's thread.

Weaving Threads to Magic Items

Most magic items in **Earthdawn** are unique, produced by a conjunction of magical energy and emotion that imbues the item with magical powers. These powers are not enchanted into the item; they simply come into being when the item is involved in some significant event. It is important to remember that in **Earthdawn**, magic is life and life itself is magic. This means that because of magic, all the world is alive in one way or another. The forces of magic and life also interact with each other, sometimes in distinct and sometimes subtle ways. This interaction is described in the concepts of patterns, True patterns, pattern items, and threads.

The more significant events an item has been a part of, and the greater its legend, the greater its powers. The person wielding or using such an item rarely sees the full force of that power manifest. Because it takes time for the forces of magic to empower an item, we provide a selection of pre-generated magic items in the **Magical Treasures** chapter on p. 161 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**. These items possess magical abilities and the power to enhance the user's abilities. A character who obtains the item can manifest those powers by empowering the item with a thread of magic. Magic items that are empowered in this way are commonly referred to as **thread items**, in order to distinguish them from items empowered in other ways.

Not all thread items are created by unique circumstance. Some are created by more traditional means. These items all have similar capabilities (within their kind) because they were specifically enchanted with those powers. However, because each item has a unique history after its construction, the specific information needed to empower each item will differ (more information on these kinds of items is provided in the **Enchanting** chapter, p. 278).

Pattern Knowledge

Thread items, by virtue of their creation (whether coincidence or design) all have True patterns. Unfortunately, the item's True pattern is a tangled mystery of history, facts, and magic. Before the adept can use the item he must unravel some of the mystery of that item. He does that in part by using one of his own mystical talents, and in part by old-fashioned, mundane research.

All thread items have a history integral to their properties. Without the knowledge of this history, a character is wasting his time attaching a thread to the item. He ends up pouring magical energy into the wrong places; the item continues to function as an ordinary example of that item. Through studying an item's history, a character can learn the Pattern Knowledge of the item, which represents the events of its history and its True pattern. Pattern Knowledge includes the item's Name, the Name of its maker and significant events in its history. Learning this knowledge allows the character to bring the item's magic alive and make it work for him.

The character does not need to learn all of the Pattern Knowledge, however – the details he needs to learn vary from item to item. He may need to learn the Name of the item's creator for one sword, but not for another.

An item's Pattern Knowledge is made up of several parts, known as Key Knowledges. An item may have any number of Key Knowledges. Most items have Key Knowledges at various thread ranks, and the character must learn the knowledge at each rank before he can increase the thread to that rank. For example, a magic ring may have three ranks of powers: Ranks 1, 2, and 3. Each rank provides a unique power and is tied to a Key Knowledge that the character must know to unlock that power. Each rank's Key Knowledge must be used in succession. The Rank 1 Key Knowledge must be used before the Rank 2 Key Knowledge, and the Rank 2 Key Knowledge before the Rank 3 Key Knowledge.

Key Knowledges

Characters can learn an item's Key Knowledges through talents such as Item or Weapon History and by researching legends, libraries, tavern lore, and other sources to find the information they need.

Each of a magical item's Key Knowledges has two distinct elements: the general type of information the Key Knowledge represents, called the Test Knowledge, and the specific details of that information, called the Research Knowledge.

The **Test Knowledge** for a Key Knowledge represents one or more general "questions" that can be determined only by making a successful Item or Weapon History Test (see the descriptions for the **Item** and **Weapon History** talents in the **Talents** chapter on p. 190 and p. 211). Each Test Knowledge tells the character what he needs to discover in order to use the item. For example:

- The Name of the fire elemental that helped to forge Kegel's Sword.
- The Name of the mountain that produced the iron ore used to forge Kegel's Sword.
- The last event in which Kegel's Sword was wielded.

The **Research Knowledge** for a Key Knowledge represents specific "answers" to the Test Knowledge "questions" that can only be learned through research or adventuring (see the description for the **Research** skill in the **Skills** chapter, p. 245). For example:

- The Name of the fire elemental that helped forge Kegel's Sword is Nogul.
- The ore used to forge Kegel's Sword came from Mount Frost, in the Thunder Peaks
- Kegel's Sword was last used in the Battle of Fornn during the last days of the Theran War, when Kegel used it to kill General Timyo, leader of the Theran forces.

First Key Knowledge

The first Key Knowledge of an item is always listed at Rank 1. This Key Knowledge contains the information that will give the character a starting place from which to learn the rest of the item's Key Knowledges. This first Key Knowledge always contains the following information:

Test Knowledge

- How many thread ranks the item has.
- Whether or not the item has any Deeds associated with it.

Research Knowledge

- The Name of the item.

A successful Item or Weapon History Test reveals the number of thread ranks the item or weapon has, and whether or not the character is required to perform any Deeds (see **Deeds**, below) to attach a thread to the item or increase the rank of a thread.

Deeds

Some items allow characters to perform Deeds in order to earn Legend Points to weave threads to items. This Deed usually relates to the history of the item, requiring a character to undertake a task similar to a task for which the item was once used, or else complete a task left undone by a former wielder of the item. Whether an item requires any Deeds is learned with the Rank 1 Test Knowledge, but the Test Knowledge of the Deed can only be learned at the rank with which the Deed is associated. Deeds must be researched in the same way as Research Knowledge.

Any Deeds associated with a magical item must be learned in the same way as Key Knowledges; a Deed listed at a thread rank is the Key Knowledge for that thread rank. When a character makes the Item or Weapon History Test, he learns that the Key Knowledge for a thread rank is a Deed, and the nature and objective of the Deed (the Test Knowledge). Performing the Deed provides the Research Knowledge.

Performing the Deeds associated with an item is not always mandatory. In some cases, the Deed must be performed in order for the character to increase the item's thread rank. In some cases, the character makes the choice. However, the character always earns Legend Points for completing the Deed.

Any Legend Points earned by performing a Deed can only be used to increase the thread rank of the magic item. Until the character increases the item's thread rank to its maximum, the player cannot use any excess Legend Points earned by performing a Deed for any other purpose. Once the character increases the item's thread rank to its maximum, he can use excess Deed Legend Points to increase his character's talents or other abilities.

Before undertaking a Deed, a character must have learned all the Key Knowledges for thread ranks up to and including the thread rank at which the Deed is listed. For example, if a Deed is listed for an item at Thread Rank 4, then the character must have learned all of the Key Knowledges for that item from Thread Ranks 1 through 4 before attempting the Deed.

Obtain the Key Knowledge

In order to learn an item's Key Knowledges, characters must first learn the Test Knowledges by making Item or Weapon History Tests.

Test Knowledge

A character who uses his Item or Weapon History talent discovers the Test Knowledge for a particular Key Knowledge at a specific rank. If the result of the test is exceptional, the character may learn the Test Knowledge information for the Key Knowledges of several ranks. This information does not give the character any advantage until he learns the full Key Knowledge of each rank.

Test Knowledges are the general "questions" required for the Key Knowledges, not the specific answers.

> *The Test Knowledge for a specific rank's Key Knowledge might be that the character has to learn the Name of the item's creator. He does not actually learn the Name by making a successful Item or Weapon History Test—only that he must learn this Name before he can weave a thread at that rank. The specific information required, in this case the Name itself, is the Research Knowledge, and must be discovered by more conventional means.*

To learn the Test Knowledge, the character makes an Item or Weapon History Test (as appropriate for the type of magic item) against the item's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the result level determines how many Key Knowledge ranks the character learns. An Average result reveals the next rank's Test Knowledge; a Good result reveals the next two Test Knowledges; an Excellent result reveals the next three Test Knowledges; an Extraordinary result reveals the next four Test Knowledges.

A character can learn a maximum number of Test Knowledges from an item equal to his Item or Weapon History rank.

> *Thom Hammerblade is using his Weapon History talent to study a magic sword he found during his last adventure. He knows Weapon History at Rank 3. After a week of study, he makes his Weapon History Test against the sword's Spell Defense rating of 12, with a test result of 29—an Extraordinary result! This should allow him to learn the first four Test Knowledges of the sword, but because Thom only knows the Weapon History talent at Rank 3, he can only learn a maximum of three Test Knowledges, for Ranks 1, 2, and 3. If he wants to learn more of the sword's Key Knowledges, he must improve his Weapon History talent rank.*

With a successful test result, the character learns what he must research before he can weave the threads for those ranks. See **Research**, p. 269, and the information presented in the **Magical Treasures** chapter on p. 161 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**. When a character learns the Test Knowledge of an item's Key Knowledge, he also learns the type of magical effect granted at that thread rank.

> *Thom might know that at Rank 3, "The sword will inflict even greater damage than normal on those struck by it."*

Research Knowledge

Once the character learns a Test Knowledge, he must discover the Research Knowledge—the specific information required that will allow him to learn the Key Knowledge for that rank, and subsequently allow him to weave a thread.

The Research Knowledge must be learned through either Research (successful use of the Research skill) or adventuring. Characters cannot use the Item or Weapon History talents to learn this information. The characters must obtain it by researching legends, seeking lost kaers or citadels, finding historical tomes that contain the information they need, and so on.

Exactly how this takes place in the game is up to the gamemaster. Learning this information can occur as part of an adventure and integrated into a story, or it can be something that takes place between other adventures. In either case, the research required should not be completely resolved through a series of Research Tests, but should also occur through adventuring and roleplaying. The process can be simple and quick, or complex and arduous, depending on the nature of the item, the information to be learned, and the style of campaign the gamemaster is attempting to run.

In short, finding the Research Knowledge answer for a Test Knowledge question, thus completing the Key Knowledge, requires effort on the part of those seeking the knowledge. For example, a character may have to undertake a journey of some distance to find a tome that has the information he seeks, rather than merely walking to the nearest collection of books and flipping through the pages for a few minutes. Once he arrives at his destination, he might also have to persuade the caretaker of the collection to allow him to look through the tome. To accomplish that, he may have to agree to do a Favor for the caretaker (see the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 94 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**).

In the process of learning the Research Knowledge, the character must also understand how it fits into the history of the item, thus properly understanding the Key Knowledge. For example, if a character must learn the Name of the jungle that produced the wood used to create a staff, it isn't enough for him to guess the Name of the jungle, even if he manages to guess correctly. The character may need to research different kinds of wood to pinpoint the exact type used to make the staff, in the process learning about where different types of trees grow, then discovering important stands or forests of those trees. Through this process, he will understand the significance of the wood used to make the staff.

When a character learns the Research Knowledge answer to a Test Knowledge question, he learns the specific effect.

In the case of Thom's sword, the Research Knowledge for his Rank 3 Test Knowledge would tell him that his spell sword increases its Damage step by +3.

Finding the information required to learn a Key Knowledge should be a challenge, but not an impossible one. More information and guidelines for the gamemaster on how to handle research and research-based adventures is presented in the **Magical Treasures** (p. 161) and **Gamemastering** (p. 80) chapters of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**.

Spend Legend Points

Once he has learned the Key Knowledge for the next rank, the character can prepare to weave a thread to the item by spending Legend Points. This Legend Point investment represents the experience and effort the character puts into weaving the thread. The actual Legend Point cost varies with the item and the thread rank desired. The general and legendary magic items described in the **Magical Treasures** chapter on p. 161 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** list the Legend Point cost with each rank.

Ardis Foarr, a dwarf Wizard, finds a counterspell staff in the ruins of a citadel and wants to weave a thread to it. After studying the item for a time, he successfully learns its first Key Knowledge. Now he must spend Legend Points to weave the thread. The gamemaster checks the description of the staff and finds that Ardis must spend 200 Legend Points to weave a Rank 1 thread to the staff. If he later wants to increase the thread rank to Rank 2, assuming he learns the Key Knowledge, he must spend an additional 300 Legend Points to weave the Rank 2 thread.

Failed Thread Weaving Tests

Optional Rule: When a character fails a Thread Weaving Test to weave a thread to an item, it might not seem fair to the player that he must improve his Thread Weaving rank before he can attempt to weave the thread again.

Gamemasters may wish to consider using the Failed Thread Weaving Tests optional rule. The maximum number of failed Thread Weaving Tests a character can make against a given item at each thread rank is equal to his Thread Weaving rank. When this failure limit is reached, he must improve his Thread Weaving rank in order to try and weave the thread again, as described above.

Jerreck, from the previous example, knows Thread Weaving at Rank 4 and is attempting to weave a thread to Drea's Magic Pouch. Having failed once, he may try weaving the Rank 3 thread three more times. Only if he fails all four attempts must he increase his Thread Weaving rank.

Weave the Thread

Once the character has spent the appropriate Legend Points, he can attempt to weave a thread to empower the item at the appropriate rank. The thread can be woven to a rank no greater than the Key Knowledge rank known by the character. Also, the maximum rank to which a character can weave a thread is equal to his Thread Weaving rank.

Thread Weaving Difficulty Table

Thread Rank	Weaving Difficulty
1	12
2	13
3	14
4	15
5	17
6	18
7	20
8	21
9	22
10	24
11	25
12	26
13	27
14	28
15	29

To weave a thread, the character makes a Thread Weaving Test against a Difficulty Number based on the thread rank, as shown in the Thread Weaving Difficulty Table. If the test succeeds, the character attaches a thread to the item's True pattern and the item's ability at that rank is empowered. When increasing the rank of an existing thread, the new thread replaces the existing thread.

If the test fails, the character cannot make another attempt at weaving a thread to that item until he has improved his Thread Weaving rank. The old thread, if one existed, remains in effect. The Legend Points spent on weaving the new thread remain allocated to the new thread rank; the character cannot use them for anything else. As soon as the character improves his Thread Weaving rank, he can make another attempt to weave the thread. This time he does not need to spend any further Legend Points, as they have already been allocated from his previous attempt.

Jerreck makes a Thread Weaving Test to increase the thread rank of the thread he has woven to Drea's Magic Pouch from Rank 2 to Rank 3. The Difficulty Number of his Thread Weaving Test is 14. He makes his test and fails, getting only a 9. Jerreck must now increase his Thread Weaving rank before he can again attempt to weave that thread. His Rank 2 thread remains in place, along with the Legend Points he has invested in attempting to weave a thread to Rank 3. The next time he tries to increase the rank of the thread attached to the pouch, he follows the same steps as he did in the first attempt, but he does not need to spend any additional Legend Points.

Once a character weaves a thread to an item, he can continue to weave a new, stronger thread at each rank beyond the first. As already noted, this new thread replaces the old thread, but main-

tains the powers and abilities of the old thread. A new thread cannot be woven until the character learns the appropriate Key Knowledges for the new rank.

Weaving Threads to Pattern Items

While weaving threads to magic items is the most common use of thread magic in the world of **Earthdawn**, it is not the only use of thread magic. As described above, thread magic allows a character to connect his True pattern to another True pattern via a magical thread. A character cannot weave threads to his own pattern items.

The basic process for weaving threads to Named people and places is similar to the process used for weaving threads to magic items. The character wishing to weave a thread first learns a Key Knowledge of the target True pattern, and then weaves a thread to the True pattern. There are some significant differences, however, and these are detailed in the following sections.

Obtain the Key Knowledge

The first step in using thread magic is to obtain the Pattern Knowledge of a True pattern. Just like magic items, this Pattern Knowledge will consist of several individual Key Knowledges. Each Key Knowledge is one piece of information about the True pattern. Through an understanding of a True pattern's Key Knowledges, someone can affect that pattern with magic.

This can be done in only a few specific ways. The most common method of obtaining a True pattern's Key Knowledges is to obtain and study one or more of its pattern items.

Obtaining a Pattern Item

Pattern items are obtained through adventuring. Through reasoning and roleplaying, a character can use his talents to find pattern items. Pattern items are important objects. They are not easily found, and obtaining them often involves overcoming opposition. In a world of magical thought, many people and creatures know the value of pattern items, and guard them accordingly.

Number of Pattern Items

A True pattern can have between zero and five pattern items. Only if a character or place has a True pattern can it have a pattern item. The more powerful a character or place, the more pattern items are likely to exist.

Scholars have long noted that pattern items are created in a flexible sequence, as follows:

- The first pattern item created for a character or place is always a Minor pattern item.
- A Major pattern item for a character or place can only be created once a Minor pattern item exists.
- A Core pattern item for a character or place can only be created after the creation of a Major pattern item.

The sequence is flexible because it never requires the creation of Major or Core pattern items. Nor does it require that Minor items be "upgraded" to Major or Core items. Death's Sea, for example, might have five pattern items, all of them Minor. For Blood Wood, on the other hand, a withered birch might be the only pattern item for the whole Wood, and it might be a Core pattern item.

Key Knowledge

Each pattern item holds one Key Knowledge about a True pattern (this is different from thread items, which contain multiple Key Knowledges). The relationship between the Key Knowledge and the True pattern is based on the type of pattern item the Key Knowledge comes from. A Minor pattern item holds knowledge that is related to, but not integral to, the True pattern. Major pattern items often hold knowledge that is an important part of the True pattern, but is only knowledge created via the pattern item's association with the True pattern. Core pattern items hold knowledge that is an essential part of the True pattern.

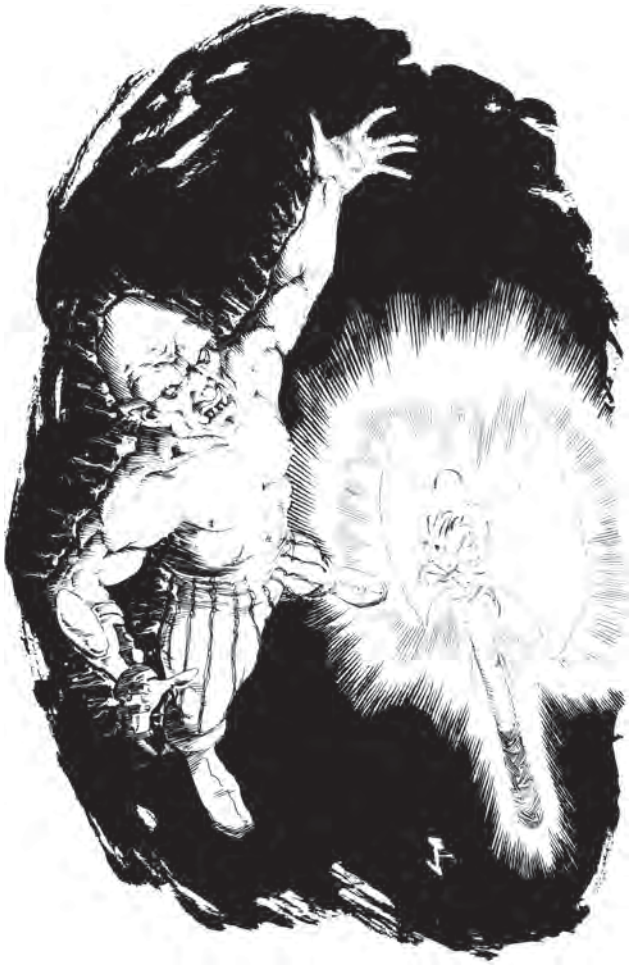
In addition to learning the Key Knowledge held by a pattern item, it is also necessary to know the truth behind the knowledge the pattern item represents.

Grolk enters the village of Corthy, hunting a Horror construct which has badly injured the Archer Delthrien. While in the village he hears a story about how a young woman managed to ward off the creature with a willow-branch talisman. Grolk now knows that willow somehow affects this Horror construct, and reasons it is the kind of information associated with a pattern item. The ability of willow to drive off the construct sounds like a magical interaction derived from the nature of its True pattern. Grolk now needs the specific talisman that drove off the construct; it has become a Minor pattern item for it.

The knowledge in a pattern item always represents at least a portion of the target's True pattern. When trying to discover what knowledge is linked to a pattern item, a character should look for the types of knowledge a True pattern contains:

- The Name associated with the True pattern.
- Ways the Name uses, is affected by, or interacts with magic.
- The Name's history of events, behaviors, and interactions with magic.

Knowing that a Troubadour visited the Kaer Cache Tavern last week is not the kind of information connected to a pattern item. That bit of information is not enough



to help a character know where the Troubadour is now, where he might be in the future, or even his preference in taverns. However, if the character learns that the Troubadour performs at the Kaer Cache Tavern every Thursday, that is something useful. Repetition of this behavior may have worn the habit into the Troubadour's True pattern. The character may now have a piece of information strong enough to be connected to a pattern item.

A character learns that Lord Malban's favorite clothes are made from a magically treated silk. Might this be the kind of knowledge attached to a pattern item? Lord Malban is more likely to wear his favorite clothes than other clothes. Again, repetition may have worn the fact into Lord Malban's True pattern.

Remember that the knowledge alone is not enough. A character must also have a pattern item that exemplifies what he has learned about the owner of a True pattern. Using the previous examples, a character might discover that a mug from the Kaer Cache Tavern is the pattern item. To weave a thread from the knowledge of Lord Malban's clothes, a character would most likely need to obtain one of Lord Malban's favorite robes.

Studying a Pattern Item

Once obtained, a pattern item can be studied in order to use the Key Knowledge that it contains. Learning (or confirming) the Key Knowledge of a pattern item is the same as learning the Key Knowledge of a magic item. The character studies the item using the **Item** or **Weapon History** talent (as described in the **Talents** chapter on p. 190 and p. 211). The item's Spell Defense is determined by the gamemaster, based on the specific type of pattern item studied. The Pattern Item Spell Defense Table shows the typical Spell Defense range for each class of pattern item.

PATTERN ITEM SPELL DEFENSE TABLE

Pattern Item	Spell Defense Range
Minor	7–12
Major	13–18
Core	19+

If the test succeeds, the character has learned the Key Knowledge held by the pattern item. Unlike magic items, further research is not typically necessary; the research has already been done to figure out what the pattern items might be.

Repeated Study Attempts

If the Item or Weapon History Test fails, the character may try again after another period of study. This period of additional study time is based on how many previous attempts he has made to study the same item.

The more a character studies a pattern item, the more the item comes in contact with the character's own True pattern, and the weaker its connection to the parent True pattern becomes. Therefore, characters must be careful not to imprint their own True pattern on the item, as this would destroy the item's value as a pattern item. This caution slows the pace of study. The more study attempts your character makes, the longer he must spend on each attempt.

The Study Time Table lists the additional study time required to study a pattern item after failed attempts. This additional time is cumulative; the second attempt takes a total of two weeks, the third takes three weeks of study, and so forth. After the character has completed this additional study, he may attempt another Item/Weapon History Test. If this test is a failure, he may try again after further study time.

STUDY TIME TABLE

Attempt Number	Required Study Time
1	1 week
2	+1 week
3	+1 week
4	+2 weeks
5	+2 weeks
6	+2 weeks
7	+3 weeks
8	+3 weeks
9	+1 month
10	+1 month
11	+2 months
12	+3 months
13	+4 months
14	+6 months
15+	+1 year

Each day of study requires that the character examine the pattern item for at least one hour each day (as per the descriptions for the **Item** and **Weapon History** talents in the **Talents** chapter on p. 190 and p. 211). If the character must study for weeks or months, the study must continue for six days out of each week. For study periods of a month or more, a character must study in week-long chunks. Any study time less than a week is wasted.

Once the character succeeds at an Item or Weapon History test (as appropriate to the item), the character has learned the Key Knowledge for that pattern item, and no further tests are required.

Research

Another method of obtaining the Key Knowledges for a True pattern is through research. People, places, and things important enough to have True patterns also tend to be remembered by those who interact with them. For example, the Name of the Archer who fired the arrow that killed the Horror that had been terrorizing a village is likely to be a part of the history of the village.

By researching the history and activities of a True pattern, it is possible to obtain its Key Knowledges, but this often takes a long time (much longer than the time needed to learn that information from a pattern item). Some legends tell of Wizards spending years researching a True pattern, only to discover that the pattern had changed so much before they could use the Key Knowledges obtained that all their research was wasted.

To research a True pattern requires that the character have the Research skill. To obtain information, he makes a Research Test against the Difficulty Number of the information sought. The gamemaster determines this number by estimating how hard the task should be. For more information, see **Research** in the **Skills** chapter, p. 245.

Spend Legend Points

Once a character knows one or more Key Knowledges of a True pattern, it becomes possible for him to weave a thread to the True pattern. First, however, he must spend Legend Points to buy the required number of thread ranks. As opposed to magic items, where the cost is determined by the item, the cost of thread ranks woven to the True patterns of people and places is the same as the cost for ranks of a First Circle talent (see **Spending Legend Points** in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 420).

Thread ranks are purchased just like ranks for talents. The cost for increasing the rank of a thread depends on the new rank.

Farliv wants to buy a Rank 1 thread to connect to the True pattern of a foe. Consulting the Talent Rank Cost Table, his player sees that this would cost Farliv 100 Legend Points.

Jerreck wants to increase the rank of a thread he has attached to the True pattern of Blood Wood. The thread is currently Rank 3. Consulting the Talent Rank Cost Table, his player finds that the cost of increasing the rank from 3 to 4 is 500 Legend Points.

The maximum rank for a thread woven to the True pattern of a person or place depends on the class of pattern item used. A Minor pattern item can have up to a Rank 5 thread attached to it, Major pattern items can support up to Rank 9 threads, while Core pattern items have no maximum thread rank. The maximum thread rank is still limited by the Thread Weaving talent rank of the character weaving the thread, so if the character's Thread Weaving talent rank is lower, that lower limit applies.

Weave the Thread

Once a character has spent Legend Points for the thread rank, he can then weave the thread to the subject's True pattern.

If the character learned the Key Knowledge from a pattern item, the character must be in possession of the pattern item he studied in order to successfully weave the thread. The pattern item is a material link between the character and the True pattern to which he is weaving the thread.

A single pattern item can have only one thread associated with it. When increasing the rank of a pre-existing thread, the new thread replaces the previous one. Because Minor pattern items are only loosely connected to a subject's True pattern, Thread Weaving Tests made for a Minor pattern item require a Good result.

To weave the thread, the character makes a Thread Weaving Test against a Difficulty Number based on the thread rank, as shown in the Thread Weaving Difficulty Table. If the Thread Weaving Test succeeds, the character has woven a thread to the True pattern.

As with Thread Weaving Tests for thread items, if the test fails the character can make no further attempts at weaving the thread until he has gained a new rank in the Thread Weaving talent. Neither the Legend Points nor the old thread (if one existed) are lost, however. As soon as the character increases his rank in Thread Weaving, he can try again to weave the thread.

Using Woven Threads

When a character weaves a thread to a True pattern, that act establishes a link between the character's True pattern and the True pattern of the target. The weaving character can use that link to boost one or more of his own abilities when interacting with the subject of the True pattern. To do this, he attaches the thread to one of the following abilities:

- Any one Talent
- Physical Defense
- Spell Defense
- Social Defense
- Wound Threshold
- Mystic Armor

When the character interacts with the True pattern to which he has woven a thread, the thread rank increases the ability to which it is attached. In the case of talents, this increases the rank and affects everything that is based on the rank, such as the final step, or duration of the talent. The increased rank does not, however, count when checking to see if the character qualifies to advance to the next circle (see **Advancing Discipline Circles** in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 424). For other abilities, each thread rank increases the value of the ability by +1.

Me'gana weaves a Rank 2 thread from the True pattern of Noraim, a Theran Wizard, to her Melee Weapons talent. This thread increases her Melee Weapons talent by 2 ranks when interacting with Noraim.

Jerreck weaves a Rank 3 thread from the True pattern of the Horror Verjigorm to his Spell Defense, thus increasing his rating whenever he is interacting with the Hunter of Great Dragons. Good thing, too. He's going to need all the help he can get!

The number of abilities that can be increased by a single thread is based on the type of pattern item used to create the thread. A thread woven from a Minor pattern item can only increase one ability. A thread woven from a Major pattern item can increase up to three abilities. A single thread woven from a Core pattern item can increase up to five abilities. When increasing multiple abilities, all attached abilities are increased by the thread's rank.

After successfully studying a Major pattern item belonging to a Theran Wizard of Vivane, Me'gana weaves a Rank 3 thread to three abilities: her Melee Weapons talent, her Physical Defense, and her Spell Defense. When interacting with the Theran Wizard, Me'gana's Melee Weapons talent is increased by +3 ranks (also increasing the step), while her Physical and Spell Defense are each increased by +3.

People

When a character weaves a thread to the True pattern of another person, the weaver can use the link created in one of two fashions. First, he can use it to boost his abilities when interacting with the subject (as described above), or it can be used to boost the abilities of the subject; the subject's True pattern draws energy from the weaver's True pattern through the thread, thereby strengthening it.

If a character wants to boost the abilities of the subject, he chooses one of the subject's abilities to which he will attach the thread. The character can choose any of the same abilities listed above. Threads used in this way work exactly as those already described.

A character must choose how he will use the thread when he first creates it. Once he has chosen, the thread cannot be changed to any other use.

Thom Hammerblade has obtained a Minor pattern item for Me'gana. After studying the pattern item and learning its Key Knowledge, Thom chooses to weave a Rank 1 thread to Me'gana's True pattern in order to boost her Spell Defense. Once the thread is in place, Me'gana's Spell Defense increases by +1.

Places

A character can use threads woven to the True pattern of a place in one of two ways. Just like threads woven to people, the character must choose at the time the thread is first woven and, once chosen, cannot be changed.

First, a character can use the thread ranks to boost abilities, as described above. The thread strengthens the character as long as he remains in that place. For example, if a character has a thread woven to the True pattern of Blood Wood, the thread rank would boost the character's abilities as long as he was in Blood Wood. Once the character leaves Blood Wood he loses the benefit of the thread. He will regain the benefit as soon as he re-enters the Wood.

Unweaving Threads

Optional Rule: Adepts may wish to remove, or "unweave," threads they have previously woven for a variety of reasons. An adept who has unwittingly woven a thread to a cursed or Horror-marked item may want to unweave the thread to escape the effects of the curse or Horror mark. An adept may simply have reached his thread limit but still feel the need to weave a thread to a different pattern. Rather than increasing his Thread Weaving rank or allowing one of his threads to be displaced, he may simply want to unweave a thread.

The optional Unweaving Threads rule provides adepts with a means to do so. To unweave a thread under this rule, an adept must take 5 Strain Points of damage and achieve an Excellent result on a Thread Weaving Test against a Difficulty Number equal to his unlowered Spell Defense plus the thread rank. For example, if a Wizard with a Spell Defense of 10 wants to remove a Rank 5 thread he has attached to a thread item, he would require an Excellent result on a Thread Weaving (15) Test.

Adepts cannot unweave threads woven by others. By unweaving a thread, an adept does not recover the Legend Points he originally spent weaving the thread. Legend Points spent on threads are gone forever and cannot be regained.

Second, the character can increase various game ratings associated with a place. For example, a Wizard might increase the Barrier Rating of the walls of his tower, the Difficulty Number to open the locks on his doors, or even simply enhance the appearance of his library. As noted above, the rank of the thread determines the rating increase.

The Wizard Noraim weaves a Rank 5 thread to the True pattern of his laboratory. He decides to use the thread to make opening locks in his lab a harder proposition for potential intruders. The Difficulty Number for Lock Pick Tests in Noraim's lab increases by +5 with the help of the thread.

Thread Magic and Group True Patterns

Thread magic can be used by groups of people in a special, unique way. By deliberately creating a True pattern for the group, the members of that group can weave threads to it, then use those threads to strengthen their own abilities. This use of thread magic is generally practiced by adventuring groups, but other groups are free to use it as well. It is believed, for example, that the Hand of Corruption has created its own True pattern, enabling its members to enhance their abilities with thread magic.

Creating a Group True Pattern

Just as people, places, and things can have Names, so can groups of people. If all the members of a group can agree upon a Name for the group, that Name can form a True pattern that represents all that the group is, just like other True patterns of people, places, and things. This process is not easy, and requires that the group fulfill the following conditions:

- The group must choose a Name for itself. The Name must represent the past, present, and future of the group.
- Once the group has chosen a Name, its members must also create a symbol for the group. This symbol can be anything that represents the group and its history.
- Each of the members of the group must create a Minor pattern item that represents not only himself, but also the group and that character's role in the group.
- The group must be Named via a specific Naming ritual. This begins to form the group's True pattern.
- All the members must agree to perform a group oath of blood peace. This last act is what concludes the formation of the group True pattern.

Each of these conditions is described in greater detail below.

Choose a Group Name

The group must choose a Name for itself. All the members must agree to the chosen Name. The Name can be anything, but will always represent a part of the group's past, present, or future. Many groups are Named for the character who first gathered the group together.

Thom Hammerblade and his companions wish to create a Name for their group. The group decides that they will be Named "Thom's Adventurers" because Thom was the one who first gathered them together.

Choose a Group Symbol

A group symbol is a small picture or diagram that is a visual representation of the group. Like a group Name, the symbol must represent the group in some way.

Thom's Adventurers decide that the symbol for their group will be that of a sword shattering a stone disk that bears the sigil of a Horror. This symbol represents one of the group's first adventures, in which they destroyed a Horror that had consumed several kaers.

Create Group Pattern Items

Once the group chooses a Name and symbol for itself, each member must create a Minor pattern item that represents himself, the group, and his role in the group. Carving the group symbol into the item is one way to ensure that the pattern item represents the group.

Farliv is an elven Archer and a member of Thom's Adventurers. Farliv must create a Minor pattern item that represents him, the group, and his role in the group. He chooses one of his arrows for his pattern item. The arrow is one that Farliv used to slay a creature during the first adventure he shared with Thom Hammerblade. The arrow represents Farliv's Discipline and his role in the group (Archer) and the group itself, because the arrow was used in his first adventure with the group.

The example above is just one possibility of a character/group pattern item. Players are encouraged to use their imagination when creating these pattern items.

Though almost any item is viable, the gamemaster is the final arbiter of whether it is an acceptable pattern item.

Perform the Naming Ritual

Once the group Name and symbol are chosen and each member has created his pattern item, the group performs the Naming ritual. The ritual involves one member acting as the leader, who states the Name of the group and that its symbol will represent the group. Then each member, starting with the leader, presents himself and his pattern item to the group. The exact ritual varies widely, but a commonly used ritual goes as follows:

"This assembly shall be Named [Group Name]. This symbol represents our present, past, and future, and will be known across all of Barsaive as that of [Group Name]."

"I am Named [character Name]. This [character's pattern item] represents my loyalty to this assembly. I am forever a part of [Group Name]."

Each member in turn recites his Name, pattern item, and his loyalty to the group. After the last member has done so, the leader then invites the members to swear an oath of blood peace.

Group Oath of Blood Peace

The last step in creating a group True pattern involves blood magic. Each of the members must swear a special oath of blood peace to the group. The **Blood Magic** section of the **Workings of Magic** chapter, p. 259, provides information about the blood peace oath, but a few important distinctions need to be made here. The oath is made to the group as a whole, not to each individual member of the group. This means that each member only takes a total of 2 points of damage from the oath of blood peace, not 2 points for every member of the group.

In addition, unlike other oaths of blood peace, all the members of the group must renew a group blood peace at the end of its duration. If all the members of the group do not renew the oath, the group True pattern dissolves, and any threads attached to it are destroyed. Because the oath is renewed and the damage from the oath is sustained, characters who have sworn a group oath of blood peace do not gain the additional point to their Death Rating, and can never heal the lost Damage Points.

Once all the members of the group take the oath of blood peace, the group's True pattern is formed. From then on it is the same as any other True pattern in that it represents everything about the group, it can be accessed via one of its pattern items, and threads can be woven to it.

Character Death or Separation

Because the members of a group jointly formed the group's True pattern, the True pattern dissolves and any threads attached to it are destroyed if any member should die or leave the group. The True pattern dissolves slowly, taking one full day to completely dissolve. If the surviving members of the group wish to save the group's True pattern, they have a day to either (somehow) resurrect the dead character or to reform the True pattern with the remaining members. To do this, they must repeat the process described above. Assuming they keep the same group Name, symbol, and pattern items, all they need to do is perform the Naming ritual and swear a new oath of blood peace.

Remaining group members do not take additional permanent Damage Points from performing the ritual to reform the group.

Adding New Members

If a group decides to add new members to its True pattern, its members must perform the Naming ritual again, this time including the new members in the rite. New members must create a pattern item and then take the group oath of blood peace. After the Naming ritual, the group True pattern is changed to reflect the new members.

Current members of the group do not take additional permanent Damage Points from performing the ritual again, although any new members joining the group do (see **Group Oath of Blood Peace**, p, 271).

Key Knowledges of Group Pattern Items

Because the members of a group must create pattern items of themselves and the group, those pattern items hold Key Knowledges about the True pattern of the group. This has two important consequences.

First, members of the group do not have to obtain Key Knowledges in order to weave threads to the group True pattern, because they already know the Key Knowledges held by the item.

The second consequence is that non-group characters can use these pattern items against the group, just as with pattern items of people and places.

If another character obtains a group pattern item, that individual can learn the Key Knowledges held by the item. The Key Knowledges held by a group pattern item always contains the following information:

- The Name of the group.
- The Names of each of the group's members.
- The Name of the character who created the pattern item.

If a character loses his group pattern item, he cannot weave any more threads to the group True pattern, and any already woven threads will cease to help him until he recovers the item.

Weaving Threads to Group True Patterns

Members of a group that have created a group True pattern can weave threads from their individual True patterns to the group True pattern. These threads can be used to enhance a character's talents or some characteristics (see **Using Woven Threads**, p. 270).

The steps for weaving threads to the group True pattern are the same as for weaving threads to other True patterns, except that a character already has the necessary Key Knowledge. This leaves only two steps for weaving threads, **Spending Legend Points** and **Weaving the Thread**.

Spending Legend Points

When a character wants to weave a thread from his True pattern to a group True pattern, he must first prepare the thread by spending Legend Points. The Legend Point cost for thread ranks woven to group True patterns is the same as that for a Ninth Circle talent, as shown in the Group True Pattern Legend Point Cost Table.

Once a character spends the required Legend Points, he can attempt to weave the thread to the group True pattern.

GROUP TRUE PATTERN LEGEND POINT COST TABLE

Thread Rank	Legend Point Cost
1	300
2	500
3	800
4	1,300
5	2,100

Weaving Threads

Weaving threads to group True patterns is done in exactly the same way as weaving threads to other True patterns. The Difficulty Number is determined by the rank of the thread that must be woven. If the Thread Weaving Test succeeds, the thread is attached; if the test fails, the character must gain a new rank in the Thread Weaving talent before he can try again.

Because the pattern items for a group pattern are Minor pattern items, a Good result is needed on the Thread Weaving Test to successfully weave the thread, just like Minor pattern items for other people and places.

Group True Pattern Thread Limits

Though thread magic usually has a limit of one thread per pattern item, this limit does not apply when weaving threads to a group True pattern.

Because group pattern items are Minor pattern items, a character can have a maximum of five threads woven from a group True pattern to his own. Should a character attempt to weave an additional thread after the fifth, the attempt fails.

ENCHANTING

Of course you must *understand what you are doing before you begin. Enchanting is not for amateurs. For instance, if I add a drop of this elixir, like so, and … Ahem. Well, not quite the result I was expecting. Don't worry, I'm sure your eyebrows will grow back.*

• Gemmar the Enchanter, Human Elementalist •

Enchanting is the art of transforming mundane objects into magical items. Magicians have fine-tuned several methods of enchanting over the centuries, producing a wide variety of magical items, from humble cook pots to the most legendary enchanted blades.

It is important to note that the creation of magical items is an art. Each item, no matter how simple, must be handmade by individual artisans ranging from enchanters and minor adepts to magicians and adventuring adepts. Neither Throal nor Bartertown nor any other city in Barsaive contains an "assembly line" grinding out magical wares on demand.

Because creating magical items is an art, no single set of rules and numbers for enchanting applies in every case. The process of creating such items contains numerous junctures that require input from both the player and the gamemaster to ensure that the item will be suitable for an individual **Earthdawn** game. Gamemasters in particular should take great care to ensure that the powers of new magical items fit into their campaign and will not ruin the balance of their games.

This chapter describes the most common methods of enchanting, the different types of magical items that the enchanting process can produce, information about True elements and orichalcum and their uses in enchanting, and the alchemical methods for creating magical potions and other elixirs.

THE ENCHANTING PROCESS

Enchanting is usually performed by adepts using half-magic and talent knacks, but under the right circumstances, minor enchanter adepts and even mundanes (non-adepts) may enchant items as well. With their affinity for the True elements and orichalcum, Elementalists make the best enchanters of all magician adepts, and many of them choose to specialize in enchanting. Weaponsmiths are also skilled at enchanting, especially weapons and armor.

Adepts of other magician Disciplines may also enchant items, but their enchanting abilities are relatively limited. Wizards represent the next most common set of adepts who practice enchanting and they often experiment with the creation of various magical items simply to deepen their understanding of magical forces.

Nethermancers rarely practice enchanting; when they do, they create magical items using bound spirits and blood magic, two methods generally frowned upon by other magicians and by other Name-givers. Illusionists perform little permanent enchanting, save for items especially related to their Discipline; the permanence of enchanting is of little interest to these masters of the ephemeral.

Creating a magical item involves three main steps:

1. Creating or Obtaining the Item
2. Imbuing the Item with Magical Power
3. Making an Enchanting Test

CREATING OR OBTAINING THE ITEM

Creating or obtaining the item is perhaps the simplest task. Depending on the item, this task may be as simple as purchasing the item or as involved as forging a blade from raw materials. In many cases, fashioning an item to be enchanted involves the use of one or more Craftsman skills and an Artisan skill. Often, characters use orichalcum as a construction material because the metal holds magical power more effectively than any other material.

IMBUING THE ITEM WITH MAGICAL POWER

Once a character has created or obtained the item, he infuses it with magical power. Enchanters use four major techniques to create magical items in **Earthdawn**.

Infusing an item with the essence of one or more of the five True elements (earth, air, fire, water and wood) is the most basic means of enchanting an item, though gathering these rare elements is difficult and weaving them into items requires considerable skill. This method is used almost exclusively by Elementalists, though Weaponsmiths make use of the technique as well.

Naming an item gives it a True pattern and great potential for magical power. All thread items that are powered through a magical connection to their wielder must be Named. The Naming

method is used in all of the Disciplines capable of enchanting.

A magician may also enchant an item by placing a Named, or permanent, spell pattern into the item's pattern. Generally, magicians use Named spells to create minor magical items that can be used by any character, but they may also be used to enhance the abilities of thread items. Adepts of any of the magician Disciplines can create permanent spell patterns.

Finally, a magician may enchant an item by magically placing a spirit in the item's pattern. The spirit may cooperate with the magician, but more commonly the magician binds the spirit against its will. Nethermancers and Elementalists sometimes use this technique, though Elementalists greatly prefer to enchant items by infusing them with True elements.

Weaving True Elements Into Patterns

True elements are often melded or woven into other objects to provide those items with some of the qualities of the element or elements. This weaving process delicately combines the elements together and "grounds" them as part of the material into which they are woven. This makes the elements considerably more stable and permits adepts to combine normally incompatible elements, such as True air and True fire or True air and True water, within an item. (For information on the properties of True elements and rules for gathering them, see **True Elements**, p. 278).

Elementalists and Weaponsmiths may learn the Weave Element talent knack that allows them to weave True elements into items.

Adepts make a Weave Element Test for each True element kernel they want to weave into an item. Weaving each kernel takes one hour. If a Weave Element Test fails, the enchanter has wasted an hour and accomplished nothing, though neither the kernel nor the item are damaged by the attempt. A Pathetic result means the item is ruined and any True elements used are wasted. The enchanter must start over anew.

The Difficulty Number for a Weave Element Test is based on the True element and the item's material, as listed on the Element Weaving Difficulty Table. Certain True elements and materials are less compatible, which makes weaving such combinations together more difficult. For example, True fire generally burns and consumes any material it contacts. Therefore, weaving True fire into most materials is extremely difficult.

Other elements and materials are completely incompatible and cannot be woven together under any circumstances. Any attempt to do so fails and consumes the material. These combinations are listed as "NA" on the table.

If weaving more than one True element into an item, add +1 to the Difficulty Number for each additional element. If any of the elements being combined by their nature cancel each other's effects, add +2 to the Difficulty Number for each opposing element.

An enchanter may lower the Element Weaving Difficulty if he used an Artisan skill to create or modify the item being enchanted. In this case, to lower the Difficulty Number, the enchanter simply makes an Artisan Skill Test. For each result level above Average, subtract –1 from the Element Weaving Difficulty.

The amount of a True element required to construct an item varies greatly. A single kernel may be enough to create a relatively simple item like a firestarter, while hundreds or even thousands of kernels may be needed to make an airship. As a guideline, base the number of kernels of True element required to enchant an item on its cost. For every full 100 silver pieces the item costs, the enchanter must weave in one kernel of True element.

Ardalon Brightsky is an Elementalist attempting to weave a warm cloak for a customer who is planning a trip into the mountains. A warm cloak costs 300 silver pieces, so Ardalon must weave three kernels of True elements into the cloak—one kernel of elemental fire and two kernels of elemental air. Ardalon has used an Artisan skill to embroider the edge of the cloak with magical symbols and runes, so he makes an Artisan Skill Test to reduce the Difficulty Numbers of the Element Weaving Tests. He generates a Good result on his Artisan Skill Test, subtracting –1 from the Difficulty Numbers of all of his Element Weaving Tests. In the first hour he makes a successful Weave Element (8) Test—the base Difficulty Number of weaving True fire to cloth, with a –1 modifier. During the second hour Ardalon makes a successful Element Weaving (6) Test—the base Difficulty Number for combining True air and cloth, +1 for the additional True element, and –1 for the Artisan Skill Test result. He makes a third Element Weaving Test an hour later to weave the final kernel into the material, thus completing the cloak.

ELEMENT WEAVING DIFFICULTY TABLE

Element	Cloth/ Leather	Water	Wood	Stone	Metal
True Air	6	8	9	11	13
True Earth	6	NA	8	6	7
True Fire	9	NA	10	13	15
True Water	8	6	9	11	NA
True Wood	6	NA	6	NA	NA

Naming

As described in the **Workings of Magic** chapter, p. 252, Naming an object or place gives it a True pattern to which others can magically connect their own patterns. Naming a place or thing may also tie it to the True pattern of the Name-giver who Named it, so that the Named thing becomes a pattern item of the individual. In addition, Naming a thing may change its nature in unpredictable ways. For these reasons, Naming is a significant act that characters should never undertake lightly.

Naming is required to create any magical item with a True pattern. All thread items are Named, which allows a wielder to draw on the item's magical energy by connecting threads from his own pattern to the item's pattern. All Legendary items are Named (or re-Named) when they are created, which forms the item's unique pattern.

Naming is the most powerful and flexible method of enchanting items, and only occurs in conjunction with the interaction of magic. All adepts are able to use this method to some degree when creating Legendary items.

Re-Naming Items

On some occasions, creating a magical item (especially a Legendary item) involves re-Naming an existing item. Giving a magical item a new Name changes that item's True pattern irrevocably.

Any threads attached to the item are lost, because the pattern they were attached to no longer exists. The item's powers and Key Knowledges change as well. Generally, the item's new True pattern offers little initial power, but gains strength over time as the item is used to perform legendary deeds.

Re-Naming an item requires considerable magical power, and so gamemasters should carefully consider the full implications of any attempt at re-Naming by player characters.

Creating Permanent Spell Patterns

Magicians can also enchant items by placing Named spells, such as Flying Carpet, Lightning Shield and Weapon Back, on items. This method of enchanting is particularly quick and simple and requires the magician to learn the Name Spell talent knack. The magician simply follows the procedure for creating a permanent spell pattern and pays the appropriate Legend Points to bind the spell to the item (see **Named Spells** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 291).

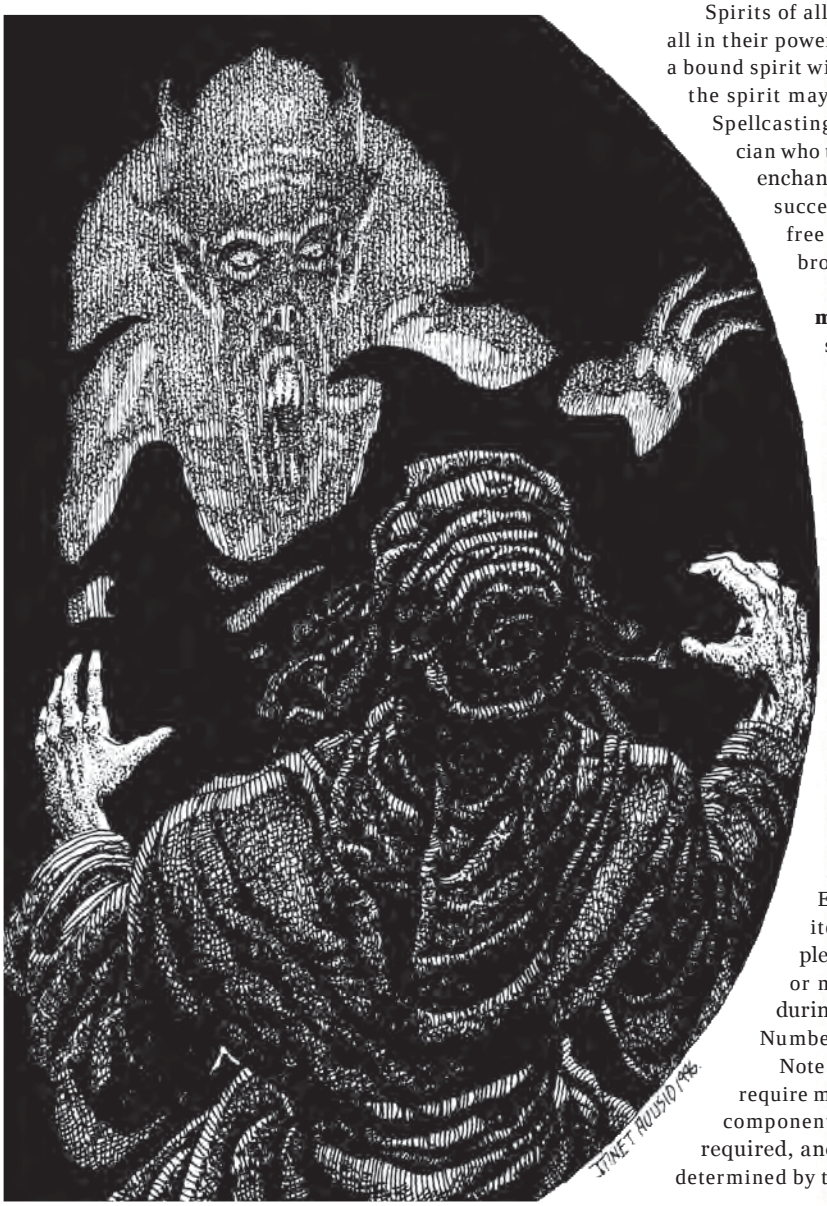
Other magicians may tamper with the results of this technique. Because a magician may discover the Key Knowledges of the item's spell, the powers of permanent spell items may be destroyed through use of the Dispel Magic spell or the Unraveling talent knack in the same manner used to destroy other Named spells.

Spirit Binding

Magicians may also enchant an item by placing a spirit within the item's pattern. This technique, known as **spirit binding**, is practiced by Elementalists and Nethermancers using the Bind Spirit talent knack.

Generally, magicians summon minor, or tasked, spirits when using this technique to create minor magical items or prepare more powerful items for enchantment. More powerful spirits may be bound to an item to give it correspondingly greater magical powers. By binding an elemental spirit or ally to a magical item, a magician gains constant access to the spirit's powers and conceals the spirit's presence.

To bind a tasked, elemental or ally spirit to an item, a magician must first obtain an item made with orichalcum and other magical materials or craft one himself. Only an item fashioned with such materials will successfully hold a spirit. The item may be virtually anything, but well-crafted items are more likely to prevent a trapped spirit from escaping. Once the magician has the finished item in his possession and has summoned the spirit, the adept must perform a special ritual to bind the spirit to the item. This ritual takes a half hour to complete. If the spirit is not cooperative, the magician must restrain it for the duration of the ritual, using a talent such as Elemental Hold, Spirit Hold, or Summoning Circle, or a spell such as Restrain Entity.



At the end of the ritual, the magician makes a Bind Spirit Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. Modify the Difficulty Number by the enchanting modifiers used in preparing the item. If the test succeeds, the spirit is bound to the item: the spirit's physical manifestation (if any) vanishes and its astral form (and consciousness) is trapped within the item's pattern.

The magician who trapped the spirit may communicate with it by touching the item and using a talent such as Spirit Talk or Elemental Tongues. The magician may also use any of the spirit's powers or abilities by touching the item. For example, a magician who has trapped a fire elemental in a sword could use the spirit's Spear power by grasping the weapon and using the spirit's step numbers to make any tests required for the use of that power.

The magician must also take any Strain or other damage required by the use of the spirit power. Any other character who comes in contact with an item containing a bound spirit can attempt to communicate with the spirit if he possesses an appropriate ability. Characters other than the enchanter who trapped the spirit must defeat the trapped spirit in a Contest of Wills in order to use the spirit's powers.

Spirits of all sorts greatly resent being trapped and will do all in their power to escape from being imprisoned in an item. If a bound spirit wins a Contest of Wills against a would-be master, the spirit may attempt to escape from the item by making a Spellcasting Test against the Summoning step of the magician who trapped it. The spirit incurs a penalty equal to the enchanting modifier (see p. 276) of this test. If the test succeeds, the spirit is freed. The spirit also becomes free if the item in which it is trapped is destroyed or broken beyond repair.

See the **Spirits** chapter on p. 358 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for information on spirits and how to summon them.

Making an Enchanting Test

The final step in the enchantment process is the Enchanting Test. This test completes the item and makes it usable by binding the magic to the item. Even if a magician successfully performs all other steps of the enchanting process, the enchantment attempt fails if the Enchanting Test fails. Enchanting requires the knowledge of specific talent knacks or half-magic abilities, available to adepts of certain Disciplines at different Circles. The requirements to create a specific item are mentioned throughout this chapter.

Many feats of enchantment can be complex and demanding. The Difficulty Number for an Enchanting Test depends on the type of magical item being enchanted. In game terms, that complexity can result in an Enchanting Difficulty of 20 or more. Characters may take a variety of actions during the enchanting process to reduce the Difficulty Numbers of Enchanting Tests.

Note that large items (like airships, for example) may require multiple Enchanting Tests, for each of the different components that makes up the item. The number of tests required, and the modifiers applied to each test, should be determined by the gamemaster.

ENCHANTING DIFFICULTY MODIFIERS TABLE	
Technique Employed	**Difficulty Modifier**
True element incorporated	–1 per kernel
Living crystal	–1
Orichalcum incorporated	–2 per kernel
Gathered item material	–1
Artisan skill use	–1 per result level on Artisan Skill Test
Craft Armor/Blade	–1 per result level
Symbolic element	–1 (or more, at gamemaster's discretion)
Bound spirit	–1
Extra time	–1 per week

Enchanting Modifiers

All of the following enchanting modifiers are cumulative, though enchanting modifiers may never reduce the base Enchanting Difficulty by more than half.

Material of Item: The type of material from which the item to be enchanted is made may make the item easier to enchant. For each kernel of a True element woven into the item, subtract –1 from the Enchanting Difficulty. If the item is made from living crystal, subtract –1 from the Enchanting Difficulty. If the item contains orichalcum, subtract –2 from the Enchanting Difficulty for every kernel of orichalcum used in its construction.

Hand-crafted Item: The enchanter may also reduce the Enchanting Difficulty by creating the item himself. If the enchanter personally gathers or makes the material for the item, subtract –1 from the Enchanting Difficulty. If the enchanter uses an Artisan skill on the item, he may make an Artisan Skill Test against a Difficulty Number of 9 or half the item's Enchanting Difficulty, whichever is higher. For each result level above Average, subtract –1 from the Enchanting Difficulty. A Weaponsmith enchanting a weapon or piece of armor he himself has made, subtracts –1 from the Enchanting Difficulty for each result level above Average he achieved on his Craft Armor or Craft Weapon Test. These construction/preparation modifiers are cumulative. For example, a Weaponsmith could use Craft Weapon to make a sword, and then use his Runic Carving skill to improve the sword's suitability for enchantment, for a –2 modifier to the Enchanting Difficulty.

Symbolic Elements: A character may also reduce the Enchanting Difficulty by incorporating symbolic elements such as Deeds or material components in the creation of a magical item. For example, a character creating a magical weapon might decorate it by imbedding the claws or teeth of certain ferocious creatures in the hilt or forge the weapon on a high mountaintop during a fierce thunderstorm. In general, a symbolic element should involve some rare and valuable material or a difficult quest or adventure. Each such element subtracts –1 from the Enchanting Difficulty, but the gamemaster may further lower the Difficulty Number to reward a character who incorporates especially suitable or spectacular symbolic elements (for example, by slaying a powerful monster or embarking on a very difficult quest).

Bound Spirit: Binding a spirit in the pattern of an item provides similar advantages to incorporating True elements into an item, and subtracts –1 from the Enchanting Difficulty.

Additional Preparation: A character may lower the Enchanting Difficulty by taking longer to prepare the item and performing minor rituals to strengthen his magic. Each additional week of preparation subtracts –1 from the Enchanting Difficulty.

Creating Magical Items

Magical items in **Earthdawn** fall into two broad categories: common items and thread items. Common items are those magical objects that can be used by anyone who knows how they work. Readily available throughout Barsaive, these items include day-to-day tools like magical cook pots, firestarters, light quartz and warm cloaks, as well as less common items such as crystal armor, fire cannons and airships.

Thread items are considerably rarer than common items, though a certain number of less powerful thread items can be found for sale in many major cities across Barsaive. All thread items have Names, and therefore True patterns. These patterns enable adepts with the Thread Weaving talent to attach threads to the items and tap into the items' magical powers. Thread items have much greater potential power than common items, but only characters who can attach threads to them may use them.

The time to create an item varies greatly. If not noted in the sections following, the gamemaster should determine the time required to make an item, based on the type of item and what he thinks works best for his campaign. Most of the tasks involved are fairly fast, however, since they require the use of a talent. Similarly, unless noted, the cost of a magical item depends on the materials used and the time put into it. The material costs given and the general pricing of items in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 432, should help the gamemaster to determine this.

Common Items

While many magical items become the stuff of legend in Barsaive, the vast majority of such items fulfill rather mundane functions in the everyday lives of Barsaive's people. Warm cloaks, firestarters and waterproof boots are just a few of the common magical items that Barsaive's smiths, weavers and other craftsmen infuse with minor magical qualities in order to increase their usefulness or beauty. These minor items may offer little more than convenience to adventuring adepts, but they make up the largest part of an enchanter's or magical crafter's work.

Typically, craftsmen give these items their magical properties by having an Elementalist or Weaponsmith adept weave True elements into the items' patterns as they design and create them. Each True element gives an item unique characteristics. See **True Elements**, p. 278, for descriptions of the True elements and **Weaving True Elements Into Patterns**, p. 274, for the rules for weaving them into items.

Occasionally, magicians create minor magical items by casting a permanent, Named spell on an object. Non-thread items created in this way are usually known as **minor talismans**, and most are owned by adventuring adepts and the wealthy. Nethermancers and Elementalists can create minor magical items by binding a spirit in the pattern of an object. All Enchanting Tests for common items use a Difficulty Number of 13. All appropriate enchanting modifiers apply. Generally, the cost of materials to create common magical items, including True element kernels, is one-quarter to one-half of the purchase price of the finished item.

Blood Charms

No blood magic is used to create blood magic charms; these charms are minor magical items that require a small amount of the wearer's blood (life force) in order to bond to the wearer and to activate the charm's magical power. Some charms, like the Death Cheat and Desperate Blow charms, temporarily provide the wearer with some additional ability. Others, such as the Targeting Eye or Astral-Sensitive Eye charms, are fairly permanent additions to the user's body that provide a constant advantage. The blood magic ritual that bonds the charm to the wearer takes only a moment and requires no test, only the expenditure of the appropriate number of permanent Damage Points.

Nethermancers learn to produce blood charms through the use of half-magic at Fourth Circle. All other magicians use the Alchemy skill to produce blood charms. The magician creates the charm by treating an item of living crystal in a special alchemical solution for one week. The materials for a single-charm supply of solution generally cost about half the price of the blood charm. The solution alters the living matrix of the crystal so that it may receive the life force of its wearer and channel the magical energy of his life force back to him.

Creating blood charms requires an Alchemy Test or a Perception-based Half-Magic Test against a Difficulty Number based on the advantage or ability of the charm, as shown on the Blood Charm Table in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 443. All appropriate enchanting modifiers apply (because the charm must be made of living crystal, the Difficulty Number already accounts for that modifier). If the test succeeds, the charm is created.

If it fails, the character has wasted his time and materials and must start over. A Pathetic result means something has gone wrong with the process. In this case, the attempt to create a blood charm instead produces a dangerous or cursed charm—the gamemaster determines the exact effects of the unpredictable process. An alchemist may produce more than one blood charm at a time, but adds +5 to the Difficulty Number for each additional charm he wants to create.

Gamemasters may allow characters to create new blood charms with unique effects. For more information and guidelines on how to develop new blood charms, refer to the **Blood Magic** chapter on p. 139 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**.

Living Armor

Living armor can be crafted from fernweave and living crystal. Only Weaponsmiths possess the skill required to shape the delicate patterns of living material into living armor. Their strong rapport with elemental earth and all living things gives obsidimen Weaponsmiths a significant advantage in crafting living armor. Obsidimen gain a +2 bonus to any Enchanting Tests they make when creating or repairing living armor.

Crafting living armor is a Perception-based Half-Magic ability that Weaponsmiths learn at Fifth Circle. The Enchanting Difficulty for each type of living armor appears in the Armor and Shield Tables in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 439.

Fernweave armor and **ferndask** shields are crafted from specially cultivated plants that are magically coaxed to grow into the proper form. The enchanter uses additional magic to tailor the armor to the wearer's exact measurements. Seedling plants require 3 months to mature, but many merchants sell mature plants for 1 silver piece per pound. Producing finished fernweave armor from a sufficient amount of the proper plants requires only a single week of work and a successful Enchanting Test. A shield can be made in half this time, just 3 days.

Blood pebbles are specially enchanted stones of living crystal. The enchanter shapes the small stones of living crystal, treats the pebbles in an alchemical solution for one week, then at the end of that time makes an Enchanting Test. Only Weaponsmiths may implant or remove blood-pebble armor, a process that requires a full eight hours of work. No test is required to implant blood pebble armor, and some Weaponsmiths possess Artisan skills that allow them to implant colored blood pebbles in various designs and patterns. The blood-pebble armor produced by these adepts often fetches as much as two or three times the price of standard blood-pebble armor. In order to bind the armor to him and receive the magical advantage of blood-pebble armor, the wearer must take 4 permanent Damage Points, which cannot be healed as long as the character wears the blood pebbles. The cost of materials for creating blood-pebble armor is 150 silver pieces—half the cost of the finished item.

To create **living crystal** armor, an enchanter must give the raw crystal a rough shape, then immerse it in an alchemical solution and work the crystal as it grows to achieve the desired form. A successful Enchanting Test completes the armor. This process requires one month of work. (Other types of armor made of living crystal, such as crystal ringlet and crystal plate armor, are not considered living armor. Weaponsmiths use half-magic to craft these types of armor using standard methods such as those described in the Craft Armor or Craft Weapon skills.

Only Weaponsmiths may implant or remove living crystal armor, which takes three days of work. The armor's wearer takes 5 permanent Damage Points that cannot be healed as long as he wears the armor. This damage represents the blood magic needed to bond the armor to the wearer and to sustain the armor's growth and self-regenerating properties. Materials for constructing living crystal armor cost 550 silver pieces—half the cost of the finished item.

Other types of living armor or shields cost similar amounts to make—usually half the cost of the finished item.

Spell Matrix Objects

Matrix objects provide magicians with additional spell matrices for storing spell patterns. Like the talents, matrix objects can contain standard spell, armored, enhanced, or shared matrices. All matrix objects must be constructed from material woven with one or more True elements, orichalcum, or both (see **Weaving True Elements Into Patterns**, p. 274).

The Enchanting Test for making matrix objects requires the use of one of the Create Armored, Enhanced, Shared, or Spell Matrix Object talent knacks (see the **Talent Knacks** chapter, p. 219), appropriate to the type of matrix object being created. To enchant a matrix object, the magician must make a successful Enchanting Test against the matrix object's Enchanting Difficulty (see **Thread Objects** in the **Magical Treasures** chapter on p. 173 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). All appropriate enchanting modifiers apply. The enchanting process requires at least one week of uninterrupted work.

Only rarely do matrix objects appear for sale, as magicians usually create their own matrix objects in order to tailor the particular item to their specific needs and desires, and such items usually become pattern items of their creators.

Thread Items

Thread items are magical items that possess True patterns. By weaving threads to a thread item, a character may connect his own True pattern to the item's True pattern and use his own command of the force of magic to enhance the item's power. Thread items have relatively simple patterns and possess only one Key Knowledge, usually their Name.

The Enchanting Test for making thread items requires the use of the Create Thread Item talent knack (see the **Talent Knacks** chapter, p. 219). The magical ritual used to create a thread item requires 1 month of work. During this time the adept can perform only ordinary daily tasks, such as eating, sleeping, light reading and Karma rituals, and must be in good health throughout—free of any damage or Wounds.

At the end of the ritual period, the adept makes a single Enchanting Test. The Difficulty Number of the test is equal to the thread item's Spell Defense + (the maximum number of threads the item may hold × the item's maximum thread rank). Base these numbers on the Spell Defense and maximum thread/rank limits of published thread items. All appropriate enchantment modifiers apply.

If the Enchanting Test succeeds, the item is enchanted and can be used normally. If the test fails, the item does not retain the magical qualities the enchanter intended, but the enchanter may reuse the materials in another attempt to create a thread item. If the test yields a Pathetic result, the gamemaster may decide that the materials used in the ritual are ruined, or that the failed enchantment produced a cursed item or created some other magical effect.

The cost of most thread item materials equals one-quarter to one-half the purchase price of the finished item. The material cost covers all enchanting materials, including True elements and orichalcum.

Legendary Items

Legendary items represent the rarest and most valuable magical treasures in **Earthdawn**. Unlike other magical items, Legendary items cannot be manufactured. An item acquires Legendary status when a character or hero uses the item to perform a legendary deed. The deed transforms the item into a treasure of heroic proportions. The deed alters the item's True pattern so that the item shares in the power of the legend that created it and provides the item with the potential to grow increasingly powerful.

Any object, including a common magical item or even a non-magical object, may become a Legendary item, though most Legendary items begin as thread items because thread objects possess the greatest magical potential. Any character may transform an item into a Legendary item by using it to perform an Empowering Deed. The **Empowering Deed** is the heroic feat that provides the spark of magic needed to transform the item's True pattern and mould it to the character's legend.

The gamemaster determines appropriate Empowering Deeds, but all deeds should be events of epic proportions. The character must perform a significant portion of the deed alone, and the item that takes on Legendary status must be the primary item the character uses to perform the deed. For example, a character who wants to empower a spiked mace by using it to slay a fierce, apparently unbeatable creature cannot kill the creature with spells or other weapons.

By adjusting the difficulty of these deeds, the gamemaster may control the number of Legendary items that appear in his game. As a general guideline, perhaps only one in fifty adepts ever create a Legendary item, and fewer still create more than one during their lifetimes. Gamemasters should consider making the deeds that transform common or non-magical items into Legendary items even more difficult than usual.

In addition to performing the Empowering Deed, the character must re-Name the item either during or immediately after the deed. The new Name should reflect the altered nature of the item, because the Name and the Empowering Deed form the basis of the item's new True pattern. Characters who have achieved at least Level 1 Legendary Status (see **Legendary Status** in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 430) may re-Name items for themselves.

> *If Me'gana uses her favorite sword to kill a particularly nasty Horror in a climactic battle, she may choose to re-Name her weapon Me'gana's Sword of Horror-slaying.*

Their heroic deaths give characters using the dying legacy option of sacrifice magic a minimum of Level 1 Legendary Status (see **Blood Magic** in the **Workings of Magic** chapter, p. 262).

Re-Naming a Legendary item alters the item's pattern, so the character loses any threads currently woven to the item and must weave a new thread at Rank 1. This usually requires no special effort from the adept, however, as the Rank 1 Pattern Knowledge of the re-Named item is most often its new Name. The gamemaster determines the new abilities, thread ranks and Key Knowledges of the item.

Because the Empowering Deed essentially equals the item's Key Knowledge, the gamemaster may require that characters perform additional Empowering Deeds in order to increase the item's thread rank beyond one or two. Rather than simply assigning 5 ranks to a single deed, which gives the item certain limits, requiring multiple Empowering Deeds allows a character to create a very powerful Legendary item by using it to perform multiple heroic acts. For more information and examples of Legendary items, see the **Magical Treasures** chapter on p. 161 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**.

True Elements

The True elements are the magical essences of the five elemental planes—air, earth, fire, water and wood—concentrated into physical form on the material plane. These highly magical substances form the basis of many of the magical arts in the world of **Earthdawn**. Magicians make extensive use of a rare form of True earth known as orichalcum in magical work.

A single unit of a True element is known as a kernel, so called because it is similar in size to a kernel of corn. The exact size of an elemental kernel may vary, depending on the purity and strength of the sample. Very pure kernels of True elements are usually quite small but offer great magical power.

True elements occur in places where the barriers between the physical world and the elemental planes are thinnest. In such places, small portions of the magical essences of the elements collect in a material form that can be gathered using specific techniques.

True air is found high in the sky and in high places of powerful winds, such as lofty mountaintops. It usually appears as small swirls of pure, cold air that almost scintillates. True earth is found deep in the ground or sometimes on the sides of mountains where it has been exposed by natural geological activity. It usually appears as semi-translucent crystal of varying gemlike colors. True fire is found in places of great heat or burning, such as the Death's Sea and volcanoes. On rare occasions it forms in large forest fires or other conflagrations. True fire appears as a flame or point of nearblinding red-white light. True water is found deep in the sea, at the surface of storm-tossed seas (lifted from the depths), at the bottom of rushing rivers (or in their rapids) or in waterfalls. It appears as pure, cold water that sparkles more brightly than natural water. True wood is found only in the deep-

est primeval forests. It is the rarest of the True elements because of the devastation wrought by the Horrors and the resulting corruption of places such as the Poison Forest. Despite the corruption of its inhabitants, the Blood Wood remains an excellent source of True wood.

The True elements combine with each other in various ways based on their natures. Each element can be neutralized by one of the other elements as described in *The Litany of the Elements*, an ancient oral tradition taught to Elementalists throughout Barsaive:

Wood destroys Earth, by covering it.
Fire destroys Wood, by burning it.
Water destroys Fire, by quenching it.
Air destroys Water, by drying it.
Earth destroys Air, by smothering it.

Any time a portion of a True element is combined with an equal part of its opposing element, the first True element is destroyed. When combined, some of the True elements, such as True fire and True air, can produce spectacular and explosive results. Because of this potential, kernels of True elements are always stored separately from one another.

Except for True wood, True elements must be stored in containers made of orichalcum (see the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 443, for details). True water can be stored briefly in non-orichalcum containers, but after two or three days the True water will begin seeping through the container.

Properties of True Elements

Each True element contains unique magical properties. By weaving a True element into an item, a craftsman can give that item the True element's properties.

True air allows items such as small flight daggers, flying carpets and even the massive stone airships of the Theran Armada to float or fly. True air also has cooling properties and can provide the air needed to survive harsh conditions. These properties are incorporated in items such as cooling stones, message stones designed to recall sounds, and effervescent liquids that enable a user to breathe underwater for short periods.

True earth has properties of solidity and strength. This element endows items with great durability and resistance to magic, and is used to strengthen stone, metal and other earth-based materials in construction and forging. Craftsmen also use True earth as a grounding medium when combining other True elements.

Living crystal is a form of elemental earth that grows in deep subterranean pockets or along exposed mountain slopes. In Barsaive, living crystal is found and mined almost exclusively in the Twilight Peaks, though it has been found in the Scytha and Caucavic mountains as well. Living crystal occurs in a rainbow of different colors and opacities, from clear and colorless to dark and almost opaque. Normally, living crystal grows quite slowly. Individual crystals may grow for years or even decades before reaching any significant size. However, certain magic and alchemical processes speed the growth process. Living crystal is used for many magical items, especially items that employ blood magic to tap into the user's own life energies. Typically, the crystal is used in blood charms, types of living armor, and some of the thread items found among the crystal raiders of the Twilight Peaks.

True fire provides heat, light and energy. Kernels of True fire and water woven together with living crystal create the light quartz used in kaers and cave exploration. Craftsmen also use True fire for household items such as firestarters and cooking pots, and in the fire engines that drive t'skrang riverboats and fuel fire cannons. Adepts often temper True fire with another element, such as True water, to keep its power in check.

True water is a cooling, refreshing and resilient medium. Craftsmen use it to create items of great suppleness and flexibility, to waterproof objects, and to craft moisture barriers. True water is also used to soften True earth and make it more pliable, and woven with True air to take advantage of the combined cooling and soothing properties of the two elements.

Generally, craftsmen use **True wood** to make items that are strongly tied to life, such as shepherd staves, scarecrows and other farm implements. Often associated with items of knowledge and beauty, magicians use this element for items such as runic sticks, magical tablets and writing instruments. Though magicians rarely combine True wood and other True elements, certain craftsmen

create exceptional musical instruments by weaving together a combination of True air and True wood.

Gathering and Mining True Elements

True elements can be collected in two ways: gathering and mining. Gathering involves collecting kernels of the True element by hand when using half-magic, a painstaking technique used only by Elementalists. Mining requires the use of special equipment made from orichalcum, and also involves considerable effort and potential danger.

The Therans use slaves for their large-scale element-mining operations because of the many hazards involved.

True air miners use fine-mesh orichalcum nets to catch and hold kernels of True air. They deploy such nets from airships sailing through a storm or an area of very high winds. As kernels of True air land in the nets, the miners transfer the True element to orichalcum containers. Because True air must be mined in stormy and windy conditions, skilled Air Sailors are in great demand to guide mining ships. Despite this precaution, fierce storms often destroy the wooden ships used by Barsaivian miners. The stone airships favored by Theran air miners generally fare better, but even these vessels occasionally go down in a storm or come under attack from elemental creatures that slip through the spaces between the physical and elemental worlds.

Barsaivians used True earth to magically reinforce the protective walls of kaers and citadels during the Scourge, but the True element is also a common component of a wide variety of ordinary magical items. True earth is the least hazardous True element to mine and can be collected using various traditional mining techniques. True earth also tends to be the least powerful True element per kernel, however, and bulk mining only yields large numbers of low-potency kernels. Careful direct gathering yields smaller, more potent kernels, which usually appear as valuable gemstones.

Mining True fire requires special tools crafted from orichalcum, which True fire miners use to scoop up fire kernels. True fire kernels must be immediately transferred to containers of solid orichalcum, as they burn through any other material. In one method of mining True fire, fire miners use airships to skim the surface of the Deaths Sea and cast kernels of True air onto its molten surface. The True air causes explosions in the fiery sea that often stir up new pockets of True fire. This technique produces quite lucrative results, but the hazards of the sea itself and its deadly creatures claim many mining ships and crews—a possible drawback to offset the advantages. Other crews mine True fire in active volcanoes, where they face dangerous creatures as well as overwhelming heat and toxic fumes.

True water miners cast orichalcum-laced nets into deep waters to dredge kernels of True water from the depths. The miners then transfer the kernels to decanters of orichalcum, or to ordinary jars or bottles for short periods of time. As do all miners of True elements, True water miners must brave hazardous conditions in unknown waters, dangerous aquatic creatures, and pirates eager to capture a valuable cargo.

The limited availability of True wood prevents entrepreneurs from mining this element. Instead, it must be collected according to a special gathering ritual, usually from virgin forests and jungles protected by dangerous predators or fierce tribes.

Gathering Tests

ELEMENT GATHERING DIFFICULTY TABLE

Element Gathered	Difficulty Number
True Air	10
True Earth	6
True Fire	12
True Water	10
True Wood	8

To gather a True element, an Elementalist must first locate a deposit of the element. Finding a deposit of a True element requires careful research, a little prospecting and some luck. Because most known deposits of True elements have been claimed long ago by miners and magicians, many Name-givers roam Barsaive for years, vainly searching for a mother lode of True elements that will make them rich. Adepts attempting to acquire material from established elemental deposits must first deal with any existing claimants to the area.

Elementalists can determine if a given area is likely to yield a True element by making a Perception-based Half-Magic Test against a Difficulty Number based on the Elementalist's familiarity with the region. The Difficulty Number for this test ranges from 6 (if the Elementalist knows the area well) to 15 or more (if he is looking at the locale on a map for the first time). If the test succeeds, the Elementalist knows whether or not the area will produce True elements.

Once an Elementalist has located a source of True elements, he can make a second Perception-based Half-Magic Test, against the appropriate Difficulty Number shown in the Element Gathering Difficulty Table, to gather the elements. A Gathering Test requires one full day. The adept gathers one kernel of the True element for each result level he achieves on the Gathering Test; an

Average result yields one kernel, a Good result yields two kernels, and so on.

Orichalcum

Orichalcum is a rare, unique form of True earth that contains the essences of all of the True elements. It has a rich, natural orange-gold color and can be worked and polished to a bright finish much like silver or gold. Orichalcum is a fairly soft metal, but Weaponsmiths often alloy it with harder materials, such as bronze or iron, to produce enchanted weapons of great strength.

Orichalcum occurs naturally in those rare areas where deposits of the five True elements interact, such as volcanic mountain peaks and the regions near the Deaths Sea. Orichalcum can also be created magically by combining the True elements according to secret rituals and formulas that are carefully and jealously guarded by the adepts who know them.

Because it contains all of the True elements, orichalcum is a highly magical material that, combined with other materials, produces magical items more powerful than those created using only one or two of the True elements. Adepts in Barsaive also favor orichalcum as a component for enchanting, because items fashioned with this elemental metal easily hold even the most powerful enchantments. The metal can also be treated to make it highly resistant to magic. When prepared in this manner, orichalcum makes an ideal material for anti-magical armor and for containers designed to hold volatile magical elements. Coins made from orichalcum are often used for various spells and enchantments, such as the Ritual of the Ghost Master talent (see the **Talents** chapter, p. 198).

Mining Orichalcum

Orichalcum occurs naturally in areas of volcanic activity or near deep veins of True earth. Skilled prospectors and miners typically look for formations of True earth when searching for orichalcum. The Orichalcum Wars that took place prior to the Scourge prompted a massive search for the metal, and many of Barsaive's largest orichalcum deposits were claimed during this resource rush. Given the value of the metal, discovery of any new orichalcum deposits undoubtedly will attract the attention of powerful groups and individuals intent on claiming the ore. For this reason, gamemasters may want to strictly control the appearance of new orichalcum deposits in their game.

If the gamemaster chooses to allow the player characters to find an unclaimed orichalcum source or mine an existing deposit, the adepts may use standard mining techniques to recover the raw orichalcum. Once recovered, the raw metal must be carefully purified for magical use by an Elementalist using a Half-Magic Test. The base Difficulty Number for the test is 6. Add +1 to the Difficulty Number for every orichalcum kernel in it. For example, refining an amount of raw orichalcum equalling 10 kernels requires a successful Half-Magic (16) Test.

The Half-Magic Test requires one week of uninterrupted time. If the test fails, the raw orichalcum is rendered useless for all magical purposes, including the creation of magical items and containers to hold True elements.

Creating Orichalcum

Adepts may use two methods to magically combine True elements and create orichalcum. In both methods, the adept melts ore samples of True earth in a forge heated by True fire burning True wood, fired by bellows that drive in puffs of True air. The adept works the molten material with special rituals and then cools it in True water to form orichalcum.

The first method is a blood magic ritual that Weaponsmiths learn at Fourteenth Circle (see the **The Value of Strong Arms and Stronger Minds** chapter, p. 152). To begin, the Weaponsmith must obtain equal amounts of the True elements for the process. The combined value of these elements equals the value of the orichalcum produced in the ritual. After gathering his materials, the Weaponsmith makes a Perception-based Half-Magic Test and takes 1 permanent Damage Point. The base Difficulty Number for the test is 15. Add +1 to the Difficulty Number for every kernel gathered orichalcum will produce. For example, a Weaponsmith who wants to create 5 kernels of orichalcum (about half an ounce of the metal) must make a successful Half-Magic (20) Test. If the test succeeds, the ritual produces the desired amount of orichalcum in one week of uninterrupted time. If the test fails, the True elements are not combined harmoniously and are wasted. If the test yields a Pathetic result, the elements explode when combined, with a Damage step equal to half the test's Difficulty Number. No armor protects against this damage.

The second method for creating orichalcum is through use of the Create Orichalcum talent knack, available to Weaponsmiths and Elementalists (see the **Talent Knacks** chapter, p. 219). This method takes considerably longer than the first but is safer.

To begin, the character must obtain equal amounts of the True elements. The combined value of the elements equals the value of the orichalcum produced. Next, the adept makes a Create Orichalcum (6) Test. Add +1 to the Difficulty Number for every kernel gathered orichalcum will produce. If the test succeeds, the ritual produces the desired orichalcum in one month of uninterrupted time. If the test fails, the ingredients are wasted, but there are no other side-effects (like an explosion).

During this period, the adept cannot adventure or undertake any other activities other than eating, sleeping and light reading and must be in good health—he must be free of damage or Wounds. The adept may also meditate to improve talents, perform Karma rituals and learn spells during this time, but he cannot train for a higher Circle.

Uses for Orichalcum

Most commonly, orichalcum is used for a broad variety of magical enchantments, especially the manufacture of magical items. Magic items made with orichalcum are easier to enchant than items made of other materials, because the magical metal more readily captures and holds magical energy. Though orichalcum coins are minted in much the same way as other money, they are rarely used for currency. The symbol of the coin allows characters to use the orichalcum in various magical rituals such as training pledges, and the orichalcum tithing performed by Elementalists.

Orichalcum is also used for containers designed to hold magical materials such as True elements, as well as in the containment vessels of fire cannons. Therans also use orichalcum to produce magic-resistant chains for imprisoning adepts and magicians.

Purchasing True Elements

Although True elements are difficult to obtain, some merchants offer them for purchase. Prices vary per kernel, as shown in the True Element Kernal Costs Table.

True elements are considered to have a Rare or Very Rare availability, reflecting the difficulty of creating or mining the element, and are normally only offered for purchase from the largest markets, such as those found in cities (see **Trading** in the **Skills** chapter, p. 249, and **Purchasing Goods** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 432, for more information).

TRUE ELEMENT KERNEL COST TABLE

True Element	Cost per Kernel	Availability
True Air	50–100	Very Rare
True Earth	5–10	Rare
True Fire	50–100	Very Rare
True Water	5–10	Rare
True Wood	25–50	Very Rare
Orichalcum	500–1,000	Very Rare

Spell Magic

The way of the magician is both power and danger.
A spell, like any thing of power, is often a two-edged sword.

• Mestoph, Elven Nethermancer •

All adepts use magic to power their talents. Many characters use their ability to wield magic to find, learn about, and use fantastic magical items and weapons. A few specialize in the use of arcane magics called spell magic. Characters that specialize in spell magic are known as magicians. These characters learn to create the patterns of spells and channel pure magical energy through those patterns to affect the physical world. This chapter describes the basic elements of spellcasting, gives the procedure for casting spells of all types, and warns characters of the dangers of certain ways of casting spells.

About Spellcasting

Characters can cast spells using one of three different methods. The three share similar elements, but each also differs slightly from the others. The first, and most common method is referred to simply as **spellcasting**. The safest way to cast spells, this method requires the use of spell matrices, and is sometimes called **matrix casting**.

The second method of spellcasting, **raw magic** casting, is the most dangerous. Using this method, a magician draws energy directly from astral space and channels it through his body. Raw magic casting usually serves as a last-resort method of casting spells. For example, a magician has spell matrices available, but the spells attuned to the matrices are not the ones he needs. If he has no time to realign his spells, even by Reattuning on the Fly, he might risk casting raw magic simply to survive.

Casting raw magic can (and usually does) inflict physical damage on the magician. In addition, a magician casting raw magic momentarily abandons the teachings of his Discipline that allow him to draw only pure magical energy into his spells. The polluted energy the caster draws from the astral plane allows Horrors to locate magicians casting such spells and mark them.

The last method is called **grimoire casting**. As its name implies, this method enables a magician to cast spells directly from a grimoire, rather than using a spell matrix. It is a slower and more difficult method than either matrix casting or raw magic. It is safer than raw magic, but still carries its share of risk. The various methods of spellcasting are detailed later in this chapter.

Talents for Casting Spells

In order to cast spells, all magicians must use the Spellcasting and Thread Weaving talents. These talents allow magicians to power a spell by shaping its pattern, and cast the spell.

In order to minimize the danger from the Horrors, a magician also needs the Spell Matrix talent. This talent provides a magician a safe conduit for transferring magical energy from astral space to the physical world. As a magician gains experience, he learns to channel more magical energy into his spells and uses the Willforce talent to increase the power of his spells. The information below summarizes these basic spellcasting talents. Full descriptions can be found in the **Talents** chapter, p. 166.

Spellcasting Talent

Each of the four magician Disciplines—Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, and Wizard—have the Spellcasting talent available to them. This talent allows them to channel magical energies in the proper way to create a spell. Spellcasting ranks are added to a character's Perception step to make Spellcasting Tests, so a character created with a high Perception value begins with an advantage as a magician.

When casting a spell, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against a Difficulty Number, also called the Casting Difficulty. Often this is the target's Spell Defense, though in some cases another value is used. Each spell description lists the Casting Difficulty for that spell. If the result of the Spellcasting Test is at least equal to the Difficulty Number, the spell succeeds.

In combat, Spellcasting Tests are considered Attack Tests. If the spellcaster achieves an Excellent result, that spell attack defeats the appropriate armor, physical or mystic, with an Armor-Defeating Hit (see **Armor-Defeating Hits** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 398).

Thread Weaving Talent

Each magician Discipline has its own Thread Weaving talent. These are known, respectively, as Elementalism, Illusion, Nethermancy, and Wizardry. The Thread Weaving talent allows a magician to weave spell threads into a spell's pattern. A magician also uses Thread Weaving to place a spell pattern into a spell matrix. A magician may only cast spells if he knows the Thread Weaving talent for that Discipline.

Each Thread Weaving talent is unique, and can only be used with spells from that Discipline. If a magician purchases the Thread Weaving talent from another Discipline, he can cast spells from that Discipline. Without the Thread Weaving talent, a magician cannot attune either a spell matrix or a grimoire, and so cannot cast the spell.

Spell Matrix Talent

In the early days of this magical age, magicians worked their spells with raw magic, channeling astral energy directly through their own patterns and shaping that energy into spells. In the years leading up to the Scourge, however, magicians discovered that these traditional techniques of spellcasting created flares in astral space that often attracted the attention of nearby Horrors. As a result, the very spells magicians used to defend themselves and others often brought about their destruction. Many magicians died terrible deaths before the phenomenon was understood and a countermeasure devised.

Magicians needed a means to conceal the flares caused by forming spells from raw magic. They also needed a way to filter the increasingly corrupted astral energy and ensure that their spells would function properly. Magicians reasoned that this filter would need to be a magical pattern that came between the magician and astral space, providing concealment and protection.

Several magicians discovered they could produce such filters by using their Thread Weaving talents to alter the patterns of physical objects. Magicians most commonly used items they carried

at all times, such as staves, rings, wands and their ever-present robes. By "reweaving" these items with magical spell patterns, these items could be used to hold the essential "matrix" of one or more spells. The magician could then use the item to cast the spell without fearing the attention of the Horrors or risking harm from polluted astral energy. This system worked well enough, but if these matrix objects were lost or destroyed, a magician could be left with no safe means of casting spells.

Not long after the end of the Scourge, Nethermancer adepts discovered a way to create a filter purely from magical threads woven to the magician's True pattern. The magician could then use his Thread Weaving talent to "attune" the filter to mimic the pattern of any spell he wished to store. This technique developed into the Spell Matrix talent now used by magicians all over Barsaive and the Theran Empire. With these portable, personal and flexible matrices, the use of "magician's robes" and other matrix items quickly fell into disuse.

Once a spell has been placed in a spell matrix, the magician can repeatedly cast the spell by drawing magical energy through the matrix. If the magician wishes to cast a different spell using the same matrix, it must be reattuned to reflect the new spell. Magicians can have multiple spell matrices, attuned as they wish, depending on their personal abilities.

Some spells are too complex for a simple spell matrix. When a spell matrix is attuned to reflect more complex spells the mimic-pattern of the matrix is compressed into a sort of "shorthand". This compression allows the matrix to reflect the complex spell's pattern, but the magician cannot directly cast the spell with this form of the matrix. The magician must weave additional threads of power into the matrix (the exact number depends on the complexity of the spell). These threads power the matrix and temporarily expand its capabilities so the spell can be properly cast. Once the spell is cast, the matrix returns to its "compressed" state. Each time the magician casts that spell, he must weave the required threads again to provide the power for the spell.

In the world of **Earthdawn**, magicians rarely cast spells without placing them in a spell matrix. The other methods of casting a spell, casting from a grimoire or casting raw magic, are more dangerous and less reliable.

The use of spell matrices comes with two drawbacks. The Spell Matrix rank represents the maximum spell Circle the matrix can hold. Also, to properly attune a spell matrix, the magician must know the intricacies of the spell—a level of understanding limited by the magician's Discipline Circle. Even though learned spells become part of the magician's pattern, he is not able to recreate these more powerful spells from memory. For example, a Rank 3 Spell Matrix can hold a single First, Second or Third Circle spell. However, a Second Circle magician is not able to attune a Third Circle spell—he must resort to using raw magic to cast it.

More details about the different types of spell matrices and how they are used in the game is provided later in this chapter.

Willforce Talent

The Willforce talent provides additional energy to increase a spell's effect. Magicians do not normally have access to the Willforce talent until they reach at least Fifth Circle in their Discipline.

Until a magician learns the Willforce talent, his spell effects are based solely on his Willpower step.

Spell Threads

As explained previously, some spells are simple enough that a magician can put the entire spell pattern and all the energy needed to power it into a spell matrix. Other spells are too complex or require too much power to fit completely into a spell matrix. Before such a spell can be cast, the magician must add magical energy in the form of threads. Threads used to power spells are usually referred to as **spell threads**, to distinguish them from threads used to power magical items. A magician creates these spell threads from energy in astral space and weaves them into the spell pattern. The spell threads expand, strengthen, and define the spell, fully empowering it. A spell that requires threads is incomplete and cannot be cast without all of its threads.

A magician weaves threads with his Thread Weaving talent. If a magician fails a Thread Weaving Test, the only harm he suffers is wasted time; any spell threads already woven into the spell remain intact. Once a magician starts to weave a spell's threads, he must finish the spell or abandon it entirely. Once the weaving is complete, he must cast the spell during the next round. If a magician begins to weave a spell and breaks off for a round or longer, or finishes weaving the spell threads and then fails to cast the spell in the next round, the spell threads woven are lost.

Learning Spells

Magicians learn additional spells as they advance through the Circles of their Discipline. The magician often wishes to learn more than this bare minimum, however. A magician must learn new spells from another magician or from a grimoire other than his own. He can learn spells of any Circle, even those higher than his own, though he may not be able to cast those spells using his spell matrices.

SPELL LEARNING DIFFICULTY TABLE

Spell Circle	Learning Difficulty
1	12
2	13
3	14
4	15
5	17
6	18
7	20
8	21
9	22
10	24
11	25
12	26
13	27
14	28
15	29

A magician uses the Read and Write Magic talent to learn spells from a grimoire, reading the spell and copying it into his own. The magician makes a Read and Write Magic Test against the spell's Learning Difficulty. The Learning Difficulty is based on the spell Circle, as shown in the Spell Learning Difficulty Table. If the test succeeds, the magician reads and correctly interprets the spell, and writes it into his grimoire.

Once a magician has successfully placed a spell in his grimoire, he has learned the spell. Though a magician may cast a spell from a grimoire without first learning it (see **Casting From a Grimoire**, p. 290), he must write the spell's symbols and patterns into his own grimoire in order to properly learn the spell. The magical act of manipulating spell symbols on paper (or on wood, metal, or stone) is necessary for the magician to lock the spell in his memory, merging the spell's pattern with his own.

The magician may only use the Read and Write Magic talent once each day, though he may sacrifice available Recovery Tests to earn additional tests. For each Recovery Test sacrificed he may make an additional Read and Write Magic Test per day. The magician must be rested and in good health before he makes any Read and Write Magic Tests; a character suffering from any damage or Wounds may not learn a new spell.

A magician can more easily learn a spell with assistance from the owner of the grimoire he is copying the spell from. Before attempting to learn the spell, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the spell's Learning Difficulty. If the test succeeds, he adds his teacher's Thread Weaving rank as a bonus to the Read and Write Magic Test he makes to learn the spell. For example, a magician learning an Illusionism spell from a teacher who knows Illusionism at Rank 4 gains a +4 bonus to his Read and Write Magic Test result, increasing the likelihood of successfully learning the spell.

Spell Learning Cost

Optional Rule: Many magicians allow others to copy a spell from their grimoires by charging for it. Some magicians' guilds even sell written copies at their guildhouses, or allow their members to copy them for free for a monthly tithe.

The standard price for learning a spell is equal to the spell's Circle × 100 silver pieces. This cost may double, or even triple, if the character is seeking personal tuition to learn a spell.

High-Circle spells—Thirteenth Circle or greater—cannot normally be purchased this way. These spells are usually powerful ritual spells, and some even possess Names (see **High-Circle Spells**, p. 292). The gamemaster determines the silver piece cost associated with learning these spells, if they are available to be learned at all.

Broomé, a windling Elementalist, has finally found a magician who knows Fireball, a Fifth Circle spell. It has taken him some time to convince the other Elementalist that a flying fire cannon can be a good thing, so he quickly pays the 500 silver piece fee before the other magician changes his mind. Broomé starts copying the spell into his own grimoire. Although under no obligation to do so, the other Elementalist has kindly decided to assist Broomé, helping him to transcribe the spell into his grimoire. Broomé makes a Spellcasting (13) Test, the Learning Difficulty for a Fifth Circle spell, and achieves a successful result. His teacher knows Elementalism at Rank 6, so Broomé gains a +6 bonus to his Read and Write Magic Test, which he makes against the spell's Learning Difficulty of 13. Adding the tutoring bonus, Broomé makes a successful test and copies the spell into his grimoire, effusively thanking his teacher afterwards.

Spell Legend Point Cost

Optional Rule: In order to complete the process of copying a new spell into his own grimoire, the magician pays a number of Legend Points, based on the Spell Circle, in order to cement his knowledge of the new spell. After he makes a successful Read and Write Magic Test the magician reduces his Current Legend Point total by the Legend Point cost shown on the Spell Legend Point Cost Table. The magician must have sufficient Current Legend Points available to him when he makes his Read and Write Magic Test.

Spell Legend Point Cost Table

Spell Circle	Legend Point Cost
1	100
2	200
3	300
4	500
5	800
6	1,300
7	2,100
8	3,400
9	5,500
10	8,900
11	14,400
12	23,300
13	37,700
14	61,000
15	98,700

Broomé successfully transcribes the Fireball spell to his grimoire. Now he just needs to reinforce his new knowledge, which he does by deducting 800 Legend Points—the cost for a Fifth Circle spell—from his Current Legend Points total. Broomé has now learned the Fireball spell.

Grimoires

Once a magician has successfully learned a spell, he can cast the spell from memory, simply by channeling magical energy through a spell matrix. So why should a magician keep a grimoire? There are several reasons for doing so, most of which relate to training and teaching. A grimoire is more than a collection of the spells a magician has learned. It is a record of a magician's growth in his Discipline, through Novice (First through Fourth Circle), Journeyman (Fifth through Eighth Circle), Warden (Ninth through Twelfth Circle), and Master (Thirteenth Circle onwards).

Magicians also use their grimoires to record other information, such as spell research and runic carvings for later study. As magicians advance to higher Circles, they learn methods for incorporating various effects into new spells they design. All of this information is recorded in their grimoire.

When considering new students, many magicians want to review a candidate's grimoire. This enables the teacher to examine the student's past experiences and gauge his knowledge of the Discipline's spells. Some magicians refuse to instruct adepts who do not maintain grimoires or treat their grimoires poorly, because they believe such students lack respect for the traditions of their Discipline and the craft of spellcasting.

Grimoires also enable magicians to share spells with other adepts of their Discipline. An adept learning a spell must be able to copy the spell from a written document, so any magician who wishes to share spells or take on students must keep a grimoire.

Additionally, a magician's grimoire almost always becomes one of his pattern items. Though grimoires typically begin as a Minor pattern item, they may eventually become a Major or even Core pattern item. By keeping his grimoire with him at all times, a magician can ensure that at least one of his pattern items cannot be used against him (see the **Thread Magic** chapter, p. 268, for

Untutored Spell Learning

Optional Rule: Some gamemasters may feel that learning spells is too easy for magicians, particularly those receiving assistance from others. This rule provides an option that makes learning spells more challenging for a magician.

A magician attempting to learn a spell without the assistance of a teacher requires a Good result on his Read and Write Magic Test to learn the spell. While the character may be adept at reading magical writing, many magicians intentionally go out of their way to include codes and other written tricks in their writing to make it more difficult for others to copy their work. Without knowing these tricks, the task of transcribing spells from one grimoire to another is somewhat harder.

If a grimoire's owner is willing to assist the magician to copy a spell, the task is made easier. The magician does not need to make a Spellcasting Test when using this optional rule. However, he does not add a Thread Weaving rank bonus to his Read and Write Magic Test. Instead, he makes a Read and Write Magic Test against the spell's Learning Difficulty, but requires only an Average result to learn the spell.

Other elements of the process, such as silver piece and Legend Point costs, remain unchanged by this rule.

Broomé, a windling Elementalist, is learning the Fireball spell. The gamemaster has decided to use the optional Untutored Spell Learning rule in place of the normal rules for learning spells. If he was attempting to copy the spell without assistance, Broomé would need to achieve a Good result on his Read and Write Magic (13) Test—this would mean a test result of 20 or more! Thankfully, Broomé has the assistance of the grimoire's owner, and simply needs to make a standard Read and Write Magic (13) Test.

more information on pattern items).

Although it is often a pattern item, the Spell Defense of a grimoire is equal to the Dispel Difficulty of the highest-Circle spell it contains (see **Dispelling Magic**, p. 291).

Though a grimoire is often defined as a book of spells, implying a bundle of paper, grimoires come in many shapes and sizes and can be written on almost any type of material. Some are thick tomes with spells inscribed on the pages. Another might be a bag of coins with runes finely etched on the silver. Others might be sticks of bone. Some might be written on gems, the spells appearing only under moonlight. The shape of a grimoire is limited only by the knowledge and idiosyncrasies of its owner.

Although it is an uncommon practice, magicians are known to write down single spells onto paper or other materials. Spells written down in this manner can be sold or stored as backup copies in cases where a magician's grimoire is lost or destroyed.

Casting Spells

Magician characters who have learned spells by creating and using a grimoire, and who know the appropriate talents, can weave spell threads and cast spells. The process of spellcasting is straightforward, as shown below in the **Spellcasting Sequence** section, but it has the following limitations.

Your character cannot cast every spell in this book. To cast a spell your character must first have learned the spell or else must cast it from a grimoire. Your character must have the appropriate Thread Weaving talent for the Discipline of the spell.

The spell should also be in a spell matrix. The other ways to cast spells, using raw magic or casting from a grimoire, are more difficult or carry higher risk to the caster and are not generally recommended except in extreme circumstances.

To cast a spell from a matrix, your character must have achieved a Circle in his magician Discipline at least equal to the Circle of the spell being cast. Spells being cast from a grimoire or with raw magic can be of any Circle, including a Circle higher than your character's current Discipline Circle.

Concentration

Once a spell has been successfully cast, the magician cannot usually end its effect until the spell expires. He must resort to other means (such as the Dispel Magic spell) to end the effect prematurely. Some spells, however, require that the magician (or spell target) concentrate in order to control the spell—either to direct the spell's effect, or to maintain the spell and prevent it from expiring. If a magician concentrating on a spell tries to make an Action Test other than those specified in the spell description, he breaks his concentration.

Injury to the magician may also break his concentration. If a magician suffers damage while concentrating on a spell, he must make a Willpower Test against the number of Damage Points taken. The magician may use his Willforce talent to add a bonus to this test, just as he can with spell effects. If the test succeeds, the magician keeps control of the spell. If the test fails, or the magician is knocked unconscious or killed, his concentration is automatically broken.

A spell that expires through a loss of concentration may be cast again, but the magician must reweave any required spell threads, as normal.

Human Versatility and Spellcasting

The human racial Versatility talent (p. 209) enables human magicians to learn the Thread Weaving talents of other magician Disciplines. This allows human magicians to cast spells of several Disciplines, though the range of spells a magician may cast in this manner is limited.

When casting spells using a spell matrix, a magician can generally only cast spells of his current Circle or less. A human magician using a matrix to cast spells of Disciplines other than his own, however, may only cast spells of Circles equal to his current Circle or his rank in the appropriate Thread Weaving talent, whichever is lower. For example, a Fifth Circle human Nethermancer uses his Versatility talent to learn Elementalism (the Elementalist form of the Thread Weaving talent) at Rank 4. The magician may cast Nethermancy spells of Fifth Circle and lower, but his Elementalism spells are restricted to a maximum of Fourth Circle.

This restriction does not apply to magicians casting from a grimoire or using raw magic, as those methods do not have Circle restrictions under normal circumstances.

Human magicians attempting to learn spells of other magician Disciplines usually have problems finding willing teachers. Most magicians are reluctant to teach the spells of their Discipline to an adept of a different Discipline. Indeed, many magicians feel it is a betrayal of the traditions and customs of their Discipline to do so. Such teachers may demand a higher payment in silver (at least twice what they would charge a follower of their own Discipline), require the potential pupil to perform some sort of task or deed for the teacher, or even require the student to swear a blood oath of some sort.

Targeting Spells

Spells aren't like rocks thrown blindly in the dark, hoping for a hit; spells travel in an astral arc between the caster and the target. The caster can only create that arc if he can see (or otherwise sense) the target. Without the proper astral arc, the spell veers harmlessly into astral space, and may draw the attention of astral denizens, including Horrors.

Sight is not the only way of targeting a spell, though it is the most common. Creatures whose primary sense is not sight may create the proper astral arc using that sense. Any method that makes the magician certain of the target's location allows the creation of the proper astral arc. For example, a magician who

Bypassing Cover

Optional Rule: If a target has taken cover behind a non-magical barrier (like a stone wall), the magician may use an astral sensing ability to bypass the target's cover.

If the magician successfully detects a target with an Astral Sensing Test (see **Astral Sensing** in the **Workings of Magic** chapter, p. 257), he may cast spells on the target as if it were in astral space (see above). The target's Spell Defense is not modified for cover, as the spell travels solely through astral space and through any physical objects.

Physical spells (those resisted by Physical Armor) do not bypass cover with this method, though the spell may still be targeted with astral sensing. Living astral presences (those with "substance" in astral space) also provide cover from astral targeting.

is touching a target when casting a spell is certain of the target's location, even if he can't see the target. In the same manner, a magician can place an area effect spell at the end of his outstretched fingertips.

Material objects between the caster and the target will not prevent a spell from reaching the target unless they block the magician's line of sight. Targets receive a bonus to their Spell Defense for cover (see **Cover** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 406) to reflect the increased difficulty of targeting them successfully. If the Spellcasting Test succeeds, however, any physical manifestation that accompanies the spell follows the astral arc, avoiding physical obstacles to strike the spell's target.

Since most spells can only be directed at targets the magician can see, magicians must possess some sort of astral sight ability to cast spells at astral targets. If a magician successfully uses an astral sensing ability (other than the Astral Sense spell), he may target that being with any spell that affects astral beings. As a general rule, spells resisted with Mystic Armor affect astral beings. Spells resisted by Physical Armor cannot be used by a caster in the physical world against targets in astral space. For example, a Wizard using Astral Sight could cast a Mind Dagger spell at a spirit in astral space, but he could not cast a Flame Flash spell on the spirit. The effect of Flame Flash is physical—it will not affect the immaterial spirit.

Magicians in astral space may cast spells against astral targets as if both the caster and the target were in the physical world. Magicians in astral space, however, cannot cast spells at targets in the physical world.

See **Astral Space** in the **Workings of Magic** chapter, p. 254, for more information on astral sensing, and the interactions between the astral and physical realms.

Observing Spellcasting

When a magician casts a spell, he uses his strength of will and awareness of astral space to gather the energies found there and weave them into a predetermined form—a pattern—for a particular spell. The spell takes form on the astral plane, so an observer in the material world simply sees the magician concentrate, speak a few words and make some simple gestures to cast a spell.

An observer with astral-sensitive sight, the Astral Sight ability, or an observer in astral space can see the spell form around the magician as he gathers threads of magical energy and weaves them into the spell's pattern. The patterns of simple spells form and execute their effects almost instantly. More complex spells take time to form, and astral observers can see the magical energy building as they are prepared.

If the character is familiar with the spell being cast (either by knowing it himself or having seen it cast before), he may recognize it by making a successful Perception or Astral Sight Test against the spell's Learning Difficulty. These observations may warn of a magician's intentions, but generally they do not give an observer enough time to prevent a magician from casting a spell.

When a spell leaps through astral space toward its target, it moves very rapidly—too rapidly for characters to interfere with it. However, some Horrors and dragons have abilities that can counter spells.

Spellcasting Sequence

The following summary outlines the steps necessary to cast a spell. More details on each step follow the summary. When using matrix casting, remember that the caster must have a spell in one of his spell matrices before he can cast it.

1. Weave Threads into Spell
2. Make Spellcasting Test
3. Check Success
4. Determine Spell Effect
5. Determine Duration

Weave Threads into Spell

If a spell requires spell threads, the magician weaves them using the appropriate Thread Weaving talent (Elementalism, Illusionism, Nethermancy, or Wizardry). To weave a spell thread, the magician makes a Thread Weaving Test against the thread's Weaving Difficulty. If the test succeeds, the thread is woven.

The magician may attempt to weave more than one thread in a round. He multiplies the Weaving Difficulty by the total number of threads he wants to weave, and makes a Thread Weaving Test against this higher Difficulty. If successful, the desired number of spell threads is woven. If the test fails, the magician weaves no threads; he may try again next round, as normal.

If the magician achieves an Excellent result on his Thread Weaving Test, he weaves an additional thread to the spell. This is the case whether he is weaving one or multiple spell threads that round.

A magician cannot normally weave spell threads and cast a spell during the same round. Having woven the required threads, the magician must cast the spell during the next round. Some high circle talents may allow a magician to weave threads and cast a spell in the same round.

Cymric's companions are in a jam, and Cymric knows the perfect spell to get them out. The spell requires 3 spell threads, each with a Weaving Difficulty of 4. Cymric recognizes the need for speed and attempts to weave all 3 spell threads in a single round, giving him a target Weaving Difficulty of 12 (3 × 4 = 12). To successfully weave all 3 threads, Cymric's player must make a successful Thread (12) Weaving Test. This can be risky; if he fails his Thread Weaving Test, Cymric does not weave any threads that round, and the time advantage he was hoping to gain is lost. Also, after weaving all of the required spell threads, Cymric must still wait until the next round to cast the spell.

Make Spellcasting Test

The Spellcasting talent or skill is used to cast spells. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the Casting Difficulty of the spell. If the test succeeds, the magician has successfully cast the spell. The Difficulty Number is often the target's Spell Defense, but may sometimes be a fixed value. Most living creatures base their Spell Defense on their Perception value. Some creatures are more resistant than others to magic and, as a result, have a higher Spell Defense. Dull-witted creatures and most inanimate non-magical objects have a Spell Defense of 2. Magical items

generally have a higher Spell Defense, which varies based on the potency of the object.

Lowering Spell Defense

Even beneficial spells must overcome the target's Spell Defense. A character may take an action to voluntarily lower his Spell Defense, increasing the chances of receiving the benefit of the spell. The character makes a Perception Test and reduces his Spell Defense by the result, to a minimum of 2. The character's new Spell Defense is used to defend against all spells cast against him that round. His Spell Defense returns to its original value at the end of the round.

When a character chooses to lower his Spell Defense, he forfeits his action for that round. He may not use a talent that requires an action in the same round he voluntarily lowers his Spell Defense.

Unless the spell description states otherwise, a magician automatically lowers his Spell Defense to 2 against any spells he casts on himself. This occurs during the same round in which he casts the spell, and does not cost the magician his Standard action that round. Note, however, that regardless of the target's Spell Defense, the minimum Casting Difficulty for all spells is still 6 (see **Spell Descriptions**, p. 293).

For the remainder of the round, the magician subtracts –2 from his Spell Defense for spells directed at him, as if he were Blindsided (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 406). This penalty does not apply to the magician's Physical or Social Defense, however.

Check Success

If the Spellcasting Test result is at least equal to the Difficulty Number, the spell succeeds. If the Spellcasting Test is less than the Difficulty Number, the spell fails.

A combat spell that does damage may achieve a high enough result level to qualify as an Armor-Defeating Hit, negating the advantages of Physical or Mystic Armor (see **Armor-Defeating Hits** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 398).

Determine Spell Effect

Each spell's effect is given in its description. Some spells have a predetermined effect that occurs on a successful Spellcasting Test. Other spells have random effects described in a form such as "Willpower + 5". If one of these spells is successfully cast, the magician makes an Effect Test. The Effect Test of a spell is usually equal to the magician's Willpower step plus the step bonus given (+5 steps in the example above).

Some spells use the target's Willpower step instead of the magician's, or another random determinant. This is noted in the spell description. Magicians with the Willforce talent (see the **Talents** chapter, p. 211) may use their Willforce step in place of their Willpower step for spell Effect Tests. Spells that cause damage to targets often use their Effect Test as the Damage Test.

Determine Duration

After determining the spell's effect, the caster determines its duration. Most combat spells last a single combat round; once the spell has affected the target, its duration ends. Non-combat spells list the spell duration in rounds, minutes, hours, or some other time period. In the spell descriptions, "Rank" refers to the magician's Spellcasting rank.

Variable Duration

If a spell has a variable duration, the magician rolls the Action dice indicated in the description to determine the spell's duration.

Spellcasting Methods

The general steps above apply to all methods of spellcasting—matrix casting, casting raw magic, and casting from a grimoire. Matrix casting, more commonly referred to as spellcasting, employs spell matrices and is the safest method. Because of the inherent danger in casting raw magic, magicians generally resort to this method only in dire emergencies. Magicians generally use a grimoire only when casting an unfamiliar spell. Directions for using each method appear below.

Spellcasting (Matrix Casting)

Magicians with the Spell Matrix talent can create spell matrices. Each Spell Matrix talent purchased represents one spell matrix. Spell matrices have ranks, just like any other talent. New ranks are purchased with Legend Points, at the same cost as for other talents of the same Circle.

To cast a spell from a spell matrix, the magician must first place the pattern of the spell into the matrix. This is called **attuning a matrix**. Simple spells, those that do not require threads, fit entirely into a spell matrix. Most spell matrices can only hold one spell.

Spell Matrix Types

The four types of spell matrices available to magicians as talents are the Spell Matrix, Enhanced Matrix, Armored Matrix, and Shared Matrix. Unless specifically noted, all general references

SPELL MATRIX TABLE

Matrix Type	Death Rating	Holds Threads?	Circle
Spell	10	No	1–4
Enhanced	15	Yes	5–8
Armored	25	Yes	9–12
Shared	20	No	13–15

to a "spell matrix" in these rules refer to any of these types of matrix.

The **Spell Matrix** is the standard matrix used by most magicians. An **Enhanced Matrix** can hold one of a spell's required threads in addition to the spell pattern. When a magician attunes a spell to an Enhanced Matrix, the magician also weaves one of the spell's threads into the matrix. This thread remains woven in the spell's pattern and reduces the number of threads required to cast the spell by one. An **Armored Matrix** holds the spell and one of the spell's threads, just like an Enhanced Matrix. It also has its own mystic armor, allowing it to better withstand attacks that can damage a matrix. The **Shared Matrix** does not hold a thread the way an Enhanced or Armored Matrix does, but it can hold more than one spell at the same time. The total spell Circles in a Shared Matrix must not be greater than the Shared Matrix rank.

The Spell Matrix Table summarizes important game information for the different types of spell matrices. For more information on each of the different matrix types, see their entries in the **Talents** chapter.

The Circle column indicates the Circle a magician must hold in order to purchase that type of matrix. Also use the Circle column to determine the Legend Point cost for increasing ranks in the different types of matrix talents (see **Spending Legend Points** in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 420).

Attuning and Reattuning Matrices

A magician uses his Thread Weaving talent to attune a spell to a matrix. Once attuned, a spell will remain in the matrix until:

- The owning spellcaster dies; *or*
- The owner reattunes the matrix to hold another spell; *or*
- A magical process (for example, a spell effect) dislodges the spell from its matrix.

Placing (or replacing) a spell in a matrix is a simple matter for trained magicians, but it takes time. All magicians learn a simple meditative exercise through which they place spells in their spell matrices. The exercise takes 10 minutes, allowing the magician to attune (or reattune) a number of spell matrix ranks equal to his Thread Weaving rank. No Action Test is required for this type of attuning. For example, a Wizard who knows the Wizardry (Thread Weaving) talent at Rank 3 can attune or reattune up to 3 ranks of spell matrices with each meditative exercise.

If a meditation exercise is interrupted, the spells being attuned are not placed in the matrix. There is no effect other than wasted time.

Reattuning on the Fly

On occasion a magician may discover he does not have the spells he needs in his matrices, and can't afford 10 minutes of peaceful meditation to reattune them. In this case, the magician can hurry the process by **Reattuning on the Fly**. Each attempt at Reattuning on the Fly takes one round and causes Strain; the character takes 1 Damage Point for each attempt. The character makes a Thread Weaving Test against the Reattunement Difficulty of the spell he is trying to put into the matrix. If the test succeeds, the new spell replaces the old. If the test fails, the new spell is not placed in the matrix.

Working with spell matrices is a delicate business and requires concentration. Once a magician begins to reattune matrices on the fly, he should not take any other actions until successful. If the magician fails a Concentration Test (see **Concentration**, p. 285), or if the magician takes an action other than reattuning, the new spell is not placed in the matrix, and all of his currently attuned spells are dislodged from their matrices. The magician can still cast spells using other methods (raw magic or grimoire casting), but matrix casting is unavailable until the matrices are reattuned using the 10-minute meditative exercise.

A magician must declare which spell matrix he is trying to attune before making his Thread Weaving Test.

Magicians can attempt to reattune more than one spell at the same time. To do this, the magician adds up the Reattuning Difficulty of all the spells he is trying to reattune to get the final Difficulty Number.

Jerreck, the elven Wizard, needs to reattune two of his spell matrices in the same round. The two spells he is trying to reattune are Dodge Boost and Ignite. Dodge Boost has a Reattuning Difficulty of 8, and Ignite has a Reattuning Difficulty of 11. Adding these together, Jerreck's player needs to roll a 19 in his Thread Weaving Test to successfully reattune both spells.

Damaging a Spell Matrix

Spell matrices can be damaged. Magicians must keep track of damage to their spell matrices, just as they keep track of damage to themselves. Some talents and spells allow an opponent to damage a character's spell matrix. Damage does not gradually make the matrix work less well; a spell matrix either works or it does not. As long as the Current Damage of the matrix is less than its Death Rating, the matrix works. When the Current Damage equals or exceeds the Death Rating, the matrix no longer functions.

The magician's Willpower slowly repairs a damaged spell matrix over a 24 hour period. The magician can temporarily repair a damaged matrix, however. He makes a Willpower Test, repairing that many Damage Points. This costs the magician one of his daily Recovery Tests. Once 24 hours pass, the matrix is fully restored to its normal Death Rating.

Spell Matrices and Multi-Discipline Magicians

In **Earthdawn**, magicians may learn other magician Disciplines. A magician learning other spellcasting Disciplines, cannot learn their Spell Matrix talents, however. The magician must use the spell matrices from his original Discipline to store spells from any of his magician Disciplines.

This restriction applies only to the basic Spell Matrix talent. The magician may learn Enhanced, Armored and Shared Matrix talents from any of his magician Disciplines; he is restricted to a total number of each type of matrix equal to the highest number available to any of his magician Disciplines. For example, a multi-Disciplined Elementalist/Illusionist character can learn the Enhanced Matrix talent when he reaches either Seventh Circle as an Elementalist or Sixth Circle as an Illusionist. Both Disciplines grant only two Enhanced Matrices, however, so the character may only ever possess two Enhanced Matrices, regardless of which Disciplines he learns the talent from.

Each Discipline determines the Circle at which he can learn these matrix talents, as well as the total number of each specific matrix type he may possess, as shown in the Discipline Matrix Table.

Using Spell Matrix Objects

Magicians in Barsaive still make occasional use of spell matrix objects—magical items that contain one or more spell matrices. Despite their limitations, these items allow magicians to maintain a greater variety of spells "on hand." In fact, many traditional

DISCIPLINE MATRIX TABLE

		—Number of Matrices—		
Discipline	**Spell**	**Enhanced**	**Armored**	**Shared**
Elementalist	4	2	2	2
Illusionist	4	2	2	3
Nethermancer	4	2	2	3
Wizard	3	2	3	3

Wizards continue the practice of wearing robes that contain spell matrices, represented by various colorful and intricately embroidered designs.

Matrix objects are thread items (see the **Magical Treasures** chapter on p. 161 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for details). The rank of the thread woven to the matrix object determines the maximum Circle of spells it can hold. For example, a matrix object with a Rank 3 thread attached can hold spells of Third Circle or less.

Spell matrices contained in matrix objects are used like standard spell matrices. The magician must be touching or wearing the object to use the matrix within it. If the magician loses physical contact with the object while spellcasting (if it is snatched away or dropped, for example), the spell is disrupted unless the magician chooses to finish casting it using raw magic (see below).

Like other matrices, the matrices contained in matrix objects may be attacked and damaged in astral space. If a matrix object is "killed" in astral combat, the item's enchantment is ruined. If a matrix object is physically destroyed, the spell matrices stored within it are lost. Minor physical damage to matrix objects can be repaired, and spell matrices damaged in astral combat can be healed through application of the magician's Willpower, just as with regular spell matrices.

CASTING RAW MAGIC

The most infrequently used method of spellcasting is known as raw magic casting. The magician channels magical energy for the spell directly through his body. This almost always damages the magician, and can also have other harmful side effects. A magician can use raw magic to cast any spell he knows, that is, any spell he has successfully transferred to his grimoire.

To cast raw magic, the magician weaves spell threads and casts the spell as normal. The gamemaster then determines the consequences of his casting attempt, if any. Spells cast with raw magic have the same effect and duration as spells cast using spell matrices. The differences are the potential consequences to the magician represented by Warping, Damage, and Horror Mark Tests. The likelihood and seriousness of these side effects depend on the extent to which astral space in the vicinity of the magician has been corrupted by the Horrors.

Warping and Damage

The degree of Warping and Damage a magician suffers when casting raw magic is based on the Circle of the spell being cast, and the classification of astral space where the spell was cast. The Raw Magic Table shows the specific game information for the four classifications of astral space. For more information on each type of astral region, see **Astral Space** in the **Workings of Magic** chapter, p. 254.

After a magician casts a spell using raw magic, the gamemaster makes a Warping Test against the base Spell Defense of the magician. Because Warping is an internal process, items, spells, and armor that normally increase the magician's Spell Defense do not protect against Warping.

If the Warping Test succeeds, the magician takes damage. The gamemaster makes a Damage Test using the step shown in the Raw Magic Table. Because this damage is internal, only the character's base Mystic Armor helps defend against this damage.

RAW MAGIC TABLE

Region Type	Warping Step	Damage Step	Horror Mark Step**
Safe	Circle*	Circle + 4	NA
Open	Circle + 5	Circle + 8	Circle + 2
Tainted	Circle + 10	Circle + 12	Circle + 5
Corrupt	Circle + 15	Circle + 16	Circle + 15

* Circle refers to the Circle of the spell being cast.
** The Horror Mark step cannot exceed the Horror's Spellcasting step.

Cymric wants to cast a First Circle spell using raw magic. He casts the spell along the road to Throal, which he guesses is Open space. Unfortunately, he is wrong. The road he is on passes close to an undiscovered kaer, one that is Tainted. The Warping step is equal to the spell Circle + 10, for Step 11. Cymric's base Spell Defense is 9. The gamemaster makes a successful Warping Test, rolling a 10. The twisting of astral space has warped Cymric's spell, and so his use of raw magic damages him. The gamemaster makes a Step 13 Damage Test and gets a result of 14. Cymric's base Mystic Armor is 2, so he takes 12 Damage Points from the backlash.

Horror Mark

When a spell is cast using raw magic, the effect is the equivalent of firing a brilliant flare on a dark night. Such an act might attract the attention of someone or something from which your character may prefer to remain hidden. Before the Scourge, many magicians doomed themselves by casting raw magic against the first signs of the Horrors. These men and women were not foolish, but they had no way of knowing the consequences of their actions. Spell matrices were developed only after the survivors saw (or heard) what became of these unfortunate magicians.

In addition to the Warping and Damage Tests, any time a character uses raw magic, the gamemaster makes a Horror Mark Test against the base Spell Defense of the caster. A successful result means a Horror has noticed the caster and marked him. A Horror mark is a Horror's personal gateway to a character; the Horror may use the gateway any time it wishes, though range may restrict a Horror's options. Horrors may use the mark to locate their victim at any time. Many Horrors have ways of communicating with marked victims who are hundreds of miles away, and some can cast spells on their victims from a great distance.

A Horror mark lasts for a year and a day. At the end of this time, the Horror may renew the Horror mark for another year and a day if it so wishes. This renewal may have range restrictions, but other than being out of range, a character cannot prevent a live Horror from renewing a Horror mark. Horrors have been known to quietly renew their Horror marks for years, without the victim being aware of the mark.

For more information on Horror Marks, refer to the **Horrors** chapter on p. 443 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**.

Casting From a Grimoire

Magicians occasionally need to cast spells from a grimoire. A magician uses this spellcasting method when he finds a grimoire and needs to use one of the spells within it before he has had a chance to learn the spell. He may also use this method when he is unable (or unwilling) to cast a spell he does know using other methods. A magician may cast any spell from a grimoire, including spells of a higher Circle than his own.

Casting from a grimoire is more difficult than matrix spellcasting, and poses risks similar to those of raw magic. As a result, grimoire casting is rarely used in Barsaive. These difficulties, however, will rarely prevent a magician from doing so in a crisis. For example, if the only Stop Horror Dead in its Tracks spell he has ever encountered happens to be in the ancient grimoire he just picked up in the dusty lorehouse of the abandoned kaer, and he's facing the Horror to which it refers right now, the magician will likely attempt to cast the spell no matter what the risk.

A grimoire is more than just a book—it also contains the pattern of every spell scribed in it. Spell matrix objects (and spell matrices) were originally modeled after the way grimoires stored spell patterns; when a magician casts a spell with a grimoire, he channels magical energy through the grimoire in much the same way he channels it through a spell matrix.

Unlike spell matrices, grimoires are not designed to filter out corrupted magical energy. They also lack the ability to conceal the astral flares caused by forming spells. As a result, grimoires may be damaged by polluted energy being channeled through them, and spells cast from a grimoire may attract Horrors in the same way as raw magic.

Casting a spell from a grimoire differs slightly from the normal sequence for casting spells, as follows:

1. Attune the Spell
2. Weave any required Spell Threads
3. Make a Spellcasting Test
4. Determine the spell's Effect and Duration
5. Resolve Raw Magic Effects

Attune the Spell

The magician must attune the spell he wishes to cast. Attuning prepares the grimoire to channel magical energy. Like reattuning a spell matrix on the fly, the magician makes a Thread Weaving Test against the Reattunement Difficulty of the spell. Instead of suffering Strain damage, add +2 to the spell's Reattunement Difficulty. If the test succeeds, the magician attunes the spell, and can begin casting the spell.

The magician must attune the spell each time he wishes to cast it. If his Spellcasting Test fails, he must reattune the spell again before attempting to recast it.

Belgaras, a troll Nethermancer, is trapped in a dead-end cave occupied by some nasty creatures. Unfortunately, his companions have already fallen victim to the foul beasts and there is only one way of escape. The troll pulls out an ancient grimoire he found earlier in the cave. It contains a Gateway spell, which he had intended to study later at his leisure. His first two attempts to attune the grimoire fail, but on his third Thread Weaving Test he manages to equal the spell's Reattunement Difficulty of 21 (19+2) and attunes the spell.

Weave Spell Threads

After he successfully attunes the spell, the magician weaves any spell threads the spell requires, incurring a –2 penalty to his Thread Weaving Tests for weaving spell threads to a spell cast from a grimoire.

Belgaras closes his eyes to form the pattern of the Gateway spell. He needs to weave the five threads required by the spell against a Weaving Difficulty of 12 with a –2 penalty to his Thread Weaving Tests. However, there is little time to worry about this—if he doesn't act quickly, the creatures will find him before he can get away!

Make a Spellcasting Test

After weaving the necessary spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test, incurring a –2 penalty to his Spellcasting Test for casting a spell from a grimoire.

Right before the first creature crosses the corner, Belgaras finishes weaving his spell. Even with a –2 penalty to his Spellcasting Test, he has little trouble casting the Gateway spell.

Determine Effect and Duration

The effect and duration of spells cast from a grimoire are determined normally, as though the spell were cast from a spell matrix.

A portal opens in front of Belgaras, outlined by pinwheels of green sparks. Belgaras makes an Effect Test to connect the portal with a Bone Circle close to his hometown. The troll prepares to enter the portal and make good his getaway.

Resolve Raw Magic Effects

After a magician successfully casts a spell from a grimoire, the gamemaster determines any Warping and Damage Effects the grimoire may suffer from channeling the magical energy of the spell. As with raw magic (see **Casting Raw Magic**, p. 289), the gamemaster makes a Warping Test against the grimoire's Spell Defense (see **Grimoires**, p. 284) using the Warping step from the Raw Magic Table. If the test succeeds, the grimoire takes damage depending on the result level of the Warping Test, as shown in the Grimoire Damage Effects Table.

The damage effect destroys some of the magical writing contained in the grimoire. The spell being cast from the grimoire is always damaged first, with other damaged spells being determined randomly. There is also a physical effect, depending on the nature of the grimoire: pages or wooden tablets might go up in flames, spells inscribed on stones might melt away, the stones may shatter, and so on.

The damage to the grimoire may be repaired. This takes one day of work, and requires a successful Read and Write Magic Test against the highest Learning Difficulty of the spells remaining in the grimoire. Until the damage is repaired, new spells may not be written to the grimoire (this includes spells lost due to warping). In addition, if the magician casts another spell from the grimoire before it is repaired, the warping results are shifted up one level on the Grimoire Damage Effects Table. If an Extraordinary result is rolled against a damaged grimoire, the entire grimoire is destroyed.

GRIMOIRE DAMAGE EFFECTS TABLE

Result Level	Damage Effect
Average	The spell being cast is destroyed.
Good	One tenth of the spells in the grimoire are destroyed, including the spell being cast.
Excellent	One quarter of the spells in the grimoire are destroyed, including the spell being cast.
Extraordinary	Half the spells in the grimoire are destroyed, including the spell being cast. If the grimoire has been previously damaged it is destroyed, along with any remaining spells.

Spells lost to warping must be rewritten to the grimoire using the Read and Write Magic talent as normal. Rewriting a spell into a grimoire from memory takes the same amount of time and effort as learning the spell from new (see **Learning Spells**, p. 283). Because he is relying on memory, however, the magician may not benefit from the presence of a tutor. Spells of a higher Circle than the magician's own cannot be restored from memory. If using the optional rules for Spell Learning or Legend Point Cost, the character does not need to pay or expend any further Legend Points to rescribe the spells.

Magicians carrying damaged grimoires earn a social stigma; some magicians might shun the magician for the lack of respect he shows towards the traditions of his Discipline. At the gamemaster's discretion, damage to a grimoire may constitute a talent crisis for the owner (see **Talent Crises** in the **Disciplines** chapter, p. 62).

As with raw magic, a spell cast from a grimoire may attract the attention of a Horror. The Horror could decide to mark the grimoire instead of marking the caster, allowing the Horror to use its abilities against anyone using the grimoire from this point on. It is not unknown for characters to come across such Horror-cursed tomes in their adventures. The gamemaster makes a Horror Mark Test as described under **Casting Raw Magic**, p. 289. If the Horror is attempting to mark the grimoire instead of the character, the Difficulty Number is the grimoire's Spell Defense.

After Belgaras successfully casts the Gateway spell, the gamemaster makes a Warping Test against the grimoire's Spell Defense of 20 (Gateway is a Tenth Circle spell with a Dispel Difficulty of 20). The gamemaster determines that the cave is a Tainted region. The Warping Test is made with Step 20, and achieves a Good result! The ancient grimoire suddenly sparks and catches fire, turning a tenth of the book's pages into ashes, including those describing the Gateway spell. The gamemaster also checks if the casting attracts a Horror, making a Step 15 Horror Mark Test. Fortunately, he fails to beat Belgaras' Spell Defense. Hastily patting out the fire and openly bemoaning the loss of the spells, Belgaras leaps through the portal. His primary concern now is whether the creatures decide to follow him or not.

Dispelling Magic

Many spells have durations longer than a single round. It is possible to prematurely end such a spell, disrupting its effect. This is known as **dispelling**. The primary means of dispelling spells is through use of the Dispel Magic spell, though some spells may also be dispelled with a Willpower Test (the spell's description indicates whether it can be dispelled this way). Unless otherwise noted, the Difficulty Number for dispelling a spell is based on its Circle, as shown on the Dispel Difficulty Table.

DISPEL DIFFICULTY TABLE

Spell Circle	Dispel Difficulty
1	12
2	13
3	14
4	15
5	17
6	18
7	20
8	21
9	22
10	24
11	25
12	26
13	27
14	28
15	29

The Dispel Magic spell can also be used to dispel magical effects produced by talents and talent knacks, Discipline abilities, magic items, or creature powers (including those of spirits, dragons and Horrors). Only magical effects with an extended duration—measured in rounds, minutes, hours, days, and so on—can be dispelled. Permanent effects cannot normally be dispelled. For example, the Wood Skin talent grants an adept an increase to his Death and Unconsciousness Ratings that lasts for one or more hours. At any point during this period, the effect of the Wood Skin may be dispelled by the Dispel Magic spell. The effects of the Durability talent, on the other hand, are permanent and cannot be dispelled.

The Dispel Difficulty for creature powers is based on the Power rank, the Dispel Difficulty for talents or talent knacks is based on the Talent rank, and the Dispel Difficulty for Discipline abilities is based on the Circle at which the ability is first eligible to be gained. The rank or Discipline Circle is equivalent to the spell Circle value listed on the Dispel Difficulty Table.

In most cases, the Dispel Magic spell serves to either cancel the target spell, or to neutralize the magical effect. This does not prevent the ability from being used again, although any criteria for minimum periods between uses of the ability must still be honored.

Named Spells

One of the first truths that an apprentice magician learns from his master is that the power of spell magic is transient. Spells enable a magician to draw energy from astral space and shape it to suit his will, but the effects of even the most powerful spells rarely last more than a short time. Spells generally create no more than a tiny, brief change in the fabric of the universe before the universe inevitably reverts to its natural state. Blood magic can prolong the duration of magical effects, but even a few years represent no more than a fleeting moment in the life span of the universe. By Naming a spell a magician can give the spell a True pattern and make its effects permanent and self-sustaining. Naming a spell allows a magician to cast lasting curses and blessings, create magical items and design unique, high-powered spells.

Only spells with a duration longer than 1 round can be Named. Spells that destroy or consume their targets, such as Razor Orb, cannot be Named because their effects are temporary by definition—these spells end after they have destroyed their targets. Magicians may, however, Name warding or defensive spells, such as Lightning Shield or Pass Ward, because destroying a target is not the primary function of these spells. Naming spells is powerful magic, and each gamemaster should determine which spells can be Named in his game.

Jens' gamemaster has ruled that spells involving the summoning of spirits cannot be Named. Belgaras, Jens' troll Nethermancer, can never make the effects of his Pocket Guardian spell permanent. Because the Pocket Guardian spell allows Belgaras to summon a small tasked spirit to protect his bag, it falls into the category of summoning spells, and therefore cannot be Named.

Casting Named Spells

Magicians wishing to cast Named spells must first learn the Name Spell talent knack (see the **Talent Knacks** chapter, p. 224). Once the magician has learned this knack, he can cast Named spells.

To make a spell's effect permanent, the magician must give the spell a Name. The Name of every permanent spell must be unique; a magician cannot use the same Name more than once. A spell's Name is usually associated with the circumstances under which the caster wishes to make the spell permanent. If the magician uses a spell to enchant an item, the spell's Name generally includes the name of the item. If the spell is targeted against a person, the Name may indicate the caster, the target and the circumstances of the casting.

Enitharmon, an elven Illusionist, casts the Eyes Have It spell on an opponent and decides to make the spell permanent. He chooses to Name the spell Enitharmon's Curse of Blindness.

Before attempting to cast a permanent spell, a magician must declare his intention to do so and must accept whatever results the Spellcasting and Effect Tests produce. The magician may change his mind and decide not to make the spell permanent if he is unhappy with the results. In this case, he takes Strain damage as described below, but need not spend any Legend Points.

To cast a Named spell, a magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the spell's Casting Difficulty, as normal. If the test succeeds, the magician makes a second Spellcasting Test against the higher of the spell's Casting or Dispel Difficulty, and takes Strain damage equal to the spell Circle plus a single Blood Wound (see **Blood Wounds** in the **Workings of Magic** chapter, p. 259). As long as the Strain does not kill the magician, the spellcasting attempt will succeed on a Good result. If the test succeeds, the magician may make the spell permanent by spending Legend Points; if he chooses not to do so, the spell simply works as normal.

The Named spell costs as much as a Ninth Circle talent on the Talent Rank Cost Table (see **Spending Legend Points** in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 420), with the spell Circle being used in place of the Talent rank. If the caster has insufficient Current Legend Points, which provide the magical energy needed to create a True pattern for the spell, he cannot make the spell permanent. For example, casting a Fifth Circle spell as a Named spell would cost the magician 2,100 Legend Points, the same Legend Point cost as a Circle 9–12 talent at Rank 5.

Once a magician makes a spell permanent, the spell becomes an independent astral entity outside his control. Even the magician who created a Named spell must dispel or destroy the Named spell he wants to cancel—he cannot simply cancel it at will.

The effects of certain spells, such as Monstrous Mantle and Shield Mist, may prove inconvenient if made permanent. For example, a magician who creates a permanent Counterspell on himself will never be able to change his Spell Defense. It will become "fixed" by the Named spell. If characters insist on Naming such spells anyway, the gamemaster is encouraged to enforce any potential problems they cause.

Dispelling Named Spells

The Thread Weaving talent knack Unraveling (see the **Talent Knacks** chapter, p. 228) and the Dispel Magic spell are the only effective means to destroy a Named spell. To use either of these methods, a magician must learn the Key Knowledges of the Named spell. The typical number of Key Knowledges for a Named spell is based on the spell's Circle, as shown on the Named Spell Key Knowledges Table.

NAMED SPELL KEY KNOWLEDGES TABLE

Spell Circle	Number of Key Knowledges
1–4	1
5–8	2
9–12	3
13–15	4

The Key Knowledges may vary but generally include the spell's Name, the Name of the magician who cast the spell, the reason for the spell, the spell's history and similar information. The gamemaster may create Key Knowledges if the need arises, and may include a Deed if so desired.

Learning the Key Knowledges of a Named spell is generally more difficult than learning the Key Knowledges of a magical item, as there is no physical object on which to use the Item or Weapon History talent. As a result, magicians often use mundane research to learn the Key Knowledges of a Named spell (see **Research** in the **Skills** chapter, p. 245). Once a magician has learned the Key Knowledges of a Named spell, he can break it by using the Unraveling talent knack or the Dispel Magic spell.

High-Circle Spells

Unlike the formulaic lower-Circle spells, each spell of Thirteenth Circle and greater is a unique and special enchantment. These extremely powerful rituals are designed to create specific effects of great scope and importance, and are often the basis of legends.

Though all spells of Thirteenth Circle and greater are different, they all possess three characteristics. Each is a unique Named ritual spell, is difficult to learn, and difficult to cast. Each of these spells has a specific purpose and intent and may only be used for that purpose. For example, there is no such thing as a Thirteenth Circle attack spell that can be used to instantly destroy any target the magician chooses. However, a magician could create a Thirteenth Circle spell intended to visit a terrible plague on a specific city.

Because each high-Circle spell has a unique effect and a unique target, gamemasters and players should view their use as significant events that can easily alter the course of a campaign. Each high-Circle spell has a Name, and therefore a True pattern that defines the spell's purpose. Because they are Named, dispelling high-Circle spells is a major task that requires the discovery of several Key Knowledges (see **Named Spells**, p. 291). For example, the Ritual of Thorns is the enchantment that created the Blood Elves. Its creation and use was a specific event in the history of the Wyrm Wood. The Ritual probably will never be used again, but if it is, that use will be an equally significant event in the history of Barsaive.

Magicians need to consider two important factors when designing spells of Thirteenth Circle and higher. First, the design must reflect the spell's unique purpose; the magician must define the spell's effect more specifically than he would define the effect of a lower-Circle spell. While the effects are not as flexible as those of lower-Circle spells, they can and should produce far-reaching effects. High-Circle spells may produce more than one effect, reach long distances or cover large areas of effect. For example, such spells might include a ritual that causes all the adult males in the city of Travar to fall ill and die, or a spell that would transform Lake Ban into ice. Second, high-Circle spells must be designed as ritual spells. Generally, rituals require the abilities of several magicians uniting their powers through the use of the Talent Linking knack to cast the spell.

Because high-Circle spells are so powerful, they should be difficult to learn and cast. Their complexity gives only the most highly skilled and talented magicians a hope of designing and executing them. High-Circle spells represent magical secrets of the highest order, and only years of devoted work enable magicians to successfully create them. These spells are as carefully guarded as the most valuable of magical treasures, and they are not shared or used lightly. Thirteenth Circle and greater spells contain enough power to alter the course of an **Earthdawn** campaign with only one use. Gamemasters should carefully consider the implications of these spells before allowing their use in campaigns.

Some examples of Thirteenth or higher Circle spells are included in this book; others may be found in dusty grimoires that await discovery in abandoned kaers.

Spell Descriptions

The following chapters contain many of the spells available to magicians in the world of **Earthdawn.** As noted earlier, high-Circle spells (Thirteenth Circle and higher) are mostly very old. During the current magic cycle the deepest magical research went into developing shelters against the Horrors instead of spell research.

In decades past some magicians experimented on their own, developing new knowledge and spells outside the fellowship of magical research. There are also legends of 5,000-year-old grimoires buried beneath ruins old before Throal's first ruler united the wild dwarf tribes. Dragons are also rumored to know high-Circle spells, but their covetousness is common knowledge. If you want your character to learn these great (and potent) spells, he will first have to find them.

Spells are organized by Discipline and Circle. The spell's Discipline determines the Thread Weaving talent the magician must have in order to attune a spell or weave spell threads. The Circle describes the relative power of the spell, and determines the spell's Learning and Dispel Difficulties.

Each spell listing shows both the spell's game statistics and its description. These statistics are: **Threads**, **Weaving Difficulty**, **Range**, **Duration**, **Effect**, and **Casting Difficulty**.

Threads

The **Threads** notation shows how many spell threads a magician must weave into a spell pattern in order to fully form the spell. Simple spells do not require the caster to weave additional spell threads—the spell matrix is sufficient to hold the entire spell intact. If the spell requires no spell threads, that is indicated by a "0" notation.

The Absorbing Sphere spell requires 3 spell threads to be woven before it can be cast. The Air Armor spell requires no threads, so can be cast from a matrix in but a single round.

Some spells are noted as being ritual spells. These generally have specific requirements related to how long it takes to weave threads for these spells, and limitations on the number of threads that can be woven.

Weaving Difficulty

The **Weaving Difficulty** is presented as two numbers separated by a slash. The first number (to the left of the slash) is the Difficulty Number for weaving spell threads into a spell pattern. "NA" means the spell requires no spell threads and so has no Weaving Difficulty.

The second number (to the right of the slash) is the Reattunement Difficulty, used when a magician is attempting to Reattune on the Fly (see **Reattuning on the Fly**, p. 288, for more information).

The Absorbing Sphere spell has a Weaving Difficulty of "13/19". This spell has a Weaving Difficulty of 13 and a Reattunement Difficulty of 19. The Air Armor spell has a Weaving Difficulty of "NA/10". This spell has no Weaving Difficulty ("NA" means the spell does not require any spell threads). While it requires no spell threads to be woven before casting, attempts to reattune this spell are made against a Reattunement Difficulty of 10.

Range

The **Range** of a spell is usually given in yards. A range of "self" means the spell only works upon the caster. A range of "touch" means the caster must be able to touch the recipient of the spell, which could also be the caster himself. A touch range spell cast on an unwilling target does not require an additional Action Test—like a Dexterity or Attack Test—to touch the target. A successful Spellcasting Test means the caster has also successfully touched the target.

The Absorbing Sphere spell allows the magician to cast the spell on a target within 60 yards distance from the caster. The Air Armor spell requires the magician to touch the target, whether himself or another—this does not require the magician to make an Unarmed Combat attack against the target, just a Spellcasting Test.

Duration

Duration is the length of time the spell remains in effect. A spell's duration is usually given in combat rounds (10 seconds of game time), though spell durations can also be measured in minutes, hours, or longer.

Unless the description specifically says otherwise, "Rank" refers to the magician's Spellcasting rank. Thus, a duration listed as "Rank + 10 minutes" refers to a number of minutes equal to the character's Spellcasting rank + 10.

A magician knows the Spellcasting talent at Rank 10. If he casts the Absorbing Sphere spell it will be effective for 22 rounds (Rank + 12 rounds). If he casts the Air Armor spell it will be effective for 15 minutes (Rank + 5 minutes).

Once cast, spells continue for their full duration even if the caster is killed or falls unconscious. Some spells require concentration and end if that concentration is broken, or expire under other conditions, as noted in the spell's description.

Unless specifically noted, a magician cannot end his own spell before the duration expires. The magician (or another magician) could use the Dispel Magic spell to do so, however.

Effect

The spell **Effect** varies with the spell. The most common use of the Effect step is to generate a number. This number then represents another value, such as the amount of damage the target takes, a creature's Attribute values, the Difficulty Number for other Action Tests made by the spell's target, and so on. When a character needs to generate such a number, the spell description instructs the player to make an Effect Test.

When a spell requires an Effect Test, the step number is indicated as, for example, "Willpower + 4." In this example, if the magician is successful in casting the spell, he adds +4 steps to his Willpower step to determine the spell's Effect step. A magician player should calculate and record the Effect steps for all of his character's spells. This will save time in the thick of the action.

Some spells—like Dispel Magic—use the Effect Test to determine the success or failure of the spell. With these spells, use the Effect step indicated and make an Effect Test against the Difficulty Number given, which is often the target's Spell Defense, but may be some other value noted in the spell description.

As noted earlier in this chapter, characters with the Willforce talent (see the **Talents** chapter, p. 211) may use their Willforce step in place of their Willpower step when determining the spell's Effect step.

A magician has a Willpower step of 7. If he casts the Absorbing Sphere spell, his Effect step is 15 (Willpower + 8). If he casts the Air Armor spell, the fixed spell effect (+3 to Physical Armor) applies. If the magician learns the Willforce talent at Rank 4, and uses it, the Absorbing Sphere spell will have an Effect step of 19. If he casts the Air Armor spell, there is no change to the spell effect—Willpower is not used in the spell effect.

Unless noted in the spell description, a magician may have a maximum number of castings of the same spell equal to his Spellcasting rank in effect at the same time. Unless otherwise stated, only one casting of a spell can affect a single character at any one time; multiple effects do not stack.

Casting Difficulty

The **Casting Difficulty** is the Difficulty Number used for the magician's Spellcasting Test. For most spells, particularly those that cause damage, this will be the target's Spell Defense. For other spells, it is simply a predetermined number given in the spell description. **The minimum Casting Difficulty for spells, regardless of modifiers, is 6.**

The term target can refer to the recipient of a beneficial spell as well as to an opponent.

The Absorbing Sphere spell requires the magician to make a successful Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. Casting the Puddle Deep spell requires the magician to make a Spellcasting (6) Test.

Description

The **spell description** explains the spell's effect or any special information for the spell. It also describes any requirements for the spell to be cast, such as gestures, supporting objects or access to a particular environment, Difficulty Numbers for Effect Tests, and other conditions and restrictions.

The Absorbing Sphere spell requires the magician to wave a finger around his head. The Air Armor spell requires the magician to blow over the target's body, and also requires the target character to be clothed or armored to constrain the spell's effect.

Illusory Spells

Illusionism spells note in their description whether they are illusory or real. See **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions** in the **Illusionism Spells** chapter, p. 322, for more information about illusions and making Sensing and Disbelief Tests.

Elementalism Spells

Masters of "flash and bang?" The subtleties of my art are obviously beyond your perceptive capabilities.

• Cadriel, Elven Elementalist •

Elementalists use Elementalism magic to manipulate the magical elements. Their spells most often affect one or more of the elements, but can also affect the weather and nature. Through their spells, they are able to speak with the elemental spirits that inhabit the world.

First Circle Spells

Air Armor

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 10
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: +3 to Physical Armor; +3 bonus to Fatigue Tests against heat exposure
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Air Armor spell creates a protective cushion of air. The magician blows on the parts of the target's body to be covered with armor and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, air rushes in under the target's clothing, pushing outward and providing padding as well as ventilation. The air cushion adds +3 to the target's Physical Armor and grants him a +3 bonus to his Fatigue Tests when resisting the effects of heat exposure (see the **Adventuring** chapter on p.120 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**).

If the target is not wearing any clothing or armor, he receives no benefit from this spell—there is nothing to constrain the air cushion, so it simply disperses. This spell is especially popular with elemental fire mining crews working near Death's Sea.

Crunch Climb

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 14
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: +3 bonus to Climbing Tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Crunch Climb spell enhances the target's climbing ability. The magician crouches down on all fours while weaving the spell thread, then touches the target as he begins his climb and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target gains a +3 bonus to any Climbing Tests he makes during the spell's duration.

Earth Blend

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 7
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Earth Blend spell makes a character blend completely with his surroundings, making it more difficult to spot him. Both magician and target must be standing on stone or earth for the spell to work. The magician throws a stone at, rubs some dirt on, or touches a pebble to, the target character and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the

magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the Detection Difficulty for attempts to spot the target using normal vision. Those using magical sight or senses must make a successful Perception Test against the target's Spell Defense to perceive him. The target must remain stationary during the duration of the spell; if he moves, the spell expires.

Other than helping hide the target, the Earth Blend spell provides no additional physical or magical protection.

Earth Darts

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 5 / 12
Range: 30 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Earth Darts spell transforms earth into crystalline darts that fly toward a foe. The magician flings a handful of dirt into the air while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

This potent spell is not an uncommon one. Knowledgeable foes will often retreat out of range as they see the crystal darts forming.

Flameweapon

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 5 / 14
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank + 10 rounds
Effect: Weapon adds a Step 3 Flame die to Damage Tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Flameweapon spell conjures a small flame, enhancing a weapon's ability to cause harm. The magician clicks his fingers as he weaves the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the target weapon or its wielder, whichever is higher. If the test succeeds, a flame leaps from the magician's fingers, completely engulfing the weapon, except for the part where it is held. The flame continues to burn on the weapon for the duration of the spell. While the spell is in effect, the wielder rolls a separate Step 3 Flame die with any Damage Tests he makes with the fiery weapon. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

While the weapon is under the effect of the Flameweapon spell its temperature increases, becoming hot, but bearably so. Whenever the Flame die result is greater than 4, the wielder takes 1 Damage Point from the heat. No armor protects against this damage. The Flameweapon spell can be cast on weapons made from any material—wood, metal, bone, and so on. The flame inflicts no physical damage to the weapon. A weapon may benefit from only one Flameweapon spell at a time.

Heat Food

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 5 / 7
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 10 minutes
Effect: Heats up and rejuvenates food
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Heat Food spell heats up food and infuses it with magic that imbues a beneficial effect. While weaving the spell thread, the magician breathes on his hands as if to warm them, and they begin to glow a gentle red. As the magician touches the food to be warmed, he makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the glow transfers from the magician's hands to the food which, within a minute, becomes steaming hot. Eating the food increases the effectiveness of Recovery Tests.

A character consuming a heated meal adds the magician's Spellcasting rank as a bonus to the first Recovery Test he makes during the duration of the spell. Each successful casting of the Heat Food spell heats a maximum number of meals equal to the magician's Spellcasting rank.

Moonglow

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 10
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: Creates softly glowing light
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Moonglow spell creates a small sphere of soft light. The magician determines where the spell is centered within the spell's range and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, a globe of softly glowing light fills a 10 yard radius around the center of the spell.

The light created is bright enough to see by at night or in Complete darkness, roughly equivalent to torchlight. It does not provide adequate illumination to read by or to allow precise work to be carried out for extended periods of time.

Plant Talk

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 7
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 10 minutes
Effect: Allows conversation with plant spirits
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Plant Talk spell allows conversation with plants. The magician puts his ear to the target plant and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, he is able to converse with the spirits who inhabit such plants, rather than with the plants themselves. Plant spirits vary widely in intelligence, but are a considerable step up from the plants they inhabit. They vary in temperament as much as characters do; some may be very willing to talk, or grumpy and taciturn, or even sleepy from lying out in the sun for so long. Plant spirits are usually only aware of events that happen within 5 yards of their roots. The spirits only inhabit living plants; they must seek a new plant when their old host dies.

Purify Earth

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 5 / 13
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Purifies earth and soil
Casting Difficulty: 6+ (see text)

The Purify Earth spell removes impurities and foreign materials preventing soil from supporting plant life. The magician determines where the effect is centered, within the spell's range, while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the earth's Spell Defense. Soil that is largely untainted has a Spell Defense of 6; disease-ridden or poisoned earth resists with the Spell Defense of the disease or poison; an area of earth that is Horror-tainted has a Spell Defense equal to that of the Horror. If the test succeeds, a 3 yard by 3 yard area of soil is cleansed of impurities and becomes again able to sustain plant life.

Purify Water

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 5 / 13
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: 6+ (see text)

The Purify Water spell removes impurities from water. The magician smears a drop of the water to be purified on his lips while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the water's Spell Defense. Water that is merely muddy has a Spell Defense of 6; disease-ridden or poisoned water resists with the Spell Defense of the disease or poison; water that is Horror-tainted has a Spell Defense equal to that of the Horror.

A magician may also use this spell to purify beverages with a high water content, such as wine, juice, beer, or milk. The magician requires a Good result on his Spellcasting Test to affect these types of beverages. If the test succeeds, the spell removes all the flavorful "impurities," leaving just pure water. The spell purifies a number of quarts of water or beverage equal to the magician's Effect Test result.

Resist Cold

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 7
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 6 minutes
Effect: +3 to Physical and Mystic Armor against cold damage
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Resist Cold spell allows a character to better accommodate the effects of a sudden or prolonged drop in temperature. The magician conjures frost upon the palm of his hand and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the frost melts away as he touches the target. The target adds +3 to his Physical and Mystic Armor against damage from cold-based attacks. A character may benefit from only one Resist Cold spell at a time.

Resist Fire

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 7
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 6 minutes
Effect: +3 to Physical and Mystic Armor against fire damage
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Resist Fire spell allows a character to better accommodate the effects of a sudden or prolonged rise in temperature. The magician conjures a small flame on the tip of each index finger and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, he touches the target on the eyebrows (or ridge above the eyes approximating the position of the eyebrows)—a bright flash singes the target's brows, but does no harm. The target adds +3 to his Physical and Mystic Armor against damage from fire-based attacks. A character may benefit from only one Resist Fire spell at a time.

Second Circle Spells

Air Mattress

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 17
Range: Touch **Duration**: 10 hours
Effect: +2 bonus to Recovery Tests
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Air Mattress spell forms a mattress of air with healing properties. As preparation for the spell, the magician anchors the four corners of a blanket using something from any one of the four non-air elements: tree branches, rocks or dirt clods, and so on. While weaving the spell thread, the magician blows into his clenched fist as if inflating a balloon, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, a cushion of air forms under the blanket, turning it into a comfortable 12-inch-thick air mattress.

Anyone who sleeps on the mattress for 8 uninterrupted hours gains a +2 bonus to his next Recovery Test, provided the test is made within an hour of waking. The mattress remains inflated for the duration of the spell or until the blanket is moved or damaged.

Billowing Cloak

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 14
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Billowing Cloak spell enhances a character's ability to impress others. The spell can only be cast on someone who is wearing a cloak or has shoulder-length or longer hair (a t'skrang's crest is considered to be "long hair" for purposes of casting this spell). While weaving the spell thread, the magician tosses his head and flips his hair (if any) or crest back, then places his hand on the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the air behind the target becomes animated, billowing his cloak or hair out behind him.

The target makes an Effect Test in place of and under the same circumstances as a First Impression Test (see **First Impression** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 185). If the target character already knows the First Impression talent or skill, he gains a +5 bonus to his First Impression Test instead of using the spell's Effect step. If the character's First Impression Test succeeds, he gains a +5 bonus to any Interaction Tests he makes against his "impressed" friend during the spell's duration.

Boil Water

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 13
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Boils water
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Boil Water spell quickly brings water in a container to the boil. The spell can only be cast on inanimate objects serving as vessels to hold water. While weaving the spell threads, the magician briskly taps the vessel as if it were very hot, then touches it and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the vessel immediately begins heating the water within, bringing a quart of water to boil each round; a gallon of water requires 4 rounds (4 quarts equals 1 gallon) to reach boiling point. The maximum number of quarts of water that the magician can boil is equal to his Spellcasting step.

Though this spell is not intended to be used in combat, the product can, nonetheless, be quite effective. A character can hurl the contents of the vessel at an opponent, making a Throwing Weapons Test against the target's Physical Defense (see **Thrown Attacks** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 412). If the test succeeds, the boiling water inflicts damage on the target equal to Step 3 damage per quart, to a maximum of Step 12 damage (for a gallon or more). Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Detect Elementalism Magic

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 5 / 15
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: Rank + 10 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Detect Elementalism Magic spell allows the magician to detect Elementalism (only) magic. Magicians find this spell useful when trying to determine if an item is magical, because many magical items are enchanted with True elements, usually by Elementalists.

This spell otherwise works in the same manner as the Astral Sense spell, but only on the physical plane (see the **Wizardry Spells** chapter, p. 374).

Flame Strike

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 11
Range: 30 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Flame Strike spell strikes a target with a bolt of flame. The magician must have a source of fire available to him, such as a torch or a campfire. The magician points at the target, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Gills

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 4 / 13
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 10 minutes
Effect: Allows target to breathe underwater
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Gills spell allows a character to breathe underwater. The magician makes fishlike mouthing gestures while weaving the spell threads, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, small gills appear behind the target's ears (or neck if the target has no external ears, such as obsidimen).

While still able to breathe air normally, the target can also breathe underwater for the duration of the spell.

Hunter's Sense

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 14
Range: 25 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Hunter's Sense spell allows a character to sense nearby animals and determine their general species. The magician touches the target's eyes, ears and nose with water or dust, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target makes an Effect Test, the result of which is compared against the Spell Defense of any animals within the spell's range. If the test succeeds, the target senses what kind of animals are present and the general direction in which they lie, though not their exact locations. The target character uses his own Willpower step for the Effect Test.

The Hunter's Sense spell does not detect Name-givers, undead creatures, Horrors, or Horror constructs. It does detect animals or other creatures with magical powers, however.

Ice Spear

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 14
Range: 120 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 3
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Ice Spear spell projects a long spear of ice at a target. While weaving the spell thread, frost forms on the fingers of the magician, then he makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a 5 foot long spear of ice is formed, trailing frost as it arcs toward and strikes the target. The magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Icy Surface

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 8
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Willpower
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Icy Surface spell creates an icy, slippery, surface that is treacherous for those attempting to cross it. The magician blows on the surface he wishes to affect, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the target area is immediately covered with ice. The spot the magician blows on is one edge of the area; the ice extends from this point. The magician can choose the shape and size of the icy surface as long as no dimension is greater than 20 yards and the maximum area of 100 square yards is not exceeded. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the Knockdown Difficulty for crossing the ice without slipping.

Characters negotiating the slippery surface must make a Dexterity Test—or a suitable Talent or Skill Test (creatures make a Dexterity or Knockdown Test)—against the Knockdown Difficulty. If the test succeeds, the character or creature can move across the icy surface at a maximum speed equal to half of their Combat Movement rate. If the test fails, the character or creature is Knocked Down (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 409).

Path Home

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 14
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: Rank + 20 minutes
Effect: Summons spirit wings to guide the caster home
Casting Difficulty: 10

The Path Home spell summons a pair of spirit wings to guide the magician to a familiar place. While weaving the spell threads, the magician closes his eyes and envisions the place where he last slept, then makes a Spellcasting (10) Test—the Spell Defense of the spirit. If the test succeeds, he summons a pair of shimmering wings, translucent and sparkling green or gold, which begin to fly toward the last place the magician slept, remaining within 60 yards of the magician at all times. When commanded, the wings will slow down or speed up.

The wings have the following statistics:

Spirit Wings

Physical Defense: 10 **Physical Armor**: 0
Spell Defense: 10 **Mystic Armor**: 0
Social Defense: Immune

Death Rating: 1 **Combat Movement**: 49✦
Wound Threshold: NA **Full Movement**: 98✦
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

✦ This value is the spirit's flying Movement rate.

Shield Willow

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 14
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: +6 to shield's Shatter Threshold and +1 to its Physical and Mystic Armor
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Shield Willow spell improves the resiliency of non-magical shields. The magician joins his fingers together while weaving the spell threads, then touches the shield and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the shield sprouts roots and leaves and gains the resiliency of a willow tree. The shield adds +6 to its Shatter Threshold and +1 to its Physical and Mystic Armor for the duration of the spell.

Slow Metal Weapon

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 9 / 13
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: Rank + 8 rounds
Effect: –3 penalty to weapon's Damage Tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Slow Metal Weapon spell slows down a weapon at the point of impact, reducing its ability to inflict damage. This spell can only be used against weapons with a metal edge or point. The magician mimes a slow-moving attack while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the wielder's or his weapon's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the spell slows down the target weapon each time its wielder hits an opponent. The wielder suffers a –3 penalty to his Damage Tests when using the slowed weapon. A weapon may be affected by only one Slow Metal Weapon spell at a time.

Nothing prevents the wielder dropping the slowed weapon and swapping to another if he desires. Anyone picking up and using the weapon still suffers the damage penalty until the spell ends.

Small Slayer

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 14
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Summons a poisonous creature
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Small Slayer spell summons a tiny poisonous creature such as a spider, snake or scorpion to attack a designated target. With a low crooning sound and slow, sinuous hand movements, the magician weaves the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against his own Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the venomous creature appears and sneaks up to its victim. It tries to repeatedly attack the target until it has successfully bitten or stung him or the spell's duration ends. At either occurrence, the summoned creature disappears.

The small slayer's venom is a Step 8 poison, with a Spell Defense of 8, an Instant Onset Time, and a Duration of 4 rounds (see the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 121 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). The creature's attack cannot penetrate armor. The small slayer attempts to strike unarmored areas on the target's body using the Called Shot combat option, if necessary (see **Combat Options** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 404). If the creature attacks successfully, the bite or sting penetrates the target's flesh, allowing the poison to take effect.

Regardless of its species, the small slayer has the following statistics:

Small Slayer

DEX: NA **STR**: NA **TOU**: NA
PER: NA **WIL**: NA **CHA**: NA

Initiative: 8 **Physical Defense**: 8
Number of Actions: 1 **Spell Defense**: Magician
Attack: 8 **Social Defense**: Magician
Damage: **Physical Armor**: 0
Bite *or* Sting: 1 **Mystic Armor**: 0

Death Rating: 10 **Recovery Tests**: NA
Wound Threshold: NA **Knockdown**: Immune
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 8 **Full Movement**: 16

Powers: Poison (SD 8; Damage 8; see text)

Legend Points: 25

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Sterilize Object

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 5 / 14
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 7
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Sterilize Object spell cleanses an object of poison or disease. The magician rubs his wrists together while weaving the spell thread, sending a white spark from his wrist to the target object, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test.

If the test succeeds, he makes an Effect Test against the Spell Defense or step number of the disease or poison. If this test succeeds, the object is cleansed of that disease or poison. An item that has multiple diseases or poisons will require several Sterilize Object spells to be cast on it to be completely cleansed.

The Sterilize Object spell is only effective against inanimate objects. If used against food, the food becomes sterile, losing both flavor and texture. A character must make a successful Willpower (4) Test to bring himself to eat sterilized food.

Stick Together

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 5 / 13
Range: 25 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Stick Together spell bonds two targets tightly together. The magician mimes putting his hands together and trying to pull them apart while weaving the spell thread, then points both hands (still stuck together) at the two target characters and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the targets. If the test succeeds, as soon as the two targets touch, they instantly bond together. The magician can choose to bond two targets already in contact, such as a character and the floor. Otherwise, the targets must be within 3 yards of each other for the spell to be effective.

The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which determines the Strength value of the magical bond, and therefore the maximum weight that can be supported by the bond (see **Determine Characteristics** and **Encumbrance** in the **Creating Characters** chapter, p. 48). Breaking the bond requires either target to make a Strength Test against the bond's Strength step (as determined by its Strength value). If the test succeeds, the bond is broken and the spell ends.

The spellcaster may break the bond at any time (thus ending the spell) by making a successful Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the two affected targets.

Third Circle Spells

Astral Sense Elementalism

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 5 / 15
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: Rank + 10 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Astral Sense Elementalism spell allows the magician to sense the presence of people, creatures, magic doors, magic items, and so on, in astral space. See the **Wizardry Spells** chapter, p. 374, for a full description.

Behind Eye

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 16
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 30 minutes
Effect: Step 4 Perception Test to rear
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Behind Eye spell creates an eye in the back of a character's head. The magician must have a lit candle or torch to cast this spell. The magician holds the candle or torch and chants softly while weaving the spell threads, then touches the flame to the back of the target's head and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a flaming eye appears in the back of the target's head. This eye "sees" things to the rear of the target with its own Perception step of 4; the target character sees what the eye sees. The eye has no special power to see in the dark or in astral space, even if the target possesses this racial ability.

In combat, the eye prevents a character from being Blindsided by an opponent (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 407). An attacker can counter this by using a skill or talent that makes him harder to see; if the eye fails its Perception Test against the talent or skill's Detection Difficulty, the attacker gains a Blindsided bonus against the target of the spell, as normal.

Dispel Elementalism Magic

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 13
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Dispel Elementalism Magic spell dispels Elementalism (only) spells. It otherwise works in the same way as the Dispel Magic spell (see the **Wizardry Spells** chapter, p. 375).

Fingers of Wind

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 15
Range: 20 yards **Duration**: Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: Willpower
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Fingers of Wind spell creates a pair of invisible hands with which the magician can lift and manipulate objects. To observers, a faint breeze seems to move the targeted item. The magician wiggles his fingers while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is allocated over the hands' Strength and Dexterity values as desired. Regardless of the test result, no Attribute value may exceed 30.

The hands can reach anywhere visible to the magician within the spell's range. While they have a tangible effect when carrying or moving objects, the hands cannot be used to attack a target character or creature, nor can they be targeted in turn; the hands have no Attributes other than Strength and Dexterity.

Fuel Flame

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 14
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: Willpower + 3
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Fuel Flame spell creates a momentary rift into the Elemental Plane of Fire, increasing the intensity of a nearby fire source. The magician points at the target fire, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, he makes an Effect Test against the fire's Damage step. If this test succeeds, the Damage step of the fire is increased by +2 for each result level achieved.

The fire burns hotter and consumes fuel more quickly while the spell is in effect, but will go out normally once it exhausts all of the fuel available to it.

Grounding

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 4 / 12
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: +6 to Physical and Mystic Armor against electrical attacks and +6 bonus to Knockdown Tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Grounding spell earths the target, protecting him from the effects of electricity. Both the magician and the target character must be standing on the earth when the spell is cast. After weaving the spell threads, the magician shoves down on the target, causing him to tense his muscles, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target adds +6 to his Physical and Mystic Armor against any type of electrical effect, such as the Lightning Bolt spell or the Lightning creature power. The target cannot break contact with the ground without the spell expiring; his movement is halved during the spell's duration.

As a side-effect, the Grounding spell makes it harder for the target to be lifted off the ground, granting him a +6 bonus to Knockdown Tests. Those using talents or spells intended to move or lift the target, such as the Levitate spell, increase the result level required for their Action Tests by one level (from Average to Good, Good to Excellent, and so on).

Ice Mace and Chain

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 15
Range: 40 yards **Duration**: 2 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Ice Mace and Chain spell creates an icy weapon that the magician throws at an opponent. The magician hurls two pebbles, coins, or other small objects at the target character, then makes a

Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the two objects transform into spiked mace-heads joined by an icy chain. The chain and mace-heads wrap around the target, often shattering when they hit. The magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target; if he rolls any Bonus dice for the Damage Test, the mace and chain shatter afterwards. If the mace and chain survive the blow, the target is considered Harried until he frees himself at the end of the following round (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408). Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Lightning Bolt

Threads: 1
Weaving Difficulty: 10 / 15
Range: 25 yards
Duration: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Lightning Bolt spell strikes the target with bolts of electricity. The magician raises his hands toward the sky while weaving the spell thread, then points at the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, crackling bolts of electricity fly from the magician's fingers, striking the target. The magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Only non-metallic Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Plant Feast

Threads: 3
Weaving Difficulty: 6 / 16
Range: 25 yards
Duration: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Plant Feast spell converts plant material of any kind into a tasty feast. The spell requires three intact plants, no matter how scrawny. The magician weaves the spell threads while cutting or tearing the plants up into small pieces, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, he makes an Effect Test, the result of which is the number of meals produced by the spell. Each meal has the following parts: appetizer, soup, salad, bread, entree, vegetable, and dessert. All of the meals are identical. Although the meals can appear to contain meat, none of them actually do. They are as nutritious and tasty as their "real" counterparts, however.

The spell only creates types of food that the magician has himself tasted within the last year and a day—a good excuse for him to occasionally eat to excess while in cities. The food created must be eaten during the spell's duration; uneaten food vanishes the instant the spell expires.

Porter

Threads: 2 (see text)
Weaving Difficulty: 9 / 15
Range: 15 yards
Duration: Rank days
Effect: Willpower
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Porter spell creates a semi-sentient being to carry equipment. The magician first spends 30 minutes making an earthen mound, molding it into a humanoid shape of approximately his own size. Running his hands over the length of the figure, he weaves the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the porter's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the mound becomes animated, lifting its body up from where it lies and standing upright before the magician. The porter travels with its feet still attached to the ground, which ripples under and around it to let it pass.

Once the porter is animated, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which determines both its Strength value for carrying equipment and the porter's Strength step (see **Encumbrance**, p. 48, and **Determining Characteristics**, p. 45, in the **Creating Characters** chapter). The porter must remain within 15 yards of the caster at all times or the spell ends. While animated, the porter will obey the magician's commands to "halt" or "follow." It understands and will carry out simple instructions involving the loading and unloading of goods. The magician must provide suitable containers (backpacks, sacks, etc.) to hold the goods he wants the porter to carry.

The porter has the following statistics:

Porter

DEX: 4 **STR**: Effect Test* **TOU**: 12
PER: 2 **WIL**: 2 **CHA**: 3

* The Effect Test result determines the Strength value, which in turn determines the porter's Strength step.

Initiative: 4
Number of Actions: NA
Attack: NA
Damage: NA
Physical Defense: 6
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 9
Physical Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 4

Death Rating: 59
Wound Threshold: 17
Recovery Tests: 5
Knockdown: STR
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 18
Full Movement: 36

Powers: None

Legend Points: 90

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Puddle Deep

Threads: 1
Weaving Difficulty: 7 / 15
Range: 15 yards
Duration: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Willpower
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Puddle Deep spell increases the depth of a puddle. The puddle must be a body of water within range of the caster and no greater than 3 yards in diameter and 1 yard deep. After weaving the spell thread, the magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test and compares the result against the Spell Defense of any characters standing in or attempting to cross the puddle during the spell's duration. If the test fails, the character treats the puddle as if it were a normal puddle. If the Effect Test succeeds, the character falls into the puddle, which increases in depth by a number of yards equal to the spell's Effect step, and must climb out or risk drowning.

While in the puddle, the character is considered Harried for all actions except attempts to clamber out (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408). Each round, the character makes a Dexterity or Climbing Test against the spell's Effect Test result. If the test succeeds, the character crawls out of the puddle.

If the test fails, the character remains in the puddle. On a Pathetic result, the character accidentally breathes in a lungful of dirty water; the magician makes an Effect Test to determine the amount of damage inflicted. No armor protects against this damage.

Anyone still in the puddle when the spell expires finds himself in the original puddle (now returned to its original depth), leaving the character somewhat wet and bedraggled for the experience. The water created with the Puddle Deep spell cannot be used to quench thirst and cannot be stored for later use. After the spell ends, the excess water disappears.

Repair

Threads: 1
Range: Touch
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: 6
Weaving Difficulty: 9 / 16
Duration: Rank + 3 months

The Repair spell uses elemental force to temporarily mend damaged objects. While weaving the spell thread, the magician takes the object or its pieces and imagines them whole again, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is the Strength value of the bond holding the object together. The Repair spell can rearrange the mass of the object to make up for any missing pieces, but this has limitations—the magician must have at least 75 percent of the original object available to him to successfully use this spell.

Rust

Threads: 1
Range: 30 yards
Effect: Reduces a weapon's Damage step or an armor or shield's Physical Armor rating
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)
Weaving Difficulty: 7 / 15
Duration: 1 round

The Rust spell rapidly corrodes metal objects, generally those made of iron, steel, or another ferrous metal. The magician flings a handful of water at the target object, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the item or its bearer, whichever is higher. If the test succeeds, the item quickly rusts away, permanently reducing a weapon's Damage step, or a set of armor or a shield's Physical Armor, by –1 for each result level achieved. If the item's Damage step or Physical Armor is reduced to zero, it rusts away completely to a gritty powder.

If the item remains intact, it can be repaired using the Craft Weapon or Craft Armor skill, as appropriate. A successful repair requires a Good result against a Difficulty Number equal to the item's original Damage step or Physical Armor rating (as appropriate), and requires a week to carry out the repairs. Magical items automatically repair themselves over time, as normal (see the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 439 and p. 442). The effect of this spell on other metal objects is determined by the gamemaster.

An Elementalist uses the Rust spell against Thom Hammerblade's favorite broadsword, which has been enhanced using the Forge Blade talent to a Damage step of 7. The Spellcasting Test succeeds with an Excellent result (3 result levels), and so the spell reduces the broadsword's Damage step by –3, to Damage step 4. When Thom attempts to repair the sword, the Craft Weapon Test is made against a Difficulty Number of 7, the weapon's "unrusted" Damage step and will require a Good result.

Sky Lattice

Threads: 3
Range: 120 yards
Effect: Willpower + 3
Casting Difficulty: 6
Weaving Difficulty: 8 / 17
Duration: Rank + 10 minutes

The Sky Lattice spell creates a shimmering web of energy. The magician makes a series of criss-cross gestures in the air while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the lattice appears within reach of the magician. It is attached to the air and need not touch the ground. A sky lattice is always 1 yard wide, but the magician can vary the length of the lattice, up to the spell's full range of 120 yards.

The force of the lattice helps grip those climbing it. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is the Strength step of the bond holding the climber to the lattice. The climber uses this Strength step in place of his own Strength step for Action Tests where he could be dislodged from the lattice, such as making Knockdown Tests. The grip only secures the climber; it does not hinder his movement in any way. The climber must still make a Climbing Test to scale the sky lattice, but the Climbing Difficulty is reduced to 2 because of the ease. A sky lattice can support up to 1,480 pounds of weight, with an effective Strength value of 30.

Blood magic can be used to extend the spell's duration. By taking 1 permanent Damage Point, the magician may extend the duration of the Sky Lattice spell to a year and a day. This damage can be healed when the spell expires or is dispelled. Crystal raider Elementalists often use the Sky Lattice spell in this manner to support bases hidden in the midst of clouds.

Smoke Cloud

Threads: 1
Range: 10 yards
Effect: Causes a Complete darkness penalty
Casting Difficulty: 6
Weaving Difficulty: 10 / 15
Duration: Rank + 8 rounds

The Smoke Cloud spell creates a cloud of smoke that obscures vision. The magician must have at least a torch-sized source of fire to cast the spell. The magician puffs out his cheeks and exhales while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the fire belches forth a thick cloud of black smoke that quickly spreads to fill a 10 yard radius around the magician. The magician can see and act normally in the smoke, but all others within it suffer a Complete darkness penalty to their sight, taste, and smell-based Action Tests from their restricted vision and choking (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 407). The effects of the smoke can be dispelled by any spell or ability that creates wind, which disperses the smoke in 1 round.

Snuff

Threads: 2
Range: Touch
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)
Weaving Difficulty: 7 / 15
Duration: 1 round

The Snuff spell extinguishes fires. The magician exhales sharply through his nose while weaving the spell thread, then thrusts his hand into the fire and makes a Spellcasting Test against the fire's Spell Defense. If the fire is of magical origin, use the creator's Spell Defense as the Casting Difficulty. If the test succeeds, a 3 yard by 3 yard area of fire is extinguished; the magician takes no damage from placing his hand in the fire. The magician makes an Effect Test against the fire's Damage step. If this test succeeds, the Damage step of the fire is reduced by -2 steps for each result level achieved.

If the fire is not completely extinguished, its Damage step increases back to its original intensity by +1 per minute until

fully restored, or the Snuff spell is cast on it again, or some other method of extinguishing the fire is employed. If the magician's Spellcasting Test fails, he takes damage from the fire as normal.

The librarians of the Great Library of Throal are rumored to keep crystal spell boxes containing the Snuff spell in numerous places throughout the library.

Sunlight

Threads: 2
Range: Self
Effect: Creates daylight
Casting Difficulty: 6
Weaving Difficulty: 10 / 15
Duration: Rank + 5 minutes

The Sunlight spell creates light as bright as normal daylight. While weaving the spell threads, the magician moves his arms about in a circle, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, light emanates from the magician to a 10 yard radius.

The light is treated as natural sunlight, even if the spell is cast at night or indoors; any magical creature affected by natural sunlight is affected by this spell. The light created by the Sunlight spell does not provide any protection from Horrors or other creatures normally unaffected by sunlight.

Thrive

Threads: 1
Range: Touch
Effect: Accelerates plant growth
Casting Difficulty: 8
Weaving Difficulty: 7 / 15
Duration: 1 round

The Thrive spell accelerates plant growth. The magician sprinkles water over the ground while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting (8) Test. If the test succeeds, the plants in a 3 yard by 3 yard area experience the equivalent of 10 days' worth of growth over the remainder of the round.

After the spell expires, the growth rate returns to normal, but the plants do not revert to their normal size—the effect is permanent.

Throne of Air

Threads: 2
Range: Self
Effect: Willpower + 7
Casting Difficulty: 6
Weaving Difficulty: 8 / 17
Duration: Rank + 10 minutes

The Throne of Air spell creates a throne made of air, on which the magician sits and can move around. The magician assumes a sitting position while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the throne forms underneath the magician, appearing as a wavering, turbulent image. By concentrating, the magician can move the throne around. It has a Full Movement rate of 110 yards, and a Combat Movement rate of 55 yards, per round.

While in motion, the throne is extremely agile; the magician may make an Effect Test in place of an Avoid Blow Test for any physical attacks directed against him while he is on the throne. The magician takes the Strain cost for the Avoid Blow Test, reflecting the additional concentration required to dodge the attack, but a Pathetic result will not cause him to be Knocked Down, as the throne compensates with a stabilizing effect.

While moving, the throne also has a limited vertical movement capability. It can move above the ground at a maximum height equal to the magician's Spellcasting rank in yards.

Winds of Deflection

Threads: 1
Range: Self
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense
Weaving Difficulty: 8 / 15
Duration: Rank + 5 rounds

The Winds of Deflection spell creates a wall of swirling wind strong enough to deflect physical attacks. The magician makes whooshing noises while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against his own Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a wave of roiling and surging air surrounds the magician. The magician makes an Effect Test against the Attack Test result of each physical attack made against him during the duration of the spell. If the test succeeds, the attack has no effect; otherwise, the attack affects the magician as normal.

The swirling wind does not block attacks that cannot be resisted by Physical Armor, such as those from certain spells and creature powers.

Fourth Circle Spells

Air Blast

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 16
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 9
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Air Blast spell creates a howling wind that blasts a path starting directly in front of the magician. The magician places both hands to his lips and blows hard while weaving the spell thread, then flings his arms wide and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the targets, +1 for each additional target in the affected area. If the test succeeds, a powerful blast of air surges away from the magician in a 45 degree arc in the direction he is facing.

The magician makes an Effect Test to determine the strength of the blast. All those caught in the wind's path must make a successful Knockdown Test against the Effect Test result to avoid being Knocked Down (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 409).

Blizzard Sphere

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 17
Range: 100 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Blizzard Sphere spell allows a magician to conjure a small blizzard to strike his foes. The magician shivers and rubs his shoulders while weaving the spell threads, then cups his hands together, as if holding a snowball, and makes a Spellcasting Test. The area of effect can be centered anywhere within the spell's range, filling a 10 yard diameter sphere with freezing ice, sleet, and snow. The magician compares the Spellcasting Test result against the Spell Defense of each target character caught within the sphere. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Once the spell is cast, the sphere remains stationary. During the spell's duration, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test each round to determine who within the sphere takes damage. Other than redirecting damage, maintaining the effects of the Blizzard Sphere spell requires the magician's concentration each round; if his concentration is broken, the spell immediately expires.

[Element] Spear

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 14
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The [Element] Spear spell forms a spear from one of the elements. This spell is similar to the Spear spirit power (see the **Spirits** chapter on p. 367 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). Each of the five different versions of the [Element] Spear spell are learned separately, one for each element: air, earth, fire, water, and wood.

The magician touches the element he wishes to use while weaving the spell thread. To make a wooden spear, the magician must touch a piece of dead wood, not a live plant; making a fire spear requires the magician to touch an open flame or glowing coals, and so he will take damage based on the size of the heat source; making a water spear requires the magician to have at least a bottle of water or to touch a small puddle; making an earth spear requires the magician to be kneeling on the ground, or holding a rock; to make an air spear is easiest, as the magician need only be standing up and breathing deeply in and out. The magician then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a spear is formed, which he hurls at the target, striking him. The magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Regardless of the result, the spear dissipates after the attack. An air spear disappears; an earth spear crumbles into dirt; a fire spear burns out; a water spear falls in a puddle to the ground; a wood spear crumbles into splinters.

Falcon's Cloak

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 20
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: Turns the caster into a falcon
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Falcon's Cloak spell transforms the magician into a falcon, an eagle or another similar bird of prey. The magician requires a falcon's or eagle's tail or wing feather to cast the spell. While weaving the spell threads, the magician waves the feather from side to side, then touches the feather to his forehead and makes a Spellcasting Test against his own Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician transforms into a falcon or eagle, with all of the bird's normal physical abilities but his own mental abilities.

The magician can fly at the bird's normal movement rates and uses its senses and methods of attack. Any equipment the magician is carrying, along with his weapons, armor, and clothing, disappears when the spell is cast and reappears when it expires. While in bird form, the magician can only cast spells that do not require speech or gestures. The magician may dispel the transformation anytime he wishes.

Fire Whip

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 20
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 5 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Fire Whip spell creates a fiery melee weapon. The magician requires a pliable strip of cloth, leather, or even plant material, at least 1 yard long to cast this spell. After weaving the spell thread, the magician 'cracks' the whip, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the material extends to three times its length and bursts into flame. The magician, or another character who he hands the material to as the spell is cast, can wield the fiery whip as a melee weapon. The magician makes an Effect Test in place of a Damage Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on an opponent by the whip.

If wielded by someone other than the magician, the character uses his own Willpower step for the Effect Test. Fire whip attacks may also set flammable targets such as dry straw or cloth ablaze, doing normal fire damage (see the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 107 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**).

Great Sticky Vines

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 20
Range: 25 yards **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: 6 (Target's Spell Defense; see text)

The Great Sticky Vines spell allows the magician to shoot and retract enormous, sticky vines from his hands. The magician rubs plant juice or sap on both wrists while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds,

small plant tendrils sprout from the magician's wrist, leaking sap as they wriggle forth. Each round, the magician can attempt to ensnare a target character by making a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a vine shoots from the magician's outstretched hand and wraps itself around the target. If three or more vines are thrown around the same target, the target is considered Grappled (see **Grappling** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 411). The magician makes an Effect Test to determine the Grappling Difficulty. Escaping from the vines requires the ensnared target to make a successful Strength or Dexterity Test against the Grappling Difficulty.

The vines created by the Great Sticky Vines spell drag ensnared objects towards the magician at a Movement rate of 5 yards per round, regardless of the object's weight and mass. This means that a grappled target can be dragged toward the magician. To resist, the target must make a successful Strength Test against the spell's Effect step; this is independent of any attempts to break free of the vines holding him.

The vines can be attacked. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is the vine's Death Rating. Should a vine be severed, however, the magician can simply drop it and shoot out a new one. The magician can maintain a number of active vines equal to his Spellcasting rank.

Each great sticky vine has the following statistics:

Great Sticky Vine

Physical Defense: Magician **Physical Armor**: 0
Spell Defense: Magician **Mystic Armor**: 0
Social Defense: Immune

Death Rating: Effect Test* **Wound Threshold**: NA
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

* The Effect Test result determines the vine's Death Rating.

Lighten Load

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 9 / 16
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank + 7 hours
Effect: Willpower + 3
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Lighten Load spell temporarily reduces the weight of an object or objects. All of the objects must be contained within a 3 yard by 3 yard by 3 yard area. While weaving the spell thread, the magician braces himself and grimaces as if lifting something heavy, then stands straight and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target objects, +1 for each additional object. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test. The combined weight of the load is reduced by the Effect Test result × 50 pounds (to a minimum of 10 pounds), for the spell's duration.

The target objects must be actively lifted by one or more characters while the spell is being cast. The spell cannot be directed against a falling object in an attempt to reduce its weight, for instance.

Lightning Shield

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 16
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 7 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 3
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Lightning Shield spell charges a shield with electricity, causing anyone striking it to take an electrical jolt in return. The magician snaps his fingers, creating a spark of electricity which leaps to the target's shield, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the shield's or its bearer's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the spark spreads over the front surface of the shield, which hisses and pops, coruscating with blue-white electricity.

Close combat attacks directed against the shield risk striking it. An attacker requires a Good result on his Attack Test to avoid hitting the front surface of the shield, thus also avoiding the spell's effect. On a Poor or worse result, the attacker misses his opponent, but squarely hits the front of the shield. On an Average result, the attacker hits the shield's bearer, but also strikes the surface of the shield. If the shield is struck, the shield's bearer makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the attacker. Mystic Armor protects against this damage. The shield's bearer uses his own Willpower step for any Effect Tests he makes.

An attacker can use the Going Inside a Shield combat option to bypass the shield (see **Combat Options** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 405). If successful, he avoids the spell's effect that round. A character with a Lightning Shield spell cast on his shield, and who is using the Shield Charge talent or skill to attack an opponent, makes a separate Effect Test to determine the electrical damage inflicted on his opponent from a successful Attack Test. This damage is not added to the Damage Test result from the shield attack, but is resolved separately. Knockdown Test bonuses from a successful Shield Charge attack still apply to any Knockdown Tests made as a result of damage received from this spell (see **Shield Charge** in the **Talents**, p. 201, and **Skills**, p. 246, chapters for more information).

Lightning Step

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 17
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank + 3 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 2
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Lightning Step spell electrically charges the magician, enhancing his movement. The magician must be standing under the open sky with his feet wet to cast this spell. While weaving the spell threads, the magician rubs his feet back and forth on the ground, then makes a Spellcasting Test against his own Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, coruscating green lightning surrounds the magician's feet.

During the spell's duration, the magician moves around on a sizzling, 1 foot wide lightning bolt that goes *pop* with every step, effectively jumping him around from place to place. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which determines his Dexterity value (to a maximum Dexterity value of 30) for the purposes of calculating Combat and Full Movement rates and his Physical Defense rating (see **Determine Characteristics** in the **Creating Characters** chapter, p. 45). Racial movement modifiers are not applied, and the spell is effective only for ground movement.

In combat, the magician makes an Effect Test in place of his Initiative Test while the spell is in effect. Normal Initiative modifiers apply to this test.

Liquid Arrow

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 17
Range: 80 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 9
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Liquid Arrow spell forms a missile from a small quantity of water. The magician must have a source of water at hand to cast the spell. The magician scoops up a handful of water while he weaves the spell thread, then hurls it at the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the liquid transforms into an arrow which strikes the target. The magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Lodestone's Touch

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 17
Range: 10 yards (see text) **Duration**: Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 3
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Lodestone's Touch spell magnetizes the target. The magician taps two metal objects together while weaving the spell threads, then points at the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target becomes powerfully magnetized and attracts all iron or steel objects within 10 yards. Items stuck to the target may weigh down or encumber him. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is the effective Strength value of the magnetic force. Those within the spell's range must make a successful Strength Test against the spell's Strength step to hold on to metallic items or to resist being drawn toward the target if they are wearing metal armor.

Any characters directing metallic missile or throwing weapons at the target gain a +3 bonus to their ranged Attack Tests. Any characters using metallic weapons to make melee attacks against the target suffer a –3 penalty to their Attack Tests, to reflect the difficulty of keeping their weapons from sticking to the target.

Root Trap

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 20
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank + 5 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 2
Casting Difficulty: 6; Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Root Trap spell creates a living trap from the roots of a tree. There must be a tree at least 3 yards tall within the spell's range for the spell to be cast. The magician points at the tree, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the tree's roots becomes animated, attempting to grapple any character standing on them.

A tree's roots usually grow within a radius equal to the height of the tree. The magician makes an Effect Test in place of an unarmed Attack Test against the target's Physical Defense. If the test succeeds, the tree roots grapple the target (see **Grappling** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 411).

Shield of Warping

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 17
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 5 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Shield of Warping spell causes wooden weapons to bend and twist out of shape. After weaving the spell thread, the magician ties a strip of bark, grass, or other plant material, to the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target is surrounded with a magical field that causes wooden or wooden-hafted weapons to radically bend and warp when they strike at him. The target makes an Effect Test against the Damage step of any wooden weapon used to strike at him, using his own Willpower step. If the test succeeds, the weapon flexes wildly and the attack is deflected away from the target, missing him. On an Extraordinary result, the weapon remains permanently warped, reducing the weapon's Damage step by –3. If this reduces the weapon's Damage step to zero, the weapon is ruined. Regardless of the number of attacks made against the target, the spell can only be used once per round.

Spirits of Death's Sea

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 17
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Spirits of Death's Sea spell creates a potent invigorating drink. The magician needs a cupful of an alcoholic beverage such as ale or *hurlg* to cast the spell (the latter being an extremely alcoholic ork beverage brewed from fermented animal fat). The magician waves his hands over the cup while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the beverage turns into a smoking, molten liquid resembling lava. The cup's entire contents must be consumed to gain any benefit from the spell. Swallowing the liquid requires the target to make a Toughness (7) Test. If this test fails, the target gains no benefit from the spell. Instead, he takes Step 3 damage from the hot liquid scalding his insides. No armor protects against this damage.

If the test succeeds, the target becomes energized and invigorated, much like the air sailors who sail over Death's Sea. During

the spell's duration, the target makes an Effect Test in place of any Willpower Tests he makes to resist fear-causing spells, talents or abilities. The target also makes an Effect Test after drinking the liquid, the result of which becomes the Difficulty Number for any Talent Tests (like Battle Shout or Battle Bellow) or Interaction Tests intended to intimidate him. The target character uses his own Willpower step for any Effect Tests he makes.

Suffocating Paste

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 9 / 18
Range: 25 yards **Duration**: Rank + 6 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 3
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Suffocating Paste spell creates a blob of greenish-yellow paste which a magician can throw at a target character in an attempt to blind or suffocate him. The magician sniffs loudly while weaving the spell threads, then spits into his hand, hurling the contents at his victim and making a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense, modified as if he was using the Called Shot combat option (see **Combat Options** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 404). If the test succeeds, the paste hits the target in the part of the body where he breathes; this is usually, but not always, the head. The paste covers the area struck, smothering the target and causing Step 4 suffocation damage to him each round. No armor protects against this damage. If the area struck by the paste also contains the target's sensory organs—the head and eyes, in the case of a Name-giver character—he is blinded, as well. A "blinded" target suffers a Partial darkness penalty for the duration of the spell (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 407). Targets that do not require vision to 'see'—such as krilworms—are still affected by this spell; the paste is sufficiently thick to inhibit the effectiveness of any sensory organs.

The paste adheres tightly to the target and cannot easily be pulled off. The magician makes an Effect Test to determine the Strength value of the mucus. If a character other than the target makes a successful Strength Test against the mucus' Strength value, the paste is pulled away from the target and the spell ends, leaving a foul residue on the character's hands. Each round, the target may make a Strength Test against the spell's Effect step. If the test succeeds, he manages to remove enough paste from his mouth to draw breath; the target takes no damage that round. However, the paste adjusts itself to cover the victim's mouth again, so the respite is only temporary.

Uneven Ground

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 18
Range: 25 yards **Duration**: Rank + 4 rounds
Effect: Penalty to enemy character actions
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Uneven Ground spell makes the ground around the magician shake and move violently. The magician wobbles from side to side as he weaves the spell thread, during which time any characters nearby should touch the magician to avoid being affected by the spell; the touch can be brief and does not require the character to make an unarmed Attack Test against the magician. The magician places his hands on the ground and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among any target characters who did not touch him earlier, +1 for each additional target within a 25 yard radius of where he is standing. If the test succeeds, the targets are flung around by the sudden and violent lurching movements of the ground, and are considered Harried until they either move out of the spell's range or it expires (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408).

The uneven shaking of the ground limits the maximum movement of those affected to half their Combat Movement rate each round.

Weapon Back

Threads: 0 (2; ritual; see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 5 / 16
Range: 250 yards
Duration: Rank + 3 rounds (see text)
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Weapon Back ritual spell creates a link between a weapon and a target character, allowing the weapon to find its way back to the character should it somehow be lost to him. The magician must ritually prepare both the weapon and the target character to cast this spell.

At dawn each day for a week, the magician spends half an hour inscribing a small design, using a drop of his own blood, on the weapon. He weaves the first spell thread at the end of the week. The magician then spends half an hour at dawn each day for another week, inscribing a scar of the same design on the target character to be linked to the weapon (either the magician or another character). He weaves the last spell thread at the end of the second week. After the spell threads have been woven, a sympathetic link is created between the target and the weapon, allowing either the magician or target character to cast the Weapon Back spell against the weapon linked to him.

The magician may prepare a number of weapons equal to his Spellcasting rank, requiring a separate ritual for each. The death of the target character or destruction of the weapon destroys the link, causing both scar-design and weapon-inscription to fade away without a trace. Additionally, the death of the magician causes all of the links he has created to break. Generally, this is the only way in which the ritual spell can be broken; a Dispel Magic attempt is only effective against the Weapon Back spell itself, not the ritual link. The duration of the ritual is otherwise permanent.

To cast the spell, the target character touches his scar-design and makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of his own or the weapon's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the weapon moves towards the character at a Movement rate of 15 yards per round. The character does not require knowledge of Elementalism, nor is the Weapon Back spell cast using raw magic; the magic of the link between the character and the weapon acts as a matrix object allowing only the casting of the Weapon Back spell. If the character does not know the Spellcasting talent or skill, he uses his Perception step as the Default Attribute instead (see **Default Skill Use** in the **Skills** chapter, p. 230). The magician who created the link may also cast the Weapon Back spell; he must touch the scar-design on the target character to do so, however.

Should the weapon be required to make an Attribute Test—to break out of a cabinet (Strength) or slide along a narrow window sill (Dexterity), for instance—the character makes an Effect Test in place of the Attribute Test. The target character does not require line of sight to the weapon to retrieve it, but the weapon must be within the spell's range for it to be effective.

Fifth Circle Spells

Balloons of Mist

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 8 / 15
Range: 25 yards **Duration**: Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Balloons of Mist spell creates several large misty balloons that can be directed to attach themselves to objects or characters with tendrils of mist and lift them. The magician must be standing under the open sky to cast this spell. While weaving the required

threads, the magician exhales in short bursts as if blowing up a balloon, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, a number of misty balloons form equal to the magician's Spellcasting rank. The magician has some control over the balloons while they are within the spell's range. By concentrating, he can command them to return to him, float upwards, or float in a direction of his choosing. Each round, the balloons move vertically or horizontally at a Movement rate equal to the magician's Spellcasting rank, in yards. Any balloons that float out of the spell's range continue in the same direction and Movement rate until the magician manages to get within range to take control again, or the spell expires.

The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense when attempting to attach a balloon to an object or character. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is the balloon's Strength value, this is used to determine the balloon's Carrying Capacity (see **Determine Characteristics** in the **Creating Characters** chapter, p. 45). It also determines the balloon's Strength step, which is used if the target resists being lifted by the balloon. Several balloons can be used together to attach to and carry particularly heavy targets.

Earth Staff

Threads: 1
Range: Touch
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense
Weaving Difficulty: 11 / 18
Duration: Rank + 5 minutes

The Earth Staff spell allows a magician to create a quarterstaff from a handful of earth or a piece of stone. The magician grasps a clod of dirt or a small pebble in his hand while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the earth's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the dirt or stone expands into a 5 foot long quarterstaff that the magician can use as a melee weapon in combat. The magician makes a melee combat Attack Test against his opponent, using a talent or skill available to him. If the attack is successful, the magician makes an Effect Test in place of a Damage Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on his opponent. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Only those characters with knowledge of Elementalism may wield the quarterstaff created by the Earth Staff spell. If a character without knowledge of Elementalism wields an earth staff in combat, the spell expires as soon as he successfully hits his opponent—the character inflicts no damage from the attack—and the staff reverts back to its original components.

Fireball

Threads: 1
Range: 100 yards
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)
Weaving Difficulty: 12 / 20
Duration: 1 round

The Fireball spell creates an explosive ball of flame that can be directed against one or more target characters. A magician must have a source of flame available to him, such as a torch or campfire, to cast the spell. The magician places one of his hands to the side of the fire, waving it in a circular motion over the top of the flame, while weaving the spell thread. A small globe of fire erupts from the magician's hand, moving quickly to the point of impact designated by the magician within the spell's maximum range.

The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target characters, +1 for each additional character within a 10 yard radius of the point of impact. If the test succeeds, the globe quickly expands to the size of a beach ball, before suddenly exploding in an intense gout of flame. The magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on those affected. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Inflame Self

Threads: 3
Range: Self
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense
Weaving Difficulty: 8 / 15
Duration: Rank + 1 rounds

The Inflame Self spell engulfs the magician in a sheet of flames, allowing him to damage targets by simply touching them. While weaving the spell threads, the magician clicks his fingers together, then makes a Spellcasting Test against his own Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician is enveloped in a thin layer of fire. For the duration of the spell, the magician can harm a target character by making an Unarmed Combat Test against the target's Physical Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determines how much damage is inflicted on the target. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

A magician who uses this spell for extended periods risks taking damage himself. Every alternate round of the spell's duration, starting on the third round, the magician makes a Willpower Test against the spell's Effect step. If the test succeeds, the magician is unharmed. If the test fails, the magician suffers Step 4 damage from the flames. No armor protects against this damage.

Ironwood

Threads: 3
Range: Touch
Effect: Transforms wood
Casting Difficulty: 6
Weaving Difficulty: 11 / 18
Duration: Rank hours

The Ironwood spell makes ordinary wood as strong and flexible as metal. The spell affects living wood or wooden items up to 3 yards by 3 yards in size. The magician taps the wood nine times with a piece of iron or steel while weaving the spell threads, the last tap giving off a metallic ringing sound, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the wood becomes as strong as metal for the duration of the spell, able to withstand greater stress and pressure than ordinary wood.

Wooden weapons, armor and shields treated with this spell become as strong as their metal equivalents but retain their normal weight (and Initiative Penalty modifiers). Wooden walls or doors enhanced with this spell have a Physical Armor rating of 11 and a Damage Rating of 40 (see **Barriers and Structures** in the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 106 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). When used on living wood, this spell does not interfere with the plant's biological processes; the plant continues to grow normally.

Metal Scream

Threads: 1
Range: 100 yards
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)
Weaving Difficulty: 11 / 17
Duration: Rank + 1 rounds

The Metal Scream spell causes metal objects to scream and wail in an eerie and disconcerting manner. The magician grimaces and silently mouths horrible cries while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target characters, +1 for each additional target. If the test succeeds, all metal objects carried or wielded by those affected begin to scream and shriek with a piercing, unnerving effect. Those affected by the spell make a Willpower Test against the spell's Effect step; all other characters within earshot of the screams, except the magician, make a Willpower (3) Test. If the test fails, the character flees away from the magician at his fastest Movement rate due to his fear of the unnatural wailing and screaming, staying out of range of the spell's effect for its duration. If the test succeeds, the character incurs a –5

penalty to any Willpower-based Tests he makes, due to the high-pitched screaming, while he remains within range of the spell. The magician can target a maximum number of characters equal to his Spellcasting rank.

Metal Wings

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 8 / 18
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 20 minutes
Effect: Flight; +5 bonus to lifting Strength Tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Metal Wings spell creates shiny metal wings, which sprout forth from the shoulders of a target character, allowing him to fly. The magician touches the shoulder blades of the target character while weaving the spell thread, then spreads his arms wide to represent the unfolding of wings and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, gleaming silver metal wings, spanning 3 yards across, appear on the target's back. The wings allow the target character to fly at a Full Movement rate of 80 yards, and a Combat Movement rate of 40 yards, per round. Should the target be required to lift an object, he gains a +5 bonus to his Strength Test for the added lift he gains from using the wings. While not preventing the Metal Wings spell being cast on him, no character weighing more than 400 pounds can use the wings to fly.

Nutritious Earth

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 8 / 15
Range: Touch **Duration**: A year and a day
Effect: Makes land fertile
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Nutritious Earth spell uses blood magic to enhance the rate at which an area of land grows food. As the magician weaves the spell threads, he pricks his hand with a sharp object and lets a drop of blood fall on the earth, taking 1 permanent Damage Point. This damage can be healed after the spell expires or is dispelled. The magician then makes a Spellcasting Test against the ground's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, an area of soil up to 100 yards by 100 yards in size is enriched by the spell, making the land especially fertile for a year and a day. During the spell's duration, plants grow in this soil at roughly double their normal rate. The gamemaster determines the exact effects of this growth.

Many kaers survived the Scourge with the help of this spell, and it also enabled many towns rebuilt in areas prone to bad weather to thrive on the surface. Rumor has it that questors of Jaspree from the town of Trosk are attempting to heal the Badlands through liberal use of the Nutritious Earth spell.

Resist Poison

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 21
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: +8 bonus to Toughness Tests made to resist poison
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Resist Poison spell enhances a target character's ability to resist the effects of poison. While weaving the spell threads, the magician prepares an infusion of herbs and fresh water, then administers it to the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target gains a +8 bonus to any Toughness Tests he makes to resist the effects of poison for the spell's duration.

The Resist Poison spell is ineffective against poisons that do not require a Toughness Test to resist. Nor does it provide any benefit against corrosive substances such as acid.

Shattering Stone

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 21
Range: 25 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Shattering Stone spell turns a normal stone into an explosive missile. While weaving the spell thread, the magician picks up a fist-sized stone, then throws it at the target area or object and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the stone explodes into sharp fragments that scatter in all directions. The magician compares his Spellcasting Test

result against the Spell Defense of all characters within 3 yards of the target. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on each target. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Stone Cage

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 19
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: Rank + 10 rounds
Effect: Traps character in a cage of stone.
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Stone Cage spell creates a cage from earth or stone to entrap a target character. The target must be standing on earth or stone for the spell to be cast against him. The magician spreads his fingers wide while weaving the spell thread, then locks his fingers together (to represent the bars closing) and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the earth or stone on which the target is standing forms into a cage up to 3 yards by 3 yards by 3 yards in size, trapping him inside; if the target's size exceeds any of these dimensions, then the spell fails.

The cage can be attacked in an attempt to destroy it, thus freeing the trapped target. The stone cage is resistant to attempts to destroy it, however. No Armor-Defeating Hits are possible against the stone cage. A character who fails an Attack Test against the cage has still struck it, but his blow has no effect. Once the spell ends, or if the cage takes damage equal to or greater than its Death Rating, it immediately crumbles apart, freeing the character.

The entrapped character may also attempt to destroy the cage. Because he is constricted in his efforts, he is considered to be Harried (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408). This penalty also applies to attacks directed against him while he is trapped.

The stone cage has the following statistics:

Stone Cage

Physical Defense: 8 **Physical Armor**: 7*
Spell Defense: Magician **Mystic Armor**: Magician*
Social Defense: Immune

* Cannot be bypassed with an Armor-Defeating Hit.

Death Rating: 50 **Wound Threshold**: NA
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Sixth Circle Spells

Drastic Temperature

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 19
Range: 100 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 3
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Drastic Temperature causes a radical change in ambient temperature. The magician wraps his arms about him and shivers as if he were cold while weaving the spell threads, then points toward the spot where the sphere of effect will be centered, within the spell's maximum range, and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the temperature inside a 10 yard diameter sphere centered on the target spot rises above the boiling point of water or drops below the freezing point of water, at the discretion of the magician. The temperature change takes 30 seconds to reach the final level; water will freeze or boil on the third round of the spell. Each round thereafter that a character is caught in, or passes through, the sphere of effect, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the character. No armor protects against this damage.

Once the Drastic Temperature spell has been cast, the sphere of effect cannot be moved. This spell is commonly used to create a barrier to discourage characters from passing a given point.

Ease Passage

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 17
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 6 hours
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Ease Passage spell allows a magician to placate elementals, allowing a target character easier travel through or in difficult terrain or weather. The magician whispers words of praise to the elements, declaring the target character to be a friend of the elements while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, these whispers are automatically translated into the correct elemental language (see **Elemental Tongues** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 181), and the elemental forces involved willingly yield to the target character. The Ease Passage spell negates the adverse effects of terrain or vegetation on the target character's movement; loose sand compacts underfoot, sharp stones roll aside, and brambles part to ease passage. It also nullifies the negative aspects of weather on the target character; mud hardens as the character passes, rain or hail falls to either side of the character, leaving him dry, and so on. Any movement penalties the target character suffers due to the effects of terrain or weather are ignored during the spell's duration.

The magician makes an Effect Test in place of any Dexterity-, Strength-, or Toughness-only Tests that the target character is required to make when traversing or surviving traveling in the terrain. The gamemaster determines the Difficulty Number of any Action Tests based on the circumstances of the situation (see the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 116 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**).

Fireweave

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 19
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: Willpower
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Fireweave spell creates a cloak of flames that protects the target character. The magician must have a source of flame available to him, such as a torch or campfire, to cast the spell. While weaving the spell threads, the magician manipulates the fire with stitching motions, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a cloak of fire is created, wrapped around the target character. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the subject's Physical Defense while wearing the cloak, even if lower than normal. Anyone attacking the wearer in close combat, or standing within 2 yards of the wearer, suffers Step 8 damage each round from the intense heat thrown off by the cloak. Physical Armor protects against this damage. The cloak's heat does not affect the wearer.

Flameshaw

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 17
Range: 100 yards **Duration**: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: Willpower + 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Flameshaw spell allows a magician to conjure a hulking fire spirit to cart him about from place to place. The magician must have a source of flame at least the size of a campfire to cast this spell. While weaving the spell threads, the magician makes pulling motions, as if tugging at the leads of an animal, then makes

a Spellcasting Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a fiery spirit is summoned from the flames, appearing at the magician's behest anywhere within the range of the spell.

The lower half of the conjured spirit appears in the shape of a two-person rickshaw, which is pulled by the creature's upper torso. The magician and a single passenger may ride in the rickshaw, unharmed by the flames, although the ride is a warm one. The magician need not concentrate to maintain the spell, but the spirit responds only to verbal commands given to it by the magician while he is within 100 yards of the flameshaw. At the gamemaster's discretion, issuing these commands may require the magician to speak the elemental language of fire (see **Elemental Tongues** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 181). Though the flameshaw has wheels, it does not actually touch the ground; the flameshaw normally travels a few inches above the ground, but can rise as high as 300 yards above the earth if the magician commands it, rising 1 yard vertically for every 3 yards of horizontal movement.

The flameshaw may be instructed to run over an opponent, trampling him under the flameshaw's fiery wheels. This is a Simple action for the magician; he may command the flameshaw to attack an opponent in addition to other actions he takes that round. Those riding in the flameshaw do not benefit from its Armor Rating; only attacks against the flameshaw itself cause the flames to coalesce and toughen to form the armor. If the flameshaw takes damage equal to or in excess of its Death Rating, it immediately vanishes.

The flameshaw has the following statistics:

Flameshaw

DEX: Magician **STR**: Effect step **TOU**: 7
PER: Magician **WIL**: 14 **CHA**: NA

Initiative: DEX
Number of Actions: 1
Attack: DEX
Damage: STR
Physical Defense: Magician
Spell Defense: Magician
Social Defense: Immune
Physical Armor: 12
Mystic Armor: 10

Death Rating: 40
Wound Threshold: NA
Recovery Tests: 3
Knockdown: Immune
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 40 **Full Movement**: 80
Powers: None
Legend Points: 240
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Living Wall

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 22
Range: 20 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 3
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Living Wall spell creates a barrier of living plants and thorny vines. The magician cuts a line in the earth while weaving the spell threads, then touches the ground and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, a wall of plants and thorny vines springs up from the line, up to 5 yards high by 20 yards wide by 1 yard thick, in the shape the magician has drawn.

The barrier inhibits both physical and astral passage with Physical and Mystic Armor ratings equal to the magician's Spellcasting rank. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the wall's Death Rating. Any character trying to hack or push his way through the wall suffers Step 4 damage from the sharp thorns and branches each round. No armor protects against this damage.

The living wall has the following statistics:

Living Wall

Physical Defense: 5 **Physical Armor**: Rank
Spell Defense: Magician **Mystic Armor**: Rank
Social Defense: Immune

Death Rating: Effect Test* **Wound Threshold**: NA
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

* The Effect Test result determines the wall's Death Rating.

Ricochet Attack

Threads: 1+ (see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 19
Range: 75 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 12
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Ricochet Attack spell creates a ball of energy filled with glowing, glass-like shards which will hit a target, then ricochet around among other characters. The magician decides how many spell threads he will weave (which determines how many attacks will be made) and which target characters he intends to affect; he may weave a maximum number of threads equal to his Thread Weaving rank. While weaving the spell threads, the magician produces a glowing shard, which he gingerly pushes into the shape of an energy ball. He then makes a Spellcasting Test, the result of which is compared against each target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

If the number of attacks exceeds the number of declared targets, the ricocheting shards may attack the same target again. At least one attack must be directed against each target before the shards will ricochet back into a target that has already been attacked. The result level required to hit the same target increases by one level for each successive attack made above the first, to a maximum of an Extraordinary result level. The magician uses the same Spellcasting Test result to determine the success of each additional attack. He must make a second attack against each target, even if unsuccessful, before he can make a third attack, and so on.

Stone Rain

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 15 / 22
Range: 30 yards **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Stone Rain spell causes a shower of fist-sized stones to fall from the sky. The stones fall within a circle 3 yards in diameter, at any place designated by the magician within the spell's range. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among any targets, +1 for each additional target within the area of effect. If the test succeeds, those affected are struck by falling stones. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which determines how much damage is inflicted on the targets. Physical Armor protects against this damage. Each round, more stones rain down on the target characters, who continue to take damage as long as they remain within the spell's area of effect.

Tossing Earth

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 17
Range: 100 yards **Duration**: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: Willpower + 1
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Tossing Earth spell tosses anyone standing on an area of earth or stone wildly into the air. The magician makes explosive sounds while weaving the spell threads as he hurls pebbles, dirt, or small stones toward the area he wishes to affect, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, an area of ground up to 100 square yards in size becomes explosive when touched. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which determines the volatility of the ground affected. Once an area becomes volatile, it cannot be affected by another Tossing Earth spell until the current spell expires or is dispelled.

Each round, any target character entering into, or moving within, the area of effect makes a Willpower Test against the spell's Effect Test result. If the test succeeds, the target can move and act normally. If the test fails, the earth or stone beneath the target explodes, throwing the character Step 5 yards up into the air. The character takes Falling damage based on the distance fallen (see the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 107 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). No armor protects against this damage.

Tree Merge

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 16 / 23
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank + 6 hours
Effect: Merges caster's body with a tree to hide him
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Tree Merge spell allows the magician to hide from view by merging his body with any tree larger than himself. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes the Spellcasting Test against his own Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, his body melds into the tree trunk; the magician is completely hidden from physical view. To detect the magician in astral space, an observer must achieve a Good result with an Astral Sensing Test against the magician's Spell Defense.

While merged, the magician can communicate with the tree's spirit as if he had successfully cast the Plant Talk spell.

Seventh Circle Spells

Beastform

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 16 / 23
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: Transforms caster into an animal
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Beastform spell allows the magician to assume the form of a non-magical animal. The magician must have a small part of the desired animal (a tuft of hair, a feather, and so on) at hand to cast this spell. While weaving the spell threads, the magician focuses on the shape and characteristics of the animal, then makes a Spellcasting Test against his own Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician transforms into the desired animal. While in beast form, the magician gains all of the chosen animal's normal physical Attributes and abilities, but retains his own mental Attributes and talents. The magician's clothing and equipment disappears when he assumes the animal form and reappears again when the spell expires. None of the magician's equipment functions while he is in animal form, but any threads the magician has woven to magical or pattern items remain effective.

Magicians in beast form can be affected by any talents or spells that normally affect animals. They can cast only those spells requiring gestures that the animal is capable of performing; this limitation automatically excludes any spell requiring speech. The magician may dispel the transformation anytime he wishes.

Calm Water

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 8 / 19
Range: 500 yards **Duration**: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: Willpower + 9
Casting Difficulty: 6+ (see text)

The Calm Water spell lowers the severity of waves created during a storm of natural or magical origin. The magician stands at the highest point of a ship or shoreline and shouts at the water while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the storm's origin and

intensity. Against natural storms the Difficulty Number is 6; particularly severe storms carry a Difficulty Number of 9 or more. Magically or elementally caused storms resist the magician's Spellcasting Test with the higher of the storm's or its creator's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, dividing the result by 3 to determine the number of yards by which the height of the waves within the spell's range are reduced. The Calm Water spell may be cast multiple times on the same section of water to further reduce the ferocity of the storm.

Cloud Summon

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 20
Range: 1 mile **Duration**: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: Willpower + 7
Casting Difficulty: 8+ (see text)

The Cloud Summon spell summons cloud cover as a precursor to the magician casting another spell, such as Death Rain, or simply to achieve impressive weather effects. The magician makes gestures mimicking the swirling pattern of rapidly moving clouds while weaving the spell threads, then tosses some water into the air and makes a Spellcasting Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the type of clouds. To summon normal clouds carries a Casting Difficulty of 8; stormy weather carries a Casting Difficulty of 13; gale-force storms carry a Casting Difficulty of 20 (or more, at the gamemaster's discretion). If the test succeeds, the water billows into a wispy fragment of cloud, rising rapidly toward the sky where it acts as a beacon drawing other clouds to it. Under normal circumstances, the clouds summoned will take 60 minutes to arrive; storm clouds may take longer to gather, at the gamemaster's discretion. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is subtracted from the clouds' arrival time, in minutes.

A magician may cast the Cloud Summon spell more than once to hasten the arrival of the clouds. The effect of the Cloud Summon spell centers on the magician's position at the time of his first casting; it does not move with the magician. The spell's range determines the radius of ground area that is covered by the clouds. The Cloud Summon spell can summon any type of natural cloud formations a magician has witnessed or experienced; if the magician has not been outside in a storm, he cannot summon that type of weather.

Death Rain

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 15 / 18
Range: 75 yards **Duration**: Rank + 12 rounds
Effect: Step 5 acid damage (Willpower + 5; see text)
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Death Rain spell allows a magician to cause acidic rain to fall from the sky, burning those whom it touches and damaging plant life and other objects in the area affected. A magician requires cloud cover, either naturally occurring or summoned or produced by magic, such as from the Cloud Summon spell, in order to cast the Death Rain spell. The magician shouts aloud the Names of characters friendly to him while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test, comparing the result against the Spell Defense of each undesignated target character within the spell's range. If the test succeeds, corrosive rain falls down from the clouds above the target, who suffers damage from the acidic downpour. Each round that a target remains exposed within the spell's area of effect, he takes Step 5 damage from the acid rain. Mystic Armor protects against this damage. The magician is not affected by the rain from his own spell; nor are those whose Names he shouted while casting the spell.

If the magician chooses to concentrate on the spell, the intensity of the acid increases, and he adds his Willpower step to any Damage Tests made against exposed targets each round he does so. The magician may begin concentrating during any round from when the spell is cast, but once he breaks concentration, it cannot be regained again without recasting the spell. Even if the magician loses concentration the spell continues until it reaches the end of its duration and expires normally, or it is dispelled.

The Death Rain spell's area of effect extends in a 75 yard radius around the caster's position at the time of casting. Should the magician afterwards move, the area of effect remains stationary. Rain falling from higher than 75 yards above the area of effect is not acidic.

Earth Q'wril

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 16 / 18
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank + 10 minutes
Effect: Move through earth
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Earth Q'wril spell allows the magician to move through the earth in a manner similar to an earth q'wril, a type of burrowing creature (see the **Creatures** chapter on p. 296 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). The magician digs at the ground with his hands or a tool while weaving the spell threads, then make a Spellcasting Test against his own Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician may move freely through the earth at the same Movement rates as an earth q'wril; he has a Combat Movement rate of 12 yards and a Full Movement rate of 24 yards when doing so. Magicians using this spell should take care to avoid getting stuck underground when the spell expires.

Earth Surfing

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 22
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 hour
Effect: Creates earth wave
Casting Difficulty: 6 (10; see text)

The Earth Surfing spell creates a wave of earth that greatly increases the magician's rate of travel. The magician stands on earth or rock while weaving the spell threads, then kneels down and moves his hands over the ground as if simulating waves and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, a 3 yard by 3 yard area of the ground on which he is standing becomes a wave of soil on which the magician can ride. The wave has a Combat Movement rate of 70 yards and a Full Movement rate of 140 yards. The magician can grant a number of characters equal to his Spellcasting rank safe passage on the wave; anyone else who attempts to ride the wave must make a Knockdown (10) Test. If this test fails, the character falls from the wave and is Knocked Down, taking Step 5 damage from the fall. No armor protects against this damage.

The magician need not concentrate to control the wave's current movement. However, he must make a successful Spellcasting (10) Test to change the wave's direction, or to stop or restart the wave to allow those traveling on it to alight or dismount safely. If the wave hits a solid obstacle, such as a large tree or rock, the spell expires and all those traveling on the wave take Step 10 damage from the collision. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Engulf [Element]

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 20
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: Willpower
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Engulf [Element] spell envelops the target character in one of the five elements, smothering him. Each of the five different versions of this spell must be learned separately, one for each element: air, earth, fire, water, and wood.

The magician touches the element he wishes to use while weaving the spell threads; to encase his foe in wood, the magician must touch a piece of dead wood, not a live plant; to surround his opponent with fire requires the magician to touch an open flame or glowing coals, and so he will take damage based on the size of the heat source; drowning his opponent in water requires the magician to have at least a bottle of water or to touch a small puddle; smothering his foe with earth requires the magician to be kneeling on the ground, or holding a rock; suffocating his opponent by withdrawing the air from him is easiest, as the magician need only be standing up and breathing deeply in and out. The magician then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, he makes an Effect Test each round to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. No armor protects against this damage.

The magician must concentrate each round, to ensure his foe remains engulfed by the element; if his concentration is broken, the spell expires. While affected by the spell, the target is considered Harried (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408). This spell is patterned after an ability used by some spirits.

Fire Hounds

Threads: 2+ (see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 20
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: Summons two or more fire hounds
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Fire Hounds spell summons two or more fire hounds. The magician requires a source of fire at least the size of a campfire to cast this spell. The magician can summon more than two hounds by weaving additional spell threads before casting the spell. Each additional thread woven, to a maximum of 6 spell threads, summons 1 additional fire hound. The more hounds summoned, the greater the risk that the magician loses control of them. If the magician fails any Thread Weaving Test to summon hounds in excess of the initial two beasts, a number of hounds equal to the number of threads woven to that point appear and immediately attack the magician. While weaving the spell threads, the magician crouches down on all fours and howls loudly, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the hound's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, two (or more) large flaming hounds leap out from the fire.

The magician can mentally control the hounds from a distance up to 10 yards, although this requires the magician's concentration while issuing commands. If the hounds move beyond 10 yards of the magician, then they will act on their most recent instructions. The hounds conjured by this spell cannot be dispelled or banished; however, they disappear if they are killed or when the spell expires. A fire hound has the following statistics:

Fire Hound

DEX: 8 **STR**: 8 **TOU**: 6
PER: 3 **WIL**: 4 **CHA**: 4

Initiative: 8 **Physical Defense**: 10
Number of Actions: 2 **Spell Defense**: 7
Attack (2): 10 **Social Defense**: 6
Damage: **Physical Armor**: 5
Bite (5): 13 **Mystic Armor**: 3
2 × Claws (2): 10

Death Rating: 35 (59) **Recovery Tests**: 2
Wound Threshold: 9 **Knockdown**: 9
Unconsciousness Rating: 27 (47)

Combat Movement: 52 **Full Movement**: 104

Powers: Astral Sight [T] (5): 8, Breath Weapon (Fire) (6): 10, Durability (4), Spellcasting (7): 10

Legend Points: 280

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Commentary

Fire hounds resemble large dogs, standing more than four feet high at the shoulder. Their stocky, muscular bodies are covered with short dark-brown fur that seems to absorb the light—they bear a passing resemblance to gate and hell hounds. Rows of sharp teeth fill their jaws; a fire hound can easily tear an arm or a leg off a human or an elf with a single bite. A fire hound's eyes also seem to burn; deep within the sockets are twin balls of flame.

In Complete darkness, the eyes of a fire hound glow like candle flames.

Rules

The following special rules apply to fire hounds:

Astral Sight: Fire hounds can see into the astral plane using an ability equivalent to the Astral Sight talent (see the **Talents** chapter, p. 170); they cannot attack or affect creatures there, however. The fire hound makes a Spellcasting Test in place of the Perception Test it would normally make. Each use of this ability causes the hound 1 Strain Point of damage.

Breathe Fire: The fire hounds' ability to breathe fire makes them extremely dangerous. They can use this power only once per summoning. To spit a gout of fire, the hound makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target is hit by the flames and takes Step 10 damage. Physical Armor protects against this damage. The fire continues to burn for the next 3 rounds, inflicting an additional Step 6 damage each round unless the target somehow extinguishes it, by diving into a pool of water or suffocating the flames by other conventional or magical means. No armor protects against this additional damage.

Flame Darts

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 23
Range: 40 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Flame Darts spell creates fiery darts that are hurled at a target area, striking one or more characters. While weaving the spell threads, the magician cups his hands together to hold the darts, then 'flings' them away and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target characters, +1 for each additional character in a 3 yard by 3 yard area within the spell's range. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on each target. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

The missiles created cannot be directed at specific targets by the magician; any friendly characters in the area of effect can be damaged as well.

Grasping Hand of Earth

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 20
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Grasping Hand of Earth spell causes a massive earthen or stone hand to rise out of the ground and seize the target. The target must be standing on earth or stone for this spell to be effective against him. The magician clutches at the air while weaving the spell thread, then points his hand at the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a huge stone or earth hand rises from the ground and clasps the target tightly.

The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the hand's Strength value. Each round, the target may attempt a Strength Test against the hand's Strength value to break free; the target may perform no other actions while held in the hand's grip, and is considered Harried while held, except for attempts to break free (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408).

Storm Manacles

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 18
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: Rank + 12 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Storm Manacles spell restrains a target character with cloudy shackles. While weaving the spell threads, the magician takes a drop of water and works it into a wisp of cloud, then blows the cloud toward the target character and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the wisp darkens and grows to form a set of manacles that shackle two of the target's arms or legs. While manacled, the target character is considered Harried (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408).

If the shackled character attempts any hostile action against the magician or his obvious allies, the manacles zap the target with lightning. The magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

Thunderclap

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 17
Range: Self **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: –8 penalty to Action Tests; causes deafness
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Thunderclap spell creates a loud *clap* of thunder that stuns and deafens anyone near the magician. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test, comparing the result against Spell Defense of each character, friend or foe, within a 5 yard radius of himself. If the test succeeds, the target suffers a –8 penalty to all of his Action Tests until the end of the following round. He is also deafened for a further Step 8 rounds, during which time he adds +8 to the Detection Difficulty for any hearing-based Perception Tests he makes.

Most unintelligent creatures flee in fear when a Thunderclap spell is cast.

Whirlwind

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 18
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: Rank + 6 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 9
Casting Difficulty: 6; Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Whirlwind spell creates a spinning turbulent column of air. The magician makes whirling motions with his fingers while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, he forms a swirling pillar of wind, twice his height in size, which spins wildly about the magician. Each round, the magician may direct the whirlwind against a target character, and all other characters standing within a 3 yard radius of the target. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test, comparing the result against the Spell Defense of each target caught in the wind. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

If the magician ceases to concentrate, the Whirlwind spell immediately expires and the wind dissipates.

Eighth Circle Spells

Blade Fury

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 20
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 3 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Blade Fury spell enhances the efficacy of a target character's melee weapon in combat. The magician shouts out a battle cry while weaving the spell threads, then touches a melee weapon being held by the target character and makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the target's or his weapon's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target's melee weapon gleams red, and a pale-red duplicate of the weapon hovers not more than 3 inches away from the original.

While the spell is in effect, whenever the target character makes a successful melee Attack Test with his enhanced weapon, the magical double-blade also hits his opponent. The magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target's opponent from the duplicate blade; the Effect Test result is determined separately from the normal weapon's Damage Test result. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Any special results achieved by the normal weapon also apply to the enhanced weapon. If the target character achieves an Armor-Defeating Hit with his melee attack, the double-blade also achieves an Armor-Defeating Hit.

Crushing Hand of Earth

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 14 / 21
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Crushing Hand of Earth spell works similarly to the Grasping Hand of Earth spell, except that instead of holding the target character, it exerts injurious crushing force on him. The target must be standing on earth or stone for this spell to be effective. The magician clenches and unclenches one of his hands while weaving the spell threads, then shakes his fist at the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a huge hand formed from stone or earth rises from the ground and clasps the target, crushing him with a terrible intensity. The magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target each round he is caught within the hand's grip; this requires the magician's concentration each round. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Each round, the target may attempt a Strength Test against the current Effect Test result to break free. Otherwise, the target may perform no other actions while held in the spell's grip.

Earth Wall

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 20
Range: 50 yards **Duration**: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: Willpower + 12
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Earth Wall spell allows a magician to summon a dirt wall that can be placed along the ground in positions of his choosing. The magician must be standing on earth or stone to cast this spell. He makes shoveling actions, as if digging a dirt palisade, while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the wall's Spell Defense. The wall is composed of multiple 3 yard by 3 yard sections of enchanted earth, each section up to 1 yard thick. If the test succeeds, the magician summons a number of wall sections equal to his Spellcasting rank. The magician directs the placement of each wall section, one at a time; summoning and positioning a section of wall takes the magician 1 round to complete, and requires his entire concentration that round. The wall may not be placed on a living being; doing so immediately destroys that section of wall, which still counts toward the maximum number of wall sections summoned.

Wall sections can be physically or magically attacked. A character who fails an Attack Test against a section of earth wall has still struck the wall, but his blow has no effect. Only an Extraordinary result can defeat the earth wall's Armor Rating. A section of wall may be toppled. If a character attempts to pull or push a section of earth wall over, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how well-anchored that section is. The toppling character makes a Strength Test against the Effect Test result. If the test succeeds, he manages to topple the wall. Anyone unfortunate enough to be within 3 yards of the wall in the direction it is falling, must make a successful Dexterity (8) Test to avoid being struck by the section. If the test fails, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the character hit by the falling wall section.

Each wall section has the following statistics:

Earth Wall

Physical Defense: 8 **Physical Armor**: 12*
Spell Defense: 10 **Mystic Armor**: 10*
Social Defense: Immune

* Requires an Extraordinary result to defeat.

Death Rating: 70 **Wound Threshold**: NA
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Perimeter Alarm

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 20
Range: Rank yards **Duration**: Rank + 4 hours
Effect: Willpower + 12
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Perimeter Alarm spell creates an alarm that will detect any creature crossing into a predefined area, alerting the magician to the activity. The magician walks the perimeter that he intends to alarm while weaving the spell threads, then stands in the center of the area and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the area designated by the perimeter glows briefly red and sounds twice to indicate it is armed.

Whenever someone or something crosses this zone, the magician makes an Effect Test against the trespasser's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the trespasser is detected and the spell sounds an alert audible to every character within the perimeter, including the intruder. Those outside the perimeter hear nothing, however.

The magician may freely pass the area defined by the Perimeter Alarm spell without setting it off, as may those characters present when the spell was cast and who were standing within the zone of effect. Before he makes a Spellcasting Test, the magician may also define the minimum and maximum size of creature that the alarm will react to, thus ensuring the Perimeter Alarm is not accidentally set off by the normal activities of local fauna or insect life.

Silence Metal

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 20
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: Willpower + 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Silence Metal spell suppresses all noise made by any metal weapons, armor, or other tools the target character is carrying. While weaving the spell threads, the magician takes a dagger

or other metal tool from the character, puts the item to his lips, makes a shushing noise, and hands the item back. He then makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the target 's Spell Defense or the Spell Defense of any metal items he is carrying or wearing. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the Detection Difficulty of any Perception Tests made to hear the target, based on the sounds that the metal objects he is carrying make.

Unlike some abilities, such as the Silent Walk talent (see the **Talents** chapter, p. 201), the character can move at his Full Movement rate with this spell. The noises from anything metallic he is carrying are completely suppressed regardless of whether he is walking, running, or jumping.

Silver Shadow

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 19
Range: 100 yards **Duration**: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: Willpower + 3
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Silver Shadow spell makes all of a target character's non-magical metal objects turn gauzy and insubstantial. The magician waves a hand in front of his face, inhaling and exhaling gently while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, all non-magical metal items that the target is wearing or carrying—weapons, armor, coins, and tools—turn into silvery shadow-like versions of the original. The objects lose their intended use during the spell's duration—tools do not carve or dig or sew, weapons cannot harm an opponent, armor provides no protection, and so on.

While small metal objects, like coins, and tools are automatically affected, larger metal items are only affected if the magician makes a successful Effect Test against the item's Damage step (weapons) or Physical Armor (armor or shields). Items that are constructed primarily from non-metal materials are not affected by this spell. Metal magical items are not affected by this spell.

Waterspout

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 14 / 21
Range: 1 mile **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 15
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Waterspout spell creates an enormous column of water that can be used to attack large waterborne targets including riverboats, sailing ships and creatures such as dragons or leviathans. The magician must be within 10 yards of a large body of water, such as a river, lake or sea, to cast this spell. The magician throws his arms in the air while weaving the spell threads.

When attacking a riverboat or sailing ship, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the vessel's Maneuverability rating (see the **Airships and Riverboats** chapter on p. 146 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the vessel. The ship's Physical Armor protects against this damage.

When attacking a creature or character, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. Attacking a target smaller than a rowboat (about 3 to 5 yards in length) requires an Excellent result, and the magician cannot achieve an Armor-Defeating Hit. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Physical Armor protects against this damage. If the target suffers a Wound, add +7 to the Knockdown Difficulty.

Ninth Circle Spells

Burning Water

Threads: 5 **Weaving Difficulty**: 15 / 25
Range: 20 yards **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: Creates flammable water
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Burning Water spell makes the surface of a body of water highly flammable. The magician pours a few drops of alcohol, oil or other flammable liquid onto the water's surface while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, an area of water up to 100 square yards in size becomes flammable (like refined alcohol). It does not immediately burst into flame; people and animals can safely drink it, swim in it, and so on. Only when exposed to a source of flame, such as a candle or torch, will the enchanted water catch fire. The water burns fiercely, inflicting Step 10 damage each round to anything in contact with it. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

The Burning Water spell is most often used against waterborne ships in combat, but it can also be used to ignite the surface of a pool or other small body of water. On swiftly flowing water, such as parts of the Serpent River, the spell lasts only a round or two (at the gamemaster's discretion) before the current's motion causes the flammable surface to disperse.

Cloud Banish

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 15 / 20
Range: 1 mile **Duration**: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: 8+ (see text)

The Cloud Banish spell causes clouds to disperse, reducing the chance of rain, hail, lightning, poisonous gas, or other effects associated with the type of clouds. The magician makes warding gestures while weaving the spell threads, then commands the clouds to disperse and makes a Spellcasting Test against the clouds' Spell Defense. Against naturally formed clouds, the Spell Defense is 8; against storms the Spell Defense is 13; against gale-force storms, the Spell Defense is 20, or even more, based on the storm's intensity. Magically or elementally created clouds or storms resist with the Spell Defense of their creator. If the test succeeds, the spell disperses the clouds within a 1 mile radius of the magician. Under normal circumstances, clouds take 1 hour to disperse. Storms or magically summoned clouds may take longer, at the gamemaster's discretion. The magician makes an Effect Test, subtracting the result in minutes from the dispersal time, to determine how long it takes for the clouds to disperse.

Krayen the Simple casts the Cloud Banish spell against an increasingly ominous-looking patch of cloud encroaching on him. He makes a Spellcasting Test, rolling an 11—a success!—against the clouds' Spell Defense of 8. Krayen makes an Effect Test to determine how quickly he disperses the cloud, with a result of 17. The clouds disperse within 43 minutes (60 – 17 = 43).

The magician may cast the Cloud Banish spell more than once against the same area of clouds, accelerating their rate of dispersal. The effect of the Cloud Banish spell centers on the position of the magician at the time of casting. The effect does not move with the magician. The spell's range is applied to the radius of the ground area cleared of clouds.

The Cloud Banish spell can disperse any clouds within sight of the magician, even if their altitude is greater than 1 mile.

Cold Embers

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 18 / 25
Range: 100 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Extinguishes open flames
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Cold Embers spell is a variant of the Snuff spell (p. 302), and extinguishes large non-magical fires, such as forest fires. The magician draws in breath while weaving the spell threads, then exhales sharply and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, an area of fire up to 100 yards by 100 yards is immediately extinguished, regardless of its intensity. Whatever was burning becomes completely cool to the touch. The Cold Embers spell does not extinguish the source of the fire; the fire can be reignited, especially if it is burning a larger area than that extinguished by the Cold Embers spell.

Dragon's Breath

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 15 / 20
Range: 50 yards **Duration**: 1 round (see text)
Effect: Willpower + 12
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Dragon's Breath spell creates a gout of flame of an intensity comparable to that produced by a real dragon. The magician inhales deeply and lets loose a shout of increasing intensity while he weaves the spell threads, until he releases the spell with a roar. The magic of the spell increases his shout nearly to the volume of an actual dragon's roar. A stream of flame flies from the magician's outstretched arms as he makes a Spellcasting Test, the result of which is compared against the Spell Defense of each target within the spell's range. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Physical Armor protects against this damage. The magician may target a number of characters equal to his Spellcasting rank with the flame.

During each subsequent round, the target catches fire, taking Step 7 damage. No armor provides protection against this damage. The fire can only be extinguished if the target makes a successful Willpower Test against the spell's Effect step. Regardless, the fire will expire after a number of rounds equal to the magician's Spellcasting rank.

Fire Wall

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 14 / 20
Range: 50 yards **Duration**: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: 15

The Fire Wall spell summons a wall of flame that may be placed along the ground or hung in the air in positions of the magician's choosing. The magician must have a source of fire available to him, such as a torch or a campfire. He waves his arms around, as if painting on a large canvas, while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting (15) Test—the fire wall's Spell Defense. The wall is composed of multiple 3 yard by 3 yard sections of enchanted fire, each section up to 1 yard thick. If the test succeeds, the magician summons a number of wall sections equal to his Spellcasting rank. The magician directs the placement of each wall section, one at a time; summoning and positioning a section of wall takes the magician 1 round to complete, and requires his entire concentration that round. The wall may not be placed on a living being; doing so immediately destroys that section of wall, which still counts toward the maximum number of wall sections summoned.

Wall sections can be physically or magically attacked. A character who fails an Attack Test against a section of fire wall has still struck the wall, but his blow has no effect. Only an Extraordinary result can defeat the fire wall's Armor Rating. Should a character or object touch a section of fire wall, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Physical Armor protects against this damage. Flammable non-magical weapons that take a number of Damage Points equal to their Size + Damage step are destroyed.

A wall section has the following statistics:

Fire Wall

Physical Defense: 17 **Physical Armor**: 5*
Spell Defense: 15 **Mystic Armor**: 7*
Social Defense: Immune

* Requires an Extraordinary result to defeat.

Death Rating: 50 **Wound Threshold**: NA
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Moon Shadow

Threads: 5 **Weaving Difficulty**: 16 / 22
Range: 100 yards **Duration**: 1 month
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Moon Shadow spell creates a pale duplicate of a target character's shadow. The magician requires a pattern item for the target character to cast this spell, and must cast the spell at night, under the light of the moon. The magician shuffles from one foot to the other while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the spell steals part of the victim's shadow from him, creating a second light-gray shadow. This second shadow forms at the target's feet, then glides over to the magician. The target's own shadow lightens slightly. Even in the stark light of the desert sun, his shadow is, at best, a light, wavering gray.

Once created, the effect of the Moon Shadow spell has a limitless range. Through the moon shadow, the magician can hear whatever the target character hears; when the target speaks, the shadow speaks the same words. The magician can harm the target by plunging a silver dagger into his moon shadow. The magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. No armor protects against this damage. A Dispel Magic spell can negate the effects of the Moon Shadow spell, but must be cast against the moon shadow itself, not the target character.

Water Wall

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 14 / 20
Range: 50 yards **Duration**: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Water Wall spell summon a wall of water that can be placed along the ground or on water in positions of his choosing. The magician must have at least 1 quart of water in a vessel to cast this spell. He puts his finger in the vessel, stirring the water around, while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the wall's Spell Defense. The wall is composed of multiple 3 yard by 3 yard sections of enchanted water, swirling section up to 1 yard thick. If the test succeeds, the magician summons a number of wall sections equal to his Spellcasting rank. The magician directs the placement of each wall section, one at a time; summoning and positioning a section of wall takes the magician 1 round to complete, and requires his entire concentration that round. The wall may not be placed on a living being; doing so immediately destroys that section of wall, which still counts toward the maximum number of wall sections summoned.

Wall sections can be physically or magically attacked. A character who fails an Attack Test against a section has still struck

the wall, but his blow has no effect. Only an Extraordinary result can defeat the water wall's Armor Rating. When the spell ends, the water reverts to its original volume. If the wall is positioned on a stream (or another source of flowing water) or a body of water larger than itself, it can recover damage taken. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is the number of Damage Points recovered; this requires the magician's concentration that round.

A wall section has the following statistics:

Water Wall

Physical Defense: 12 **Physical Armor**: 10*
Spell Defense: 10 **Mystic Armor**: 12*
Social Defense: Immune

* Requires an Extraordinary result to defeat.

Death Rating: 60 **Wound Threshold**: NA
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Tenth Circle Spells

Air Fortress

Threads: Variable (see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 17 / 23
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank × 10 hours
Effect: Willpower + 12
Casting Difficulty: 8

The Air Fortress spell creates a translucent fortress from elemental air. At the magician's discretion, the fortress may be tinted to make it easier to see. The magician paces out the dimensions of the fortress while weaving a maximum number of spell threads equal to his Thread Weaving rank, then makes a Spellcasting (8) Test. If the test succeeds, each thread woven creates up to 36 square yards of floor space (a 6 yard by 6 yard by 1 yard thick section, or the equivalent) and a 3 yard high wall surrounding the floor space.

Smaller walls and ceilings can be inserted to divide the interior space as the magician desires. Floors may be stacked one upon one another, and some of the exterior walls may be discarded for aesthetic reasons. Other non-air elements, such as wooden doors or stone masonry, may be added to complete the fortress.

Once the fortress has been assembled, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is used as the Strength value and Physical and Mystic Armor ratings for the fortress' exterior walls and floors. Interior walls and ceilings have a Strength value and a Physical and Mystic Armor rating equal to the magician's Spell Defense. The fortress may be raised and lowered vertically at a Movement rate of 5 yards per round; it may travel over the countryside at a Movement rate of 25 yards per round (approximately 5 miles per hour).

Blood magic can be used to extend the spell's duration. By taking 1 permanent Damage Point, the magician may extend the duration of the Air Fortress spell to a year and a day. For each additional permanent Damage Point he takes, the magician may further extend the spell's duration by another year and a day. The magician cannot heal this damage unless the fortress is destroyed or until the spell expires or is dispelled.

Earth and Air

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 16 / 20
Range: 120 yards **Duration**: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Earth and Air spell allows a magician to convert earth to air, or air to earth. While weaving the spell threads, the magician focuses entirely on the spell—no movement, speech, or other action is possible—bringing to mind the essence of earth and air, then he imagines reversing the two and makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the earth or air. If the test succeeds, the spell converts either earth to air or air to earth, as designated by the magician. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which determines the maximum radius of material converted, to a maximum depth equal to the Effect Test result in feet. The converted volume can be of any shape the magician chooses—it is not limited by the shape of the original source material. When the spell's duration expires, the material reverts to its original form.

The fabled t'skrang *shivalahala* of House V'strimon used this spell in the last war to sink a number of Theran vedettes threatening to attack the Floating City on Lake Ban.

Elemental Merchant

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 15 / 19
Range: 50 yards **Duration**: Rank + 1 days
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Elemental Merchant spell conjures a fiery servant which, despite its appearance, is able to negotiate for goods on behalf of its summoner. The spell requires access to a source of flame at least the size of a campfire. The magician raises his arms up high while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician conjures an elemental spirit of fire. The spirit takes on a large humanoid shape, usually dwarf in appearance, except for its height, which often towers over seven feet. If necessary, the elemental merchant can reduce (not increase) its size by up to 50 percent.

Once summoned, the magician tells the elemental merchant what he requires. Once it has received its list of instructions, plus sufficient coin for the transaction, the spirit travels to the nearest settlement or city, purchases the goods, then delivers them to the magician. If the spirit must do any haggling or other similar trading negotiations, the magician makes an Effect Test in place of the Haggle Test; the magician's Haggle rank is considered to be equal to his Spellcasting rank for determining how many tests he may make for the transaction.

In a single trip, the elemental merchant can carry up to 260 pounds of goods. The spirit's fiery body does not harm any merchandise it is carrying. Elemental merchants do not fatigue, and can travel overland at a Full Movement rate of around 22 miles per hour; the merchant can easily travel 24 hours a day, traversing a distance in excess of 500 miles, assuming the terrain it is passing over is relatively unbroken. The elemental merchant will

protect itself should it be attacked, but will never initiate combat against another being.

The elemental merchant has the following statistics:

Elemental Merchant

DEX: 8 **STR**: 8 **TOU**: 9
PER: 5 **WIL**: 7 **CHA**: 7

Initiative: 9 **Physical Defense**: 11
Number of Actions: 1 **Spell Defense**: 10
Attack (1): 9 **Social Defense**: 12
Damage: **Physical Armor**: 4
Unarmed (2): 10 **Mystic Armor**: 3

Death Rating: 47 **Recovery Tests**: 2
Wound Threshold: 13 **Knockdown**: 8
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 43 **Full Movement**: 86

Powers: Haggle[T] (Effect step; see text)

Legend Points: 125

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Fire and Water

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 17 / 20
Range: 120 yards **Duration**: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: Willpower + 9
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Fire and Water spell converts fire to water, or water to fire. While weaving the spell threads, the magician focuses entirely on the spell—no movement, speech, or other action is possible—bringing to mind the essence of water and fire, then he imagines reversing the two and makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the fire or water. If the test succeeds, the spell converts either fire to water or water to fire, as designated by the magician.

The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which determines the maximum radius of material converted, up to a maximum depth equal to the Effect Test result divided by 3, in yards. The converted volume can be of any shape the magician chooses—it is not limited by the shape of the original source material. When the spell's duration expires, the material reverts to its original form.

The Fire and Water spell allows a magician to create raging fires in the middle of a sea; the fire will not burn out normally until the spell expires or is dispelled.

Frozen Harbor

Threads: 5 (ritual; see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 16 / 29
Range: 1 mile **Duration**: 1 round (see text)
Effect: Freezes an expanse of water
Casting Difficulty: 9

The Frozen Harbor ritual spell freezes an expanse of water, trapping any vessels within. The magician must stand within sight of the target water and no more than 30 yards from the shoreline. Weaving each spell thread requires 1 hour. After all of the spell threads are woven, the magician makes a Spellcasting (9) Test. If the test succeeds, an area up to a mile in diameter is covered in a 1 yard thick sheet of ice. The ice immobilizes any ships within the spell's area of effect and is strong enough to support the weight of a fully armed and armored troll or obsidiman. It takes one round for the harbor to freeze, but the spell's duration varies depending on the weather.

The ice eventually melts on its own. In temperate weather, the ice melts completely within a week, and it breaks up sufficiently for ships to navigate within a day or two of the spell being cast.

Petrify

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 19 / 26
Range: 20 yards **Duration**: Rank days
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Petrify spell turns a target character to stone. After weaving the spell threads, the magician casts a handful of powdered stone at the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is compared against the target's Willpower step. If this test succeeds, the target is turned into stone, of the same type used to cast the spell. All of the target's clothing and possessions are transformed along with him. Each hour, the target may make a Willpower Test against the spell's Effect step. If the test succeeds, he breaks free and the spell ends, restoring him to his normal state. Any damage inflicted on the target while in "statue" form carries over when he returns to normal.

Blood magic can be used to extend the spell's duration. By taking 3 permanent Damage Points, the magician may extend the duration of the Petrify spell to a year and a day. The magician cannot heal this damage unless the target breaks free or until the spell expires or is dispelled. The target may still try to break free, but may make only one attempt each week to do so.

Weather Change

Threads: 5 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 20
Range: 10 miles **Duration**: Rank + 10 hours
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Weather Change spell creates localized changes in the weather. While weaving the spell threads, the magician softly calls out the names of the winds and the rains, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the magician can make incremental changes to the weather within the spell's range.

Each hour the magician may:

- Raise or lower the temperature by 5 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Increase or decrease the wind speed by 5 miles per hour.
- Increase the possibility of a change in precipitation by +10 percent. If it is currently raining, the change stops the rain; if it is currently dry, the change starts the precipitation.

The magician makes an Effect (5) Test to make the first change to the weather. Thereafter, add +1 to the Difficulty Number for the Effect Test for each additional change he wishes to make. If, for example, the Elementalist has already raised the temperature by 15 degrees, increased the wind speed by 10 miles per hour, and increased the chance of precipitation by 30 percent (a total of 8 changes), the Difficulty Number of the next change is 13 (5 + 8 = 13). Each change takes one minute to take effect. The gamemaster determines if there is a change in precipitation after each successful Effect Test.

Eleventh Circle Spells

Wood Blade

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 22 / 28
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 8 hours
Effect: Willpower + 16
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Wood Blade spell transforms a piece of wood at least 1 yard long into a broadsword that causes immense damage. While weaving the spell threads, the magician grips the piece of wood

in both hands, wielding it like a blade, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the wood transforms into a standard-sized wooden broadsword.

The sword can be wielded by anyone, not just the magician. When used in combat, the sword's wielder makes an Effect Test in place of a normal Damage Test, using his own Willpower step.

Twelfth Circle Spells

Crop Blight

Threads: 8 (ritual; see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 21 / 26
Range: Touch **Duration**: A year and a day
Effect: Destroys plant life
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Crop Blight ritual spell blights an area up to 10 square miles in size. Each spell thread takes 1 hour to weave; the magician may attempt to weave only one thread each week. The magician must stand within the area of effect as he weaves each thread, tramping down an increasingly large patch each time. After he has woven the spell threads, the magician uproots a small plant and smashes it into pulp as he makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, all plant life within the target area withers and dies within an hour of the spell's casting; no plants will grow there for the duration of the spell.

Most magicians are reluctant to cast this spell, as it causes significant harm to the spirits of the plants killed. In more than one recorded instance, a magician who successfully cast this spell was found dead just days later, presumably killed by angry plant spirits. A magician who has ever even attempted to cast this spell will have the act weighed heavily against him should he ever use the Council of the Forest ritual spell (see below).

Fourteenth Circle Spells

Council of the Forest

Threads: 9 (ritual; see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 18 / 32
Range: 1 mile **Duration**: 1 day
Effect: Summons tree and plant spirits
Casting Difficulty: 10

The powerful Council of the Forest ritual spell awakens all tree and plant spirits within a 1 mile radius of the magician and calls them to attend him. The most powerful spirits physically move to the caster's location, taking 30 minutes to do so; others remain where they are, and are mentally linked into the council. Each spell thread takes the magician 1 hour to weave. The magician sways from side to side while weaving the spell threads, as if he were a sapling in a strong wind, then makes a Spellcasting (10) Test. If the test succeeds, the magician may bring a single matter before the forest council and ask its judgment on it, but he cannot force the spirits to obey him or judge in his favor.

The matter brought up can be anything of concern to the plant spirits: the fate of the forest, the threat of invaders, punishment for a transgression, a quest for lost treasure, and so on. The council weighs up whatever the magician has to say and then offers its advice. The spirits can be powerful allies if they choose to help the magician: they know everything about their forest domain and have game statistics equal to Strength 1 or higher wood elementals (see the **Spirits** chapter on p. 375 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**).

The gamemaster determines the spirits' reaction based on two factors: the magician's presentation of his case, and how much respect he has shown for the element of wood in the past. At the gamemaster's discretion, the spirits will choose either 'yea' or 'nay,' depending on how the magician stacks up in these two areas; in the case of a magician having shown complete irreverence toward the element of wood in the past, the reaction could range from outright denial of the request, the spirits returning to their homes, to complete outrage, with overtly hostile action taken against the magician.

Fifteenth Circle Spells

Call Forth the Maelstrom

Threads: 6 (ritual; see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 25 / 33
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: Creates a natural disaster
Casting Difficulty: 10

The Call Forth the Maelstrom ritual spell stirs up a natural disaster of the magician's choosing: an earthquake, tidal wave, forest fire or the like. Weaving each spell thread takes 1 week, during which time the magician contacts the various elemental spirits that must make the alterations needed for the maelstrom. Small signs of its approach are noticeable as each thread is being woven: tremors, high winds or unusual changes in temperature. After weaving the last spell thread, the magician raises his arms and makes a Spellcasting (10) Test. If the test succeeds, a 100 square mile area of the magician's choice is devastated.

Most settlements or cities in the area of effect will be seriously damaged or destroyed. The gamemaster determines specific individual effects of the maelstrom based on its type and location. Characters caught in a maelstrom suffer damage based on the type of disaster, taking a minimum of Step 13 damage for each minute of direct exposure to the spell's effects. No armor protects against this damage.

Purify Forest

Threads: 12 (ritual; see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 28 / 33
Range: 10 miles **Duration**: Permanent
Effect: Cleanses astral space over forested areas
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Purify Forest ritual spell purifies the astral space corresponding to an area of forest or jungle. Created to counter the corrupting influences of Horrors on astral space, the spell is usually only cast on Corrupt astral regions. Weaving each spell thread takes 1 week, during which time the magician must walk around the borders of the target area, making one complete circuit.

After weaving the spell threads, the magician must enter the area of astral space corresponding to the target land. The magician then returns to the physical world to cast the spell; he pours water onto a small pillar of stones taken from the target area, symbolizing the cleansing of the land. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense of any Horror that has traveled through the tainted area within the past year and a day. If the test succeeds, the spell cleanses the astral space corresponding to the target area in a 10 mile radius around the magician, making it a Safe region.

Illusionism Spells

What is truth? You think I deceive you with with illusions to confound and aggravate you? No. I am simply teaching you how to cut to the truth of things. Nothing more, nothing less.

• Alachrim, Human Illusionist •

The Illusionist works with deception magic, spells that create things that are not what they seem. Sometimes he takes the unreal and gives it the appearance of reality. Other times he uses real effects to deceive or throw opponents off-guard.

Illusions and Damage

The effectiveness of an illusion depends on the credulity of those it is intended to deceive. For this reason, spells that are pure illusions cannot cause a viewer's death; they only knock a character into a coma-like state. Damage taken from pure illusions can never exceed a character's Unconsciousness Rating; any excess damage is ignored. In addition, an unconscious character cannot be affected by illusions; they only affect a conscious mind.

Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions

Illusionism spells can be quite effective, but it is possible for opponents to see through or otherwise sense the deception. A character who suspects the illusionary nature of an object, creature, or effect may take an action to make a **Disbelief Test**.

The character takes 1 Strain Point of damage, and makes a Willpower Test against the Disbelief Difficulty of the illusion. The Disbelief Difficulty is usually based on the Circle of the spell, as shown on the Disbelief Difficulty Table. Some spells determine their Disbelief Difficulty in other ways; these exceptions are noted in the spell description.

DISBELIEF DIFFICULTY TABLE

Spell Circle	Disbelief Difficulty	Sensing Difficulty
1	7	15
2	8	16
3	9	18
4	10	19
5	11	21
6	12	22
7	13	24
8	14	26
9	15	27
10	16	29
11	17	30
12	18	32
13	19	33
14	20	34
15	21	35

For illusions created by abilities other than spells, the Disbelief Difficulty is based on the rank of the power, the Disbelief Difficulty for talents or talent knacks is based on the Talent rank, and the Disbelief Difficulty for Discipline abilities is based on the Circle that the ability is eligible to be gained at. The rank number or Discipline Circle is equivalent to the spell Circle value listed on the Disbelief Difficulty Table.

If the Disbelief Test succeeds, the effect of the illusion ends—but only for that character. A successful Disbelief Test does not end the illusion for other characters who may be affected by it. Disbelieving an illusion always causes 1 Strain Point of damage to the disbelieving character, whether or not an illusion is actually present.

A character may also sense an illusion whenever he acts against or reacts to it. Some spells describe special **Sensing Tests** that allow a character to notice an illusion without actively disbelieving it. Any Action Test made against an illusion is also considered to be a Sensing Test. The Sensing Difficulty for most spells is shown on the Disbelief Difficulty Table, though some spells use a different Difficulty Number for Sensing Tests (listed with their description). A successful Sensing Test ends the illusion for the character as if he had made a successful Disbelief Test.

The Thief Vole is trying to pick the lock on an illusory door. The illusion of the door is the equivalent of a Second Circle Illusionism spell (Sensing Difficulty 16). Vole rolls a 20 on his Lock Picking Test—a successful Sensing Test result. His talent at lock picking gives Vole the feeling something is wrong with the door. The door disappears before him even as Vole is thinking this thought.

A character who has disbelieved or sensed an illusion may help his friends disbelieve it. His companions receive a bonus to their Disbelief Tests (but not Sensing Tests) based on the result level the original character achieved on his Disbelief or Sensing Test. An Average result grants a +1 bonus; a Good result grants a +2 bonus; an Excellent Result grants a +3 bonus; an Extraordinary result grants a +4 bonus to Disbelief Tests.

Vole tries to convince his friend Weaver that the door is an illusion. Because he achieved a Good result on his Sensing Test, his efforts grant Weaver a +2 bonus to his Disbelief Test.

First Circle Spells

Assuring Touch

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 7
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 12 rounds
Effect: +3 to Spell and Social Defense; +3 bonus to Willpower Tests against fear
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Assuring Touch spell increases a character's resistance to fear. The magician thinks positive thoughts, gently touches the target on the arm, shoulder or head, while murmuring some bromide like "everything is going to be all right", then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target adds +3 to his Spell and Social Defense against fear-causing attacks and gains a +3 bonus to any Willpower Tests he makes to resist the effects of fear or Intimidation (see the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 93 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**).

Bellow of the Thundras

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 15
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: Allows target's voice to be heard up to spell's range
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Bellow of the Thundras spell enhances the target's voice, allowing him to be better heard. The magician mimes the opening lines of the target's speech, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target's voice is amplified and can be heard clearly by those listening up to 60 yards away.

Magicians often use this spell at large gatherings or to Make an Impression—usually to get the attention of others—in a distracting situation (see the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 93 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**).

Best Face

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 5 / 14
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 8 minutes
Effect: +5 bonus to Charisma-based Tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Best Face spell disguises a target character's identity. The magician splashes water or cologne on the target character's face while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target's face changes to match a face envisaged by the magician; if the magician is copying a specific face, he must have seen that individual recently, within a number of months equal to his Spellcasting rank. The target gains a +5 bonus to Charisma-based Tests when trying to convince others of his false identity and attempting to persuade them to act according to that misperception. Any Interaction Tests made against the target act as Sensing Tests (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322).

Alachrim, a human Illusionist, successfully casts the Best Face spell on himself, assuming the visage of a local militiaman he spent time with earlier that morning. He gains a +5 bonus to his Interaction Tests when attempting to Intimidate a crowd—ordering them to disperse, or taking another appropriate action.

The Best Face spell only affects the head and neck of the target, including hair and ears; the rest of the target's body is unaffected. The maximum possible size difference between the target's face and the face being mimicked is 100 percent in any dimension. The magician must find some other way to disguise any obvious differences. The Best Face spell does not change the target's voice, so the character will have to try his best to speak with the intonation and mannerisms of the character whose face he has borrowed, nor does it clothe the target in appropriate garb.

Blazing Fists of Rage

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 16
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 4 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Blazing Fists of Rage spell engulfs the target's hands or feet in illusory flames that augment the damage he inflicts when making unarmed attacks. The magician touches the target's hands or feet and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target's hands (or feet, or other areas of his body used in combat) glow cherry-red, and a slowly fading after-image begins to trail behind his body.

The target's body audibly "hums" with power. When he strikes an opponent with an unarmed Attack Test, brilliant red sparks fly away from the area struck, accompanied by an explosive sound effect. The target makes an Effect Test in place of a Damage Test for any successful attacks he makes, using his own Willpower step. Physical Armor protects against this damage. If the target's opponent takes a Wound from an Attack Test enhanced by this spell, his Knockdown Test acts as a Sensing Test (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322).

Catseyes

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 5 / 10
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Grants Low-Light Vision to the target
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Catseyes spell grants a target character the ability to see in near-darkness. The magician blinks several times while weaving the spell thread, then touches the

subject lightly on his eyelids and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target gains the equivalent of the Low-Light Vision racial ability for the duration of the spell (see **Low-Light Vision** in the **Creating Characters** chapter, p. 49).

While the spell is in effect, the target's pupils become vertical slits, like those of a cat. The target's eyes also reflect incoming light and therefore seem to glow in the dark. If used on a target that already has Low-Light Vision, such as an ork or elf, this spell has no effect.

Disguise Metal

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 14
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 7 minutes
Effect: Willpower
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Disguise Metal spell disguises one type of metal as a different type of metal. The magician imagines the two types of metal involved while he weaves the required thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the metal's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is multiplied by 10 pounds, to determine the maximum quantity of metal that he can disguise with this spell.

The disguised metal has a Spell Defense of 7 against magic that identifies metal (such as the Gold Sense talent, if the metal is precious; see the **Talents** chapter, p. 187, for a description). Only the appearance of the metal, not the shape, is transformed by the spell. For example, disguising a steel sword as mercury would be useless because the blade would not flow at room temperature like real mercury does.

Displace Image

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 15
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 7 rounds
Effect: Projects image of the target 3 yards away
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Displace Image spell makes a target character "invisible", by displacing the image that others see and shifting it a short distance away. The magician traces the outline of the target character while weaving the spell thread, then touches first the "shoulder" of the outline, then the shoulder of the target character, and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, an outlined figure shrouded in a shimmering blur appears, drifting 3 yards away from the character, quickly transforming into an identical image of the target.

The target character is no longer visible in his actual location, the illusion having displaced his image; other senses, such as smell and hearing, are not affected by this illusion. Attacks made against the image have no effect, but if the target does not concentrate that round to mimic the response to a blow made against him, the attacker can make a Disbelief Test. Attack Tests made against the image count as Sensing Tests (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322).

Fun With Doors

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 5 / 10
Range: 20 yards **Duration**: Rank + 1 minutes
Effect: Creates / alters door illusions
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

This spell is an illusion. The Fun With Doors spell creates different illusory effects, all based around or involving the use of doors. The magician must be able to see the target door, trapdoor or archway. He gestures in the air as if painting the door with an imaginary brush while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target door's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician may create a variety of illusions involving the target door.

Hamvel, an ork Illusionist, casts the Fun With Doors spell against the entry door to his local tavern. He can make the door look like a wall as people run for the exit, apparently move the door up to 3 yards in any direction, make an illusion of the door just opening or shutting as people turn to look at the entrance, or make the door appear to be made of solid orichalcum or some other material.

Any Action Tests made while interacting with the illusion are treated as Sensing Tests. Illusory doors created with this spell may be no bigger than 3 yards by 3 yards in size; likewise, new doors cannot be created any further than 3 yards away from the original. And obviously, you can't run through an illusory door...

Light

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 14
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: Summons a sphere of light
Casting Difficulty: 6 *or* Target's Spell Defense (see text)

This spell is not an illusion. The Light spell taps into the astral plane, releasing some energy to create a magical light. The magician holds his hand out while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, a floating, glowing sphere about the size of an orange forms in his upturned palm, providing the magician with illumination to a 10 yard radius. As the magician moves, he carries the light around with him. The magician can direct the independent movement of the sphere within the spell's range, but this requires his concentration that round. He may move the light toward a character or object, placing it on or transferring it to the target if he makes a successful Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. The magician can no longer move the sphere of light once he has placed it on or given it to another character or object.

A magician can also blind a character by directing the movement of the light to cover the target's eyes. This is more difficult than simply placing it on the character; the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. On a Good result, the target character is "dazzled" by the sphere's light and suffers a Partial darkness penalty to his sight-based Action Tests (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 407). Target characters who don't require vision to "see" are unaffected by this spell.

Blood magic can be used to extend the spell's duration. By taking 1 permanent Damage Point, the magician may extend the duration of the Light spell to a year and a day. The magician cannot heal this damage until the spell expires or is dispelled.

Pauper's Purse

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 7
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 1 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Pauper's Purse spell makes a target object appear to contain less money than it actually does. The magician touches the purse, cash box, or other container holding the money, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the wearer's or the item's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a number of coins are temporarily transferred from the container or purse into an extra-dimensional pocket, invisible to those without any means of astral perception. The magician makes an Effect Test, transferring the result × 10 coins into the pocket. Those able to see into astral space can see the pocket if they make a successful Perception Test against the spell's Effect step. Even if the test

succeeds, however, the coins remain inaccessible until the spell expires or is dispelled.

Rope Guide

Threads: 0
Weaving Difficulty: NA / 7
Range: 25 yards
Duration: Rank + 3 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Rope Guide spell animates the movement of a piece of rope. The magician touches a piece of rope, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the rope's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the rope becomes animated. By concentrating, the magician can direct the rope to wriggle along the ground at a Movement rate of 10 yards per round.

The rope uses the spell's Effect step in place of its Dexterity step if it is required to tie itself off, or tie something else up. The rope cannot carry any additional weight while the magician is controlling its movement. A magician could direct the rope to tie itself around the bars of a window, but characters would still have to climb up the rope themselves; the rope provides no bonuses to the character's Climbing Tests.

True Blazing Fists of Rage

Threads: 0
Weaving Difficulty: NA / 16
Range: Touch
Duration: Rank + 4 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 2
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The True Blazing Fists of Rage spell looks and acts exactly like the Blazing Fists of Rage spell, but is slightly less powerful than its illusory twin. The True Blazing Fists of Rage spell engulfs the target's hands or feet in real flames that augment the damage he inflicts when making unarmed attacks. The magician touches the target's hands or feet and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target's hands (or feet, or other areas of his body used in combat) glow cherry-red, and a slowly fading after-image begins to trail behind his body.

The target's body audibly "hums" with power. When he strikes an opponent with an unarmed Attack Test, brilliant red sparks fly away from the area struck, accompanied by an explosive sound effect. The target makes an Effect Test in place of a Damage Test for any successful attacks he makes, using his own Willpower step. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Unseen Voices

Threads: 0
Weaving Difficulty: NA / 7
Range: 40 yards
Duration: Rank + 15 rounds
Effect: Creates a number of unseen illusory voices
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Unseen Voices spell creates the illusion of hidden voices to distract a target character. The magician mutters quietly to himself as he makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a number of illusory voices are created equal to the magician's Spellcasting rank. The Unseen Voices spell provides a nearly limitless number of different voices that the magician can use.

A magician need only use whatever voices he requires to achieve the desired effect; the voices do not sound like the magician unless he wants them to. By concentrating, the magician can control what each voice says; if the magician loses concentration, the voices will repeat whatever they said during the previous round. The magician does not gain any special ability to hear what is being said by the target character; he must be in a position to hear what the target is saying if he wants to mimic a conversation using the illusory voices.

Second Circle Spells

Blindness

Threads: 1
Weaving Difficulty: 8 / 14
Range: 25 yards
Duration: Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: Blinds the target, who suffers a Complete darkness penalty to his sight-based Action Tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Blindness spell obscures the target's vision, filling his eyes with an inky blackness that prevents him seeing. The magician closes one eye while weaving the spell thread, points at the target, blinks twice, and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target is "blinded" for the duration of the spell, suffering a Complete darkness penalty to his sight-based Action Tests (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 407).

Because the spell's effect is an illusion, the target may attempt to resist it by disbelieving it. The target may make a Disbelief Test to detect the spell's illusory nature as soon as it takes effect. A successful Sensing Test (which is a visual test, and therefore subject to the spell's "blindness" penalty) will also dispel the illusion. Target characters who don't require vision to "see" are unaffected by this spell.

Crafty Thought

Threads: 1
Weaving Difficulty: 6 / 14
Range: 2 yards
Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Crafty Thought spell plants a thought in the target character's mind, distracting or confusing him. The magician talks conversationally to the target while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician plants a simple visual image in the target character's mind. The thought may incorporate the effect of small gestures, such as those used to emphasize speech. The image cannot contain more than a single round worth of activity, and the area of the image "seen" can be no larger than the common room of a typical tavern, with no more than four characters acting out their parts in the image.

The target does not have to act on the thought, but the idea has now been planted. Each round, the magician can make the previous thought recur simply by deciding to do so; this is a Simple action for the magician. He can also modify the thought by concentrating, and making an Effect Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician can modify the original thought, but the setting must primarily remain the same. The original principal characters must also remain the same, but any of them can change their actions in the modified image. If the test fails, the spell expires.

If the spell fails, or otherwise expires early, the magician can attempt to cast it again against the same target character. Because of the conversational element involved during the casting of the spell, if the magician fails to weave the spell thread, or to cast the spell, the target may make a Sensing Test (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322); this is either an applicable Skill or Talent Test, or a Perception Test. If the test succeeds, the target knows the magician was trying to cast a spell upon him, and can no longer be affected by the Crafty Thought spell until at least 24 hours has passed.

Disaster

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 9 / 17
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank + 5 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Disaster spell creates the illusion of a disaster happening just beyond the range of normal sight. The magician glances casually around while weaving the spell thread, then stops and stares hard at a fixed point on the horizon, saying out loud something like "Oh, Passions, look over there!" or "What in the world can that be?" and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense of the target group, +1 for each additional target within the spell's range. If the test succeeds, the spell creates illusory evidence of a disaster of the magician's choosing: a plume of smoke rising from the roofs of a village, the sounds of people screaming, or some other minor, but distracting, effect.

The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is compared against the Social Defense of each target. If the test succeeds, the spell distracts the target by drawing his attention to the supposed disaster. This distraction is sufficient to allow the equivalent of a Blindsided attack against that character (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 407). The magician may affect a maximum number of target characters equal to his Spellcasting rank.

The Disaster spell cannot be cast inside small, enclosed environments, such as rooms with no windows. If used against a target engaged in combat, or some other equally distracting activity, the magician must achieve a Good result on his Effect Test for the spell to take effect against him.

Encrypt

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 11
Range: 20 yards **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

This spell is an illusion. The Encrypt spell makes a selected tract of text jumbled and unreadable. The magician runs his hands over the text, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the book or paper on which the text is written. The Spell Defense of a grimoire is equal to the Dispel Difficulty of the highest Circle spell contained in the grimoire (see **Grimoires** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 284). If the test succeeds, the text becomes incomprehensible to anyone other than the magician.

The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the Sensing Difficulty. A character attempting to read the encrypted text must make a successful Sensing Test (either a Perception or a Read and Write Magic Test). If the test succeeds, the character can read the encrypted text.

Ephemeral Bolt

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 9
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Ephemeral Bolt spell creates a wriggling, glowing green bolt that squirms its way through the air toward a target character. The magician wriggles his finger, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

If the target takes a Wound, his Knockdown Test is considered to be a Sensing Test (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322).

Impossible Knot

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 14
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 1 days
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: 6

This spell is an illusion. The Impossible Knot spell ties a knot that is incredibly difficult to undo. The magician weaves the spell threads while tying a knot in a rope or cord, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the knot cannot come loose and is extremely difficult to untie or break. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the spell's Sensing Difficulty. It also becomes the knot's Physical Armor against any attempts to cut or break it. Any test made to cut or untie the knot is considered to be a Sensing Test (untying the knot requires a Dexterity Test). The magician can cancel the spell at any time by touching the knot and willing the spell to end.

Innocent Activity

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 14
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 12 rounds
Effect: Covers up true activity
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Innocent Activity spell creates a flowing wave of color over a target character. The magician waves his hands about, as if painting on a large canvas, while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a colorful wave spreads forth from the magician's hands, coalescing into an image of the target performing an apparently innocent activity appropriate to the setting.

If the target moves from his current location, the illusion is broken. The target may otherwise perform any action, even

attacking an opponent if he is able, while under the effect of the spell. Any obviously inexplicable phenomena as a result of action on the part of the target, such as voices, spells, or attacks, allows those viewing or listening to make a Perception Test as a Sensing Test (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322). If the test succeeds, the sensing character sees through the illusion, and the spell expires. If the test fails, the sensing character concocts some other plausible explanation for what happened.

Monstrous Mantle

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 8 / 13
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 5 rounds
Effect: Increases the combat prowess of a target character
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Monstrous Mantle spell improves the combat prowess of a target character. The magician makes snarling and growling sounds, mimicking the attacks of a violent creature, while weaving the spell threads, then he touches the target character and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, twin helices of light form around the target, rotating around and spinning out into the form of a monstrous creature. While the spell is in effect, the target gains a +3 bonus to his Attack and Damage Tests and adds +3 to his Physical Defense. The target also adds +12 to his Death Rating—the first 12 Damage Points inflicted on him are subtracted from this pool, and do not count towards his Current Damage total.

The illusion does not give the recipient any of the creature's special attack forms or special abilities. For example, if the magician places an illusion of a giant crakbill onto a Swordmaster, the Swordmaster does not get the breath attack, nor can he make the running attack, of a crakbill. The illusion of the "breath attack" appears to those viewing it, but the only way the Swordmaster can actually inflict damage is to successfully strike an opponent with his sword; the "breath attack" does no damage at all, illusory or real.

This illusion is most effective if the magician has fought and suffered damage from being in a real combat with the creature depicted. If the magician has never taken damage from this type of beast, those characters interacting with the illusion gain a +3 bonus to their Sensing and Disbelief Tests; if the magician has never fought the creature at all, those interacting with the illusion gain a +3 bonus to their Sensing Tests. These bonuses are cumulative. Any Attack Tests made against the target character are also considered to be Sensing Tests.

Remove Shadow

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 14
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: Removes target's shadow and reflection
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Remove Shadow spell removes a target character's shadow. After weaving the spell thread, the magician touches the target and pulls away a fine veil of silky, gray material that seems to fold in on itself and vanish as the spell is cast. He then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target casts no shadow, even in strong light, and shows no reflection in mirrors or other reflective surfaces. While the spell is in effect, the target gains a +1 bonus to any Action Tests he makes to remain unseen or to hide; he also becomes immune to spells and powers that affect someone's shadow or reflection, such as the Shadow Tether spell (p. 365).

Unfortunately, those without shadows or reflections are often believed to be Horror-touched in many areas of the world.

Send Message

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 14
Range: Self (see text) **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: Passes a paper message to a chosen target
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Send Message spell creates a message which is transferred to a target character. The magician must be able to see the target to send the message to him. While weaving the spell thread, the magician makes tiny, rapid gestures in the air to represent writing the note's text, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, an illusory paper message is conjured in the target's hand, pocket, pouch, or elsewhere on his body (according to the magician's choice). The note may contain no more than a few short sentences, with a maximum number of words equal to the magician's Spellcasting rank × 10.

Tailor

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 7
Range: Touch **Duration**: 10 × Rank minutes
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Tailor spell alters the style, cut, and color of a target character's clothes, either improving or worsening his appearance. The magician clenches his teeth as if biting a thread while weaving the spell threads, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target's clothes change, taking on either a more fashionable and flattering cut, or appearing threadbare and bedraggled, as the magician desires.

When the target of the spell interacts with another person during the spell's duration, the magician makes an Effect Test against the other person's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the Attitude of the viewing character toward the target is moved one degree better or worse, as determined by the look chosen by the magician (see the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 90 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**).

True Ephemeral Bolt

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 8
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 3
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The True Ephemeral Bolt spell looks and acts exactly like the Ephemeral Bolt spell, but packs less punch than its illusory twin. Illusionists find this spell particularly useful against characters busy disbelieving every spell the magician casts. The magician wriggles his finger, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a wriggling, glowing, green bolt squirms through the air and hits the target. The magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Weather Cloak

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 9
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank × 10 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 3
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Weather Cloak spell creates a cloak that protects the target character from the elements. The magician holds his hands over his head while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a shimmering blue-silver cloak is woven around the target, protecting him from the elements. The target gains a +3 bonus to any Action Tests he makes to resist the effects of heat or cold caused by the weather.

The weather cloak can also provide protection against the effects of supernatural weather, such as the Death Rain spell. The magician makes an Effect Test against the higher of the creator's or the weather's Spell Defense. The Spell Defense of weather created by a spell or power is equal to the Dispel Difficulty of the spell or power. If the test succeeds, the character wearing the cloak is unaffected by the weather that round.

You Got Me

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 14
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank + 6 minutes
Effect: +6 bonus to Charisma-based Tests
Casting Difficulty: 6

This spell is an illusion. The You Got Me spell enhances the magician's ability to pass himself off as another person. It is similar in effect to the Best Face spell, but changes the magician's entire appearance. After weaving the spell thread, the magician makes a ripping motion, as if he was peeling a mask off his face or pulling the clothes from his body, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the illusion changes the magician's appearance (including clothing and equipment) and voice, as desired. The magician gains a +6 bonus to any Charisma-based Tests he makes when trying to convince others of his false identity or attempting to persuade them to act according to that misperception.

During the spell's duration, the magician may make another Spellcasting (6) Test to shift the illusion again; he may even create an illusion of his regular appearance. Magicians use this spell for everything from quick changes of clothes to appearing as their worst enemy while committing crimes. If the magician is mimicking an individual, he must have previously seen that individual on a prior occasion. The spell can change the magician's apparent size, making him as large as a troll or as small as a windling. Any Action Tests made against a magician sustaining this spell are considered to be Sensing Tests (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322).

Third Circle Spells

Alarm

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 8 / 17
Range: 50 yards **Duration**: Rank + 6 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Alarm spell alerts the magician to the presence of others. After weaving the spell thread, the magician points at the object or place on which he wants to place the alarm, then gives a slight shriek and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is compared against the Spell Defense of any living or sentient being passing within 3 yards of the alarm's position. If the test succeeds, the alarm goes off, shouting out a warning in a loud voice for a full minute; all those within earshot of the alarm hear it. The magician determines the warning shouted by the alarm, which may not exceed a number of words equal to his Spellcasting rank. The Alarm spell cannot be cast on living targets.

And Then I Woke Up

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 15
Range: Self **Duration**: 2 rounds
Effect: +8 bonus to Perception and True Sight Tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The And Then I Woke Up spell enhances the magician's ability to perceive the truth of things. The magician claps his hands together loudly while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against his own Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, he adds +8 to any Perception or True Sight Tests made to detect illusions or Illusionism magic during the remainder of the current and the following round.

Astral Sense Illusionism

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 5 / 15
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: Rank + 10 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: 6

This spell is not an illusion. The Astral Sense Illusionism spell allows the magician to sense the presence of people, creatures, magic doors, magic items, and so on, in astral space. See the **Wizardry Spells** chapter, p. 374, for a full description.

Blinding Glare

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 20
Range: 30 yards **Duration**: Varies (see text)
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Blinding Glare spell creates a blinding flash of light. The magician opens his eyes as wide as possible while weaving the spell thread, then shields his eyes, points to a target area within the spell's range and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among all targets within 3 yards of the flash-point, +1 for each additional target within the area of effect. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, comparing the result against the Perception step of each affected target. For each result level achieved, the target is blinded for 1 round. An Average result blinds the target for 1 round; a Good result for 2 rounds; an Excellent result for 3 rounds; an Extraordinary result blinds the target for 4 rounds. A blind target suffers a Complete darkness penalty to his sight-based Action Tests (see

Situation Modifiers in the **Combat** chapter, p. 407). Targets who do not require vision to "see" are unaffected by this spell.

Dampen Karma

Threads: 1
Weaving Difficulty: 8 / 17
Range: 60 yards
Duration: Rank + 6 rounds
Effect: –4 step penalty to target's Karma step
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Dampen Karma spell reduces a target character's ability to use Karma. The magician must spend a Karma Point on either his Thread Weaving or Spellcasting Test. The magician holds his open palm up in front of himself, then closes it and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target character suffers a –4 step penalty to his Karma step while the spell is in effect; the target's Karma step cannot be lowered below Step 1 by the Dampen Karma spell. Targets who do not have or use Karma are unaffected.

Detect Illusionism Magic

Threads: 2
Weaving Difficulty: 5 / 15
Range: 60 yards
Duration: Rank + 10 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: 6

This spell is not an illusion. The Detect Illusionism Magic spell allows the magician to detect Illusionism (only) magic. Magicians use this spell to detect the effects of Illusionism spells or the presence of magical illusory effects. The spell otherwise works in the same manner as the Astral Sense spell, but on the physical plane (see the **Wizardry Spells** chapter, p. 374).

Dispel Illusionism Magic

Threads: 1
Weaving Difficulty: 6 / 13
Range: 60 yards
Duration: 1 round
Effect: Willpower
Casting Difficulty: 6

This spell is not an illusion. The Dispel Illusionism Magic spell dispels Illusionism (only) spells. It otherwise works in the same way as the Dispel Magic spell (see the **Wizardry Spells** chapter, p. 375).

False Floor

Threads: 2
Weaving Difficulty: 7 / 17
Range: Touch
Duration: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: 6

This spell is an illusion. The False Floor spell creates the illusion of an obviously disguised fake floor, or another similar trap, in a normal section of floor, up to a maximum 6 yard by 6 yard area. The magician imagines the type of trap concealed by the floor while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the spell's Sensing Difficulty.

Characters encountering the False Floor illusion make a Perception Test as a Sensing Test (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322). If the test succeeds, the illusion is revealed. If the test fails, the character believes that something is wrong with the floor. The gamemaster indicates that a trap might be triggered if the character were to cross the floor section, with potentially disastrous results for the character. Regardless of the outcome of the Sensing Test, if a character crosses the illusory floor, nothing is triggered.

The False Floor spell may also be cast on wall sections or ceilings; its use is not limited only to floors.

Impossible Lock

Threads: 2
Weaving Difficulty: 7 / 15
Range: Touch
Duration: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: Willpower + 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

This spell is an illusion. The Impossible Lock spell makes a target lock more difficult to pick. The magician pantomimes failing to open the lock he is touching while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the lock's Spell Defense. This is usually 6—the minimum Casting Difficulty for creating an illusion—for non-magical locks, but may be higher for magical locks. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the spell's Sensing Difficulty. A character attempting to pick the lock makes a Lock Picking Test as a Sensing Test (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322). If the test fails, the lock refuses to open. If the test succeeds, the lock opens and the spell expires.

Mind Fog

Threads: 1
Weaving Difficulty: 8 / 15
Range: 60 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Mind Fog spell makes a target character forget what he was about to do. The magician scratches his temple as if trying to remember something while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target character can only react to actions taken against him, until he remembers what it is he wants to do.

The magician makes an Effect Test to determine how effective the masking effect of the spell is. The target character can make a Willpower Test against the Effect Test result each round. If the test succeeds, the target breaks free from the effect of the Mind Fog spell; the character recovers his wits, and can act normally again.

Nobody Here

Threads: 1
Weaving Difficulty: 10 / 18
Range: 10 yards
Duration: Rank + 8 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

This spell is an illusion. The Nobody Here spell hides characters who would normally be visible to others. The magician concentrates intensely on the thought of "nobody here" while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among any target characters (including himself), +1 for each additional target within a 10 yard radius of where he is standing. If the test succeeds, all of the target characters within the circle of effect become invisible to those outside the area who are able to view them. Once cast, the spell's effect does not move with the magician. Target characters who exit the area of effect lose the benefit of the spell, again becoming visible to others; they only regain their invisibility by moving back inside the circle. Once the Nobody Here spell has been cast, no additional characters may be affected by it.

The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the spell's Sensing Difficulty. A character who walks into the area of the illusion makes a Perception Test as a Sensing Test (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322). The viewing character adds a +3 bonus to his Perception Test if a concealed target manipulates the environment in a way that obviously requires explanation, such as moving books in plain sight, opening and shutting doors, and so on; the viewing character gains a +5 bonus to his Perception Test if a concealed target makes physical

contact with him. If the test succeeds, the illusion is revealed. If the test fails, the viewing character's sensory feedback is magically suppressed; his senses detect any characters that would normally be visible, but the knowledge is suppressed by the spell. If a concealed target causes damage to another character, the Nobody Here spell immediately expires. Once the duration expires, or the spell is sensed or disbelieved, the bamboozled character suddenly realizes what he had seen a few minutes earlier. Magicians often use this spell to tell off an overbearing employer, escaping before the realization hits their boss.

Phantom Warrior

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 15
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 rounds
Effect: Creates three images of the target
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Phantom Warrior spell forms three phantom images of the target character, making him more difficult to hit in combat. The magician moves his hands in slow, abstract movements while weaving the spell thread, then points at the intended target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, three identical images of the target appear. The images remain within 1 yard of the target at all times, occasionally overlapping with him as they move around. The images do not move in complete sync with the target; one image may swing a sword high, another swing low and the third thrust home, while the target adopts a defensive stance.

The images confuse opponents; the target adds +3 to his Physical Defense during the duration of the spell. Attacks made by the target are also more difficult for opponents to avoid or defend against; a –3 penalty is applied to any Avoid Blow, Riposte or other similarly defensive Action Tests made in response to the target's attack. These tests are considered Sensing Tests.

See the Unseen

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 15
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: +8 bonus to sight-based Perception Tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The See the Unseen spell allows a target character to better see hidden things. After weaving the spell thread, the magician lightly touches the target's eyes, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target gains a +8 bonus to his sight-based Perception Tests when attempting to detect hidden objects or characters. This spell does not enable the target to see things that normally cannot be seen, such as Horrors lurking in astral space, although it will help when combined with a talent or ability that allows such astral viewing.

Soothe the Savage Beast

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 15
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Hypnotizes a target animal into passivity
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Soothe the Savage Beast spell hypnotizes a target animal into passivity. This spell only works on animals; if it is cast against a Name-giver, undead, Horror, or Horror construct, it fails. The magician stretches out his hands, causing softly glowing tendrils of blue light to move in an intricate pattern between them as he weaves the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target becomes passive; it will not attack for any reason, including hunger or aggression.

On an Extraordinary result, the spell creates a weak rapport between magician and target, as the creature finds the effects of the spell pleasurable. The target animal follows the magician around for a number of hours equal to his Spellcasting rank, purring or making appropriately pleasurable animal sounds. If the hypnotized animal is struck or affected by a disorienting spell or talent, the spell's effect expires.

Suffocation

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 18
Range: 120 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

This spell is an illusion. The Suffocation spell suffocates one or more target characters. The magician holds his breath while weaving the spell threads, then exhales and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense, +1 for each additional character within 3 yards of the target. If the test succeeds, the target loses his breath and begins to suffocate. Each round, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

The spell continues to suffocate affected targets each round until disbelieved, the duration expires, or the character moves out of the spell's range. Target characters who are suffocating are considered Harried (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408), except when making Disbelief Tests against the Suffocation spell, and can only move a maximum distance equal to half of their Combat Movement rate each round.

Fourth Circle Spells

Aura

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 16
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 rounds
Effect: Makes target's aura visible
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Aura spell makes the target's astral aura physically visible as a glowing halo of colors and shapes surrounding his body. While weaving the spell thread, the magician opens his eyes as wide as possible, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target's aura turns visible, enabling any character with astral sensing abilities to glean information from the exposed aura without the Strain cost or danger of looking into astral space.

The brightly glowing aura also makes the target clearly visible in the dark, negating Darkness modifiers when engaging the target in combat (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 407).

Bleeding Edge

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 20
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: +5 bonus to melee weapon's Damage Tests, but only against the previous wielder
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

This spell is not an illusion. The Bleeding Edge spell causes a melee weapon to bleed in a manner that enhances its ability to inflict damage against its most recent wielder. If the target melee weapon has not been used to spill blood within the last 24 hours the spell fails.

The magician scratches his arm while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the weapon's Spell Defense or that of the wielder who last spilled blood with the

weapon. If the test succeeds, the weapon visibly bleeds along its edge or striking surface, the blood dripping to the ground. If the weapon is used against its previous wielder, the attacker gains a +5 bonus to his Damage Test.

Circle of Well Being

Threads: 3
Range: Touch
Effect: Willpower
Casting Difficulty: 6
Weaving Difficulty: 8 / 17
Duration: Rank × 10 minutes

This spell is not an illusion. The Circle of Well Being spell allows a magician to create an area within which those who repose feel cooled and refreshed. The magician walks the circumference of the circle of effect while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, a 3 yard diameter circle is created, the area within which glistens like ice on a lake. The air inside the circle is cool, but not uncomfortably so.

Those who spend at least 10 minutes resting within the Circle of Well Being can benefit from its refreshing influence. The magician makes an Effect Test against the Spell Defense of each character reposing within the circle (a separate test is made for each character). If the test succeeds, the target adds a bonus equal to the spell's Effect step to any Recovery Tests he makes while in the circle.

A character may benefit multiple times from the effect of this spell, as long as at least 1 hour passes between Recovery Tests (see **Recovering From Damage** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 402).

Clarion Call

Threads: 1
Range: 100 yards
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense
Weaving Difficulty: 8 / 17
Duration: Rank + 12 rounds

This spell is an illusion. The Clarion Call spell allows a magician to create an illusory voice that can persuade one or more target characters to do his will. The magician speaks quietly to himself while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target. The spell creates an illusory voice which carries considerable authority; the spell automatically translates the magician's words into a language (or languages) appropriate to the targets.

If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is compared against each target's Social Defense. On an Average or Good result, the target acts according to the voice's suggestions, as long as the action is not obviously harmful to himself or others; on an Excellent result, the target is fooled into taking the suggested course of action, even if it is obviously harmful to himself or someone else.

If convinced to follow a course of action that would hurt himself or others, the target makes a Disbelief (10) Test before he carries out the harmful action. This Disbelief Test does not use the target's Standard action. If the test succeeds, it destroys the influence of the suggestion on that character only (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322). The magician may affect a number of target characters equal to his Spellcasting rank.

Conceal Tracks

Threads: 2
Range: Touch
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense
Weaving Difficulty: 10 / 20
Duration: Rank hours

This spell is an illusion. The Conceal Tracks spell disguises the spoor of one or more target characters with Illusionism magic, confusing anyone making tracking attempts against the group. The magician brushes the ground around him while weaving the spell threads, then touches one of the targets and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target. If the test succeeds, the targets' tracks are magically concealed against attempts to follow them. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the Sensing Difficulty of the tracks.

Any Perception or Tracking Tests made to discover tracks concealed by this spell are considered Sensing Tests. The magician can affect a maximum number of targets equal to his Spellcasting rank.

Eyes Have It

Threads: 3
Range: 60 yards
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: 6; Target's Spell Defense (see text)
Weaving Difficulty: 7 / 17
Duration: Rank + 1 minutes

This spell is not an illusion. The Eyes Have It spell allows a magician to temporarily blind one or more target characters. The magician touches his eyelids with his fingers while weaving the spell threads, then touches his clothes and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, a number of pairs of stylized, mirror-like eyes equal to the magician's Spellcasting rank appear on the magician's clothing. Each round, the magician may concentrate his focus against a character, making a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician transforms one pair of the mirror eyes into a duplicate of the target character's eyes. The target's eyes become glazed, turning opaque white in color; he is blinded, and suffers a Complete darkness penalty to his sight-based Action Tests for the duration of the spell (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 407).

The magician makes an Effect Test to determine how effective the blinding is. Each round, the target character can make a Willpower Test against the Effect Test result. If the test succeeds, the character's "mirrored" eyes disappear from the magician's clothing and the target can see normally again.

Great Weapon

Threads: 1
Range: Touch
Effect: Causes the target to be Harried
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)
Weaving Difficulty: 13 / 20
Duration: Rank + 2 rounds

This spell is an illusion. The Great Weapon spell makes a sword or other Size 2 or larger melee weapon, appear bigger and more dangerous than it actually is. The magician makes threatening overtures while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the weapon or its wielder, whichever is higher. If the test succeeds, any opponent facing the weapon is considered Harried for the duration of the spell (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408).

Any Action Tests made in combat against the wielder or the weapon are considered to be Sensing Tests.

Hunger

Threads: 3
Range: Touch
Effect: Increases or diminishes hunger
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense
Weaving Difficulty: 10 / 17
Duration: Rank days

This spell is an illusion. The Hunger spell makes a target character feel or forget his hunger. While weaving the spell threads, the magician mimes either eating or vomiting, based on the desired effect, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the spell induces a strong feeling of hunger or nausea.

If the magician mimes eating, the target feels sudden, over-

whelming hunger pangs. The target suffers a –1 penalty to all of his Action Tests for the duration of the spell. This hunger makes the target irritable and easily distracted; he single-mindedly seeks food and continually eats, yet he still remains hungry while this spell is in effect. If the magician mimes vomiting, the target ceases feeling hungry, and does not feel hunger again until the spell expires or he successfully disbelieves the illusion. If the target eats while the spell is in effect, he becomes nauseous. If the target goes 3 days without food he grows weary and incurs a –1 penalty to all of his Action Tests. For each additional day without food, this penalty increases by –1. The gamemaster makes a Damage Test each day using the total number of days the target has gone without food as the Damage step. This damage never causes Wounds, regardless of the test result, and no armor protects against this damage.

While under the effect of this spell, any Action Tests made by the target related to eating or resisting hunger (such as Fatigue Tests) are considered to be Sensing Tests.

Improved Alarm

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 8 / 19
Range: 120 yards **Duration**: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. Similar to the Alarm spell, the Improved Alarm spell discreetly alerts a magician to the presence of others. After weaving the spell threads, the magician points at the object or place on which he wants to place the alarm, then whispers to himself and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is compared against the Spell Defense of any living or sentient being passing within 3 yards of the alarm's position. If the test succeeds, the alarm goes off. If the magician is within the spell's range, the alarm quietly notifies him that something is amiss; the magician then instructs the alarm to remain silent or to shout out a warning, alerting all those within earshot of the alarm.

The magician determines the warning given by the alarm, which may not exceed a number of words equal to his Spellcasting rank. The Improved Alarm spell cannot be cast on living targets.

Memory Blank

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 17
Range: 2 yards **Duration**: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Memory Blank spell temporarily suppresses a target character's memories. After weaving the spell threads, the magician looks at the target and says, "what was that?," then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the target's Willpower step. If this test succeeds, the target forgets the events of 1 minute for each result level achieved—an Average result causes the loss of one minute, a Good result the loss of two minutes, an Excellent result causes the target to forget three minutes, and an Extraordinary result causes the target to lose four minutes. This spell can affect a target even in the middle of a sentence or action, in which case the target likely forgets what he was doing and why. The spell's effects can be overcome with a successful Disbelief Test. When the spell expires, the target recalls everything that he forgot.

Blood magic can be used to extend the spell's duration. By taking 4 permanent Damage Points, the magician may extend the duration of the Memory Blank spell to a year and a day. The magician cannot heal this damage until the spell expires or the target makes a successful Disbelief Test.

Multi-Missile

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 8 / 17
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: +4 missiles
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

This spell is an illusion. The Multi-Missile spell allows a magician to add a number of illusory missiles to a target's character's missile attack. The magician mimics loading a missile weapon of the same type as the target character is wielding while weaving the spell threads, then touches the target's weapon and makes a Spellcasting Test against the wielder's or his weapon's Spell Defense, whichever is higher. If the test succeeds, four additional missiles of the type appropriate to the weapon are added to that fired by the target character. The target character makes an Attack Test as normal. If the real missile hits, so do all of the illusory missiles; if the real missile misses, so do all of the duplicates. Each of the four duplicate missiles inflicts Step 4 damage; roll separately for each missile after the damage from the real missile has been resolved. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

The defender can detect the illusion through the use of Avoid Blow, or other defensive talents and skills. Any use of these abilities acts as a Sensing Test (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322).

Nightmare of Foreboding

Threads: 5 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 17
Range: 20 yards **Duration**: Rank days
Effect: -6 to target's Wound Threshold
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Nightmare of Foreboding spell dramatically weakens a victim through the sending of sinister dreams. The magician must be able to see the target character, who must also be asleep while the spell is being cast. He faces the target and throws sand and soot into the air while weaving the spell threads, then draws an "X" in the falling debris and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target experiences a terrifying nightmare of helplessness and weakness in the face of danger. When the target wakes, subtract –6 from his Wound Threshold, to a minimum of 1, for the spell's duration.

This spell is most often used as a death threat, or to cause convenient "accidents." Rumor has it that the spell was first created and used by members of the Hand of Corruption, and those who use it are often suspected of working with the group.

Stop Right There

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 9
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: Willpower + 3
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Stop Right There spell immobilizes a target character. The magician holds up a hand, shouting "Stop!" as loudly as possible, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target's feet become frozen in place; he cannot move from where the spell is anchoring him, but otherwise may act normally. The target is considered Harried while he remains frozen in place (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408). The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which determines the difficulty of breaking free of the spell's effect. Each round, the target makes a Willpower Test against the Effect Test result. This test is a Simple action for the target. If the test succeeds, the target breaks free of the spell, which immediately expires. A target character who takes damage while under the effect of the Stop Right There spell gains a +5 bonus to his Willpower Tests to end the spell.

Unmask

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 20
Range: 20 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Unmask spell reveals the target's true physical appearance to anyone watching. After weaving the spell thread, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the highest Dispel Difficulty of any power, spell or talent being used to conceal the target's appearance. If this test succeeds, the effects of those enchantments are suspended and the target's actual appearance is revealed. The Unmask spell does not dispel the spells or effects; it merely makes them temporarily ineffective.

Fifth Circle Spells

Awaken

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 18
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Awaken spell awakens an unconscious character. While weaving the spell threads, the magician claps his hands together three times, lightly touches the target, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the Dispel Difficulty of any spell or magical ability keeping the target unconscious, asleep, drugged or otherwise unaware, or against the step number of the poison or drug if the subject is unconscious from non-magical causes. If the test succeeds, the target immediately regains consciousness.

If an unconscious target has taken damage exceeding his Unconsciousness Rating, the Awaken spell allows him to make a Recovery Test with a +6 bonus; if he has no Recovery Tests available, he makes a Step 6 bonus Recovery Test instead. Regardless of the outcome of the Recovery Test, the target recovers sufficient Damage Points to regain consciousness—if the Recovery Test result does not restore him to consciousness, his current Damage Point total is reduced to 1 point below his Unconsciousness Rating (see **Effects of Injury** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 402).

Bond of Silence

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 18
Range: 20 yards **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Bond of Silence spell prevents the target from speaking directly about a single, specific topic, event or individual (though he can still hint indirectly at it). The magician holds his breath while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the Difficulty Number to resist the effect.

When the target character attempts to speak about the forbidden topic, he makes a Willpower Test against that Difficulty Number. If the test succeeds, the spell expires and he can speak normally and freely. If the test fails, his voice falters and he is unable to talk until he changes the subject to one he can speak freely about.

Clothing Gone

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 21
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: 5 rounds
Effect: Causes the target to become Harried
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Clothing Gone spell causes the target to believe that his clothes and armor have been completely destroyed, leaving him naked and vulnerable. The magician takes off one or more small items of his own clothing while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target is so distracted (and perhaps also embarrassed) that he is considered Harried for the duration of the spell (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408). Any Action Test the target makes while under the effect of the Clothing Gone spell is considered to be a Sensing Test (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322).

Enter and Exit

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 21
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: Shows quickest entrance and exit
Casting Difficulty: 6

This spell is not an illusion. The Enter and Exit spell shows the quickest way into and out of a location. While weaving the spell threads, the magician looks about him, first to the left, then to the right, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the magician unerringly finds the most direct route into or out of the target location within the spell's range. The route revealed is always one that the magician can traverse (in the gamemaster's judgment), though it may not always be the easiest. The spell does not reveal the locations of traps or guards, nor does it provide passwords or other means of entry or exit, but if a route that avoids those things exists, the spell shows it.

The Enter and Exit spell also reveals hidden passages that the magician might not otherwise have noticed. The magician compares the Spellcasting Test result against the Detection Difficulty for finding the passage. If the test succeeds, the passage is revealed to him.

Eye of Truth

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 18
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: +10 bonus to Disbelief Tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Eye of Truth spell allows a magician to see beyond the veil of illusion with near-absolute clarity. The magician rubs clean, clear water over his eyes while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against his own Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician gains a +10 bonus to any Disbelief Tests that he makes against illusions for the duration of the spell; this bonus does not apply to any Sensing Tests the magician makes, however.

Flesh Eater

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 14 / 21
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 5 rounds
Effect: Causes target to be Harried
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Flesh Eater spell makes a target character's flesh look as if it is rotting and failing off his body. The magician shakes his head while weaving the spell thread, then scratches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target goes into a state of mild shock as he sees his flesh crawling with maggots and rot-

ting away before his eyes. The target is considered Harried for the duration of the spell (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408); this also affects his Social Defense.

Any Action Tests the target makes while the spell is in effect act as Sensing Tests (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322).

Flying Carpet

Threads: 3
Range: Touch
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: 7
Weaving Difficulty: 10 / 18
Duration: Rank + 1 hours

This spell is not an illusion. The Flying Carpet spell enchants a carpet or other piece of cloth, no bigger than 3 yards by 3 yards in size, to become a flying platform. The magician vigorously shakes the carpet or cloth while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting (7) Test. If the test succeeds, the material animates, floating several inches above the ground. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which determines the carpet's Strength value and, in turn, the weight it can carry. A carpet carrying more than its Carrying Capacity allows cannot fly (see **Determine Characteristics**, p. 45, and **Encumbrance**, p. 48, in the **Creating Characters** chapter).

The magician can verbally control the carpet, requiring him to concentrate. He may also turn over command of the carpet to another character, who may verbally command the carpet in the same way. The magician may regain control of the carpet at any time with a successful Spellcasting (7) Test. The carpet is not very intelligent and can be easily confused, so commands issued to it must be simple, limited to one or two words at best. The carpet normally flies a few inches above the ground, but can rise as high as 300 yards above the ground if commanded to do so, rising 1 yard vertically for every 3 yards of horizontal movement.

The magician may use blood magic to extend the duration of the spell. By taking 2 permanent Damage Points, the carpet remains animated for a year and a day. This damage cannot be healed until the spell expires, is dispelled, or the carpet is destroyed.

Those riding on the flying carpet do not benefit from its Physical Armor. If the carpet takes damage in excess of its Death Rating, or when the spell's duration expires, it immediately reverts to its normal form.

The flying carpet has the following statistics:

Flying Carpet

DEX: Magician **STR**: Effect Test* **TOU**: 4
PER: 5 **WIL**: 4 **CHA**: 4

* The Effect Test result determines the Strength value, which in turn determines the carpet's Strength step.

Initiative: Magician
Number of Actions: 1
Attack: NA
Damage: NA
Physical Defense: Magician
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: Immune
Physical Armor: 4
Mystic Armor: 0

Death Rating: 30
Wound Threshold: NA
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune
Recovery Tests: NA
Knockdown: Immune

Combat Movement: 46+
Full Movement: 92+

\+ This value is the carpet's flying Movement rate.

Powers: None

Legend Points: 25

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Illusion

Threads: 2
Range: 30 yards
Effect: Creates illusions
Casting Difficulty: 6
Weaving Difficulty: 11 / 21
Duration: Rank + 5 minutes

This spell is an illusion. The Illusion spell allows a magician to create illusory effects of his own design. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the magician creates an illusion, filling an area up to 30 square yards in size. Illusions created with this spell must be simple, and so cannot include Name-givers or other complex images. For example, an illusory door could swing a few inches but not open or close entirely. An illusory banner might wave in the breeze but could not be removed.

The magician can maintain the illusion beyond the spell's initial duration by making an additional Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the illusion remains in effect for another period of time equal to the spell's duration. A magician may sustain the duration of an illusion a maximum number of times equal to his Spellcasting rank. If any subsequent Spellcasting Test fails, the spell ends and the illusion disappears.

A character who interacts with an illusion makes a Sensing Test using an ability appropriate to the action. For example, a character opening an illusory door would make a Dexterity Test, the result of which also serves as the Sensing Test result.

Improve Karma

Threads: 3
Range: Touch
Effect: +5 step bonus to target's Karma step
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)
Weaving Difficulty: 8 / 18
Duration: Rank + 6 rounds

This spell is not an illusion. The Improve Karma spell improves a target character's ability to use Karma. The magician must spend a Karma Point on his Spellcasting Test. While weaving the spell threads, the magician holds his closed hand in front of himself, then opens it palm up and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target gains a +5 step bonus to his Karma step while the spell is in effect. If the target cannot use Karma, the spell has no effect.

Noble Manner

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 10
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: +5 bonus to target's Interaction Tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Noble Manner spell makes a target character appear to be of a higher social status than he actually is. The magician adopts a haughty expression, slowly softening it to a smile, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target gains a +5 bonus to any Interaction Tests he makes during the spell's duration, as long as he acts as if he were from a superior social station.

The target may act arrogant, gracious, friendly, condescending, or whatever, but he must behave as if he is from a social class a cut above the listener's station or any Interaction Tests made against him count as Sensing Tests.

Phantom Fireball

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 21
Range: 100 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Phantom Fireball spell creates a magical ball of flame similar to that produced by the Fireball spell, though this fireball is illusory. After weaving the spell thread, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target within 10 yards of the point of impact. A small globe of fire erupts from the magician's hand, moving quickly to the designated point of impact within the spell's range. If the test succeeds, the globe quickly expands to the size of a beach ball then suddenly explodes in an intense gout of flame.

The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which determines how much damage is inflicted on each target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage. If any target suffers a Wound, his Knockdown Test acts as a Sensing Test.

Pleasant Visions

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 9 / 18
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Creates visions that prevent targets from acting
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

This spell is an illusion. The Pleasant Visions spell distracts one or more target characters with pleasant thoughts and fantasies. The magician remembers a pleasant scene or experience while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target. If the test succeeds, the targets' heads are filled with pleasant thoughts and sensations. They will not take any actions, other than Disbelief Tests, until the visions are dispelled or they take damage from another character.

A target character who suffers damage while under the effect of this spell makes a Willpower Test as a Sensing Test with a +5 bonus (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322). The magician can target a maximum number of characters equal to his Spellcasting rank.

Switch

Threads: 5 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 18
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: Switches magician's appearance with that of a target
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Switch spell allows a magician to switch his own appearance with that of a target character. The target cannot voluntarily lower his Spell Defense for this spell. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician now appears to be the target character, and vice-versa. This spell is easier to cast on a willing target. If the target is unwilling, the magician requires a Good result with his Spellcasting Test for the spell to take effect.

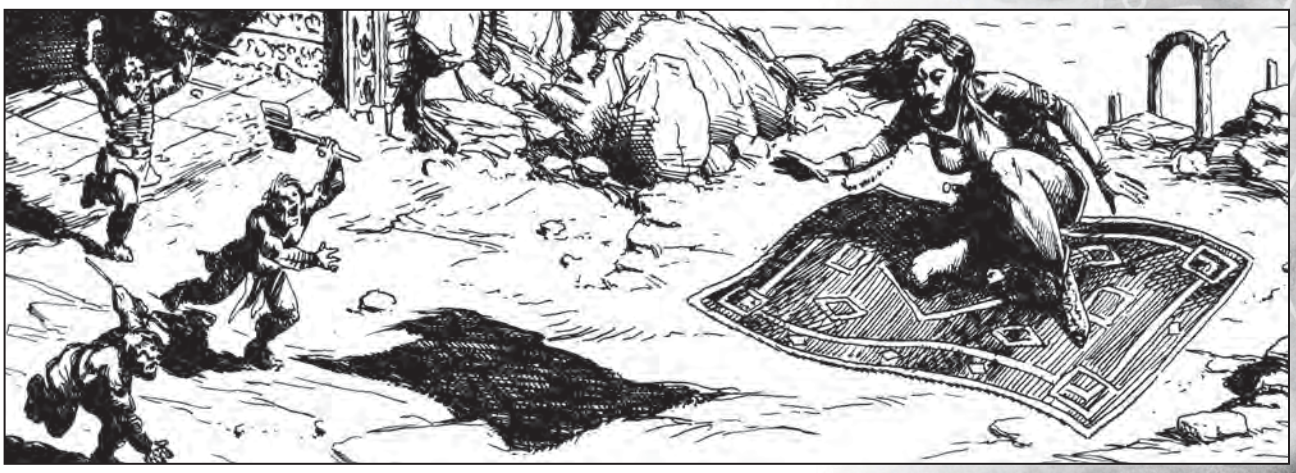
Most magicians use the Switch spell to lose pursuers in crowded areas, such as marketplaces or bazaars. Any type of Action Test made against the target or the magician while the spell is in effect is considered to be a Sensing Test (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322).

Wall of Unfire

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 15
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: 6 (see text)

This spell is an illusion. The Wall of Unfire spell creates a wall of illusory fire. The magician makes crackling, hissing noises like a roaring fire while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, a 3 yard by 3 yard by 1 yard thick wall of flame appears within the spell's range. If a character attempts to pass through the wall, the magician compares his Spellcasting Test result against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

If the target character takes a Wound, his Knockdown Test counts as a Sensing Test (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322).



Sixth Circle Spells

Astral Shadow

Threads: 2
Range: Touch
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense
Weaving Difficulty: 12 / 17
Duration: Rank + 3 minutes

This spell is not an illusion. The Astral Shadow spell makes the target character more difficult to see in astral space. The magician ties a silk veil over the target's face while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the Detection Difficulty for locating the target using astral sensing abilities, such as windling Astral-Sensitive Sight, the Astral Sight talent, or the Astral Sense spell.

Apart from obscuring his presence in astral space, the Astral Shadow spell does not affect the target in any other way, and does not provide any protection against spells or Horror powers, such as Horror Mark. The Astral Shadow spell can be only cast on living beings in the physical world; it does not affect spirits.

Bouncing Blaster

Threads: 4
Range: Touch
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: 6 (see text)
Weaving Difficulty: 9 / 20
Duration: Rank + 3 days

This spell is not an illusion. The Bouncing Blaster spell "seeds" an area of earth with magical mines, creating a minefield through which characters may pass at their peril. The magician makes motions with his hands, as if he were throwing seeds onto a field, while weaving the spell threads, then touches the ground and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, an area of ground up to 30 yards by 30 yards in size is seeded with magical blasters. The magician can plant a maximum number of blasters equal to his Spellcasting rank and determines exactly where within the minefield each mine is planted. A given area may only be seeded by one Bouncing Blaster spell at a time.

The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of any character who walks within 2 yards of a blaster. If the test succeeds, the blaster shoots 3 yards into the air, trailing fiery orange sparks behind it as it goes, then explodes. The magician compares the Spellcasting Test result against the Spell Defense of any characters within a 6 yard radius of the blaster's launch point, including the character who triggered the mine. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

Chosen Path

Threads: 3
Range: 60 yards
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: 6
Weaving Difficulty: 10 / 18
Duration: Rank + 3 hours

This spell is not an illusion. The Chosen Path spell makes one or more target characters follow a path of the magician's choosing when they are presented with a choice of which way to go. The magician considers a path (a set of doors, a branch in the road, and so on) visible to him while weaving the spell threads, then indicates his choice and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test.

If the Spellcasting Test succeeds, when others are faced with a choice of direction at the same point as the spell was cast, the magician makes an Effect Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the Effect Test succeeds, the target group may believe they have chosen otherwise, but in reality they select the path determined by the magician when the spell was cast. The deception will become apparent once they are out of the spell's range or the spell's duration ends. Should the target group decide to backtrack and take the correct path from the same point, the spell remains in effect, and the magician makes a new Effect Test to see if they are again diverted down the wrong path.

A magician stands at a three-way intersection. He chooses left, then casts the spell. A few hours later a group of seven merchants walks by. The magician has an Effect Step of 18, and makes a test against a Difficulty Number of 14 (highest Spell Defense of 8, +6 for the additional merchants). He rolls a 21. The merchants try to take a right turn, but the spell makes them turn left, even though they all believe they have taken the right-hand turn. Once they are more than 60 yards from the intersection, they notice that they are not heading in their intended direction. They backtrack to the intersection and try again. The magician makes another Effect Test, and unfortunately rolls a 12. The spell fails to divert the merchants, and they proceed down the right-hand corridor.

Dancing Disks

Threads: 3
Range: 75 yards
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)
Weaving Difficulty: 7 / 19
Duration: Rank + 7 rounds

This spell is not an illusion. The Dancing Disks spell creates spinning disks under the feet of one or more target characters. The magician spins around in increasingly tight circles while weaving the spell threads, then suddenly stops and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense of the target group, +1 for each additional target within the spell's range. If the test succeeds, several glowing violet or green disks appear under the target's feet. The magician can affect a maximum number of target characters equal to his Spellcasting rank.

The magician makes an Effect Test for each target character. Any time the result of an Action Test made by the target is less than the Effect Test result, the disks spin the character around 180 degrees. The Dancing Disks spell gives those characters unaffected by it wonderful opportunities for making Blindsided attacks (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 407).

Foreseeing

Threads: 2 (ritual; see text)
Range: Self
Effect: Willpower + 3
Casting Difficulty: 9
Weaving Difficulty: 12 / 22
Duration: 1 round

This spell is not an illusion. The Foreseeing spell allows a magician to read the future in cryptic visions. To cast this ritual spell, the magician requires a suitable divination tool, such as a deck of elven path cards, bones, dice or the like. Weaving each spell thread requires 1 hour of meditation, which requires the magician's concentration. Once the magician has woven all of the spell threads, he makes a Spellcasting (9) Test. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster, based on the information he is seeking. If this test succeeds, the result is the number of days in the future that the magician can foresee. If the magician wishes to foresee the fate of a particular target, compare the Effect Test result against the target's Spell Defense. The result level achieved indicates the clarity of the vision provided by the spell.

Foreseeing should almost always provide information couched in symbols, strange visions and riddles that the magician must decipher. The gamemaster should use the information provided

by this spell as a source of adventure hooks and a means to drive the plot of an adventure forward, rather than allowing it to easily solve any problem the magician may face.

Illusory Missiles

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 15
Range: 120 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 11
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Illusory Missiles spell creates the illusion of a barrage of missiles, which he directs against one or more target characters. After weaving the spell threads, the magician throws his arm as if pitching a baseball, then makes a Spellcasting Test, the result of which is compared against the highest Spell Defense of any target characters in a 3 yard radius circle of effect within the spell's range, +1 for each additional target. A hail of illusory missiles saturates the area in which the targets are standing. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Any Knockdown, Avoid Blow, or other defensive Action Test the target makes is considered to be a Sensing Test, allowing the character to realize the attack is an illusion (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322).

Memory Scribe

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 19
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Memory Scribe spell alters a target character's memory, making him recall things differently from the way they actually happened. After weaving the spell threads, the magician touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the target's Willpower step. Each result level achieved allows the magician to change one fact that the target remembers about a particular topic or event. On an Average result, 1 fact remembered by the target is altered; on a Good result, 2 facts are altered; on an Excellent result, 3 facts are altered; on an Extraordinary result, 4 facts remembered by the target are altered. The effects of the spell can be overcome with a successful Disbelief Test. In addition, the target can make a Perception Test as a Sensing Test each time he "recalls" the false memory. If this test succeeds, or when the spell duration ends, the target's memory returns to normal.

Blood magic can be used to extend the spell's duration. By taking 3 permanent Damage Points, the magician may extend the duration of the Memory Scribe spell to a year and a day. The magician cannot heal this damage until the spell expires or the target makes a successful Sensing or Disbelief Test (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322).

Spotlight

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 20
Range: 100 yards **Duration**: Rank + 7 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

This spell is not an illusion. The Spotlight spell creates spotlights that illuminate one or more target characters. The magician clicks his fingers while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character in a 6 yard radius circle of effect. If the test succeeds, a spotlight is created for each character in the circle, to a maximum number of lights equal to the magician's Spellcasting rank. If there are more characters in the circle than there are spotlights, those characters with lower Spell Defense ratings are illuminated first.

Each spotlight sits about 1 yard above the target's head, brightly illuminating him. If a target character tries to evade an attack or use stealth to avoid detection, the magician makes an Effect Test against the result of the target's test. If the test succeeds, the target's attempt to evade or use stealth fails, even if he would normally have succeeded with his Action Test. If the test fails, the target manages to avoid the spotlight following him around, and the light promptly goes out.

A spotlight will remain with a target until he successfully avoids it, he moves out of the spell's range, or the duration expires.

Stench

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 22
Range: 40 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Stench spell creates a horrible smell, causing those subjected to it to uncontrollably retch and puke. While weaving the spell threads, the magician crushes several blossoms from a stinkweed or similarly pungent plant, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense of any character within a 3 yard by 3 yard area of the target, +1 for each additional target. If the test succeeds, a hideous odor arises that renders everyone in the spell's area of effect unable to do anything except try to hang on to their last meal.

The magician makes an Effect Test. A character affected by the stench must make a successful Willpower Test against the Effect Test result to take any action, including movement. If the test succeeds, the character can act normally, but is still affected by the smell while he remains within the area of effect. If the test fails, he can do nothing except vomit; the target is considered Knocked Down (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 409). Any Willpower Tests made are considered to be Sensing Tests (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322).

Seventh Circle Spells

Dream Sight

Threads: 3 (ritual; see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 23
Range: 1 mile **Duration**: Rank + 8 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Dream Sight ritual spell allows a magician to eavesdrop on a target character's dreams. The target must be asleep in a location known to the magician when the spell is cast, or it fails. The magician must also possess something personal that belongs to the target; the object does not need to be a pattern item, just something that the target has used or worn recently. The magician weaves one spell thread each hour, sprinkling a little fine dust over the object as he does so. After weaving all of the spell threads, the magician picks up the object and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the target's Willpower step. If the Effect Test succeeds, the magician can view the subject's dreams for the duration of the spell.

The magician cannot interact with the target's dreams; he can only see them played out. A Name-giver's dreams might give insights into his hidden traits, secrets, hopes or fears that the magician can use at a later time. The gamemaster determines

what the magician sees, and what useful information is imparted with the viewing.

Drunken Stagger

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 20
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 5 days
Effect: Penalizes the target's Action Tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Drunken Stagger spell infuses a target character with magical energy that makes him inebriated, causing him to stagger around drunkenly for days. The magician drinks water or ale while weaving the spell threads, directs a slurred comment at the character, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target becomes instantly inebriated, incurring a penalty to all of his Action Tests for the spell's duration. On an Average result the target suffers a –1 penalty to his Action Tests; on a Good result he suffers a –2 penalty; on an Excellent result he suffers a –3 penalty; on an Extraordinary result the target suffers a –4 penalty to his Action Tests.

False Enchantment

Threads: 5 **Weaving Difficulty**: 8 / 20
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 7 days
Effect: Gives an item fake magical abilities; +5 to the illusion's Disbelief Difficulty
Casting Difficulty: 6 (see text)

This spell is an illusion. The False Enchantment spell imbues an item with an illusory magical power. The magician casting the spell cannot activate this power, but other magicians can detect it and be deceived. While weaving the spell thread, the magician imagines the fabulous properties he wishes the object to have, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the magician may choose a new Spell Defense for the item, to a maximum rating equal to the Spellcasting Test result. The item's Spell Defense is used as the Difficulty Number for magically obtaining information about it.

> *Magaja casts False Enchantment on a broadsword. She gets an 11 on her Spellcasting Test, and chooses to give the sword a Spell Defense of 8. If a Weaponsmith were to use his Weapon History talent on the sword, he would require a successful Weapon History (8) Test to gain the (false) information about the sword.*

If magical investigation succeeds against the item's Spell Defense, the investigator obtains the false information planted by the magician. The false enchantment makes it more difficult than normal to determine the veracity of the spell. The magician adds +5 to the illusion's Disbelief Difficulty. The enchanted item's Spell Defense and false Key Knowledges should be recorded at the time of casting, along with the Disbelief Difficulty of the enchantment. Tests made to magically examine the item are considered Sensing Tests (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322).

Blood magic can be used to extend the spell's duration. By taking 2 permanent Damage Points, the magician keeps the False Enchantment spell in place on the item for a year and a day. This damage cannot be healed until the spell expires or is dispelled.

Rebel Limb

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 16 / 18
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: Rank + 10 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Rebel Limb spell allows a magician to gain control over a target's limb. The magician grabs one of his own limbs and shakes it around while weaving the spell thread, then points it at the target character and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician takes over his choice of one of the target's limbs. The magician controls the movement of the limb as long as the target is within the spell's range. The limb acts with any applicable physical talents or skills possessed by the owner, i.e., an arm can attack, a leg can kick, etc.

The magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much control he has over the target's limb. Each round, the target character may try to regain control by making a successful Disbelief Test against the Effect Test result. If the limb is attacking its owner, the owner gains a +3 bonus to his Willpower Test to regain control.

Reversal of Passion

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 20
Range: 30 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Reversal of Passion spell reverses a target character's emotions. The magician mimics the target's facial expressions while weaving the spell threads, then abruptly changes his expression to the opposite of what he is displaying and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target's emotions are reversed, so that he feels the opposite of whatever he was feeling when the spell took effect; hate becomes love, greed becomes generosity, and so on. The target acts in accordance with the new emotion during the spell's duration. The magician makes an Effect Test. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the Effect Test result. If the test succeeds, he regains control of his emotions and the spell expires.

If the target is a questor, he may add his Questor rank as a bonus to his Willpower Tests to resist the inversion of emotion caused by this spell (see the **Passions and Questors** chapter, p. 469, for more information on questors).

Silent Stampede

Threads: 6 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 20
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: Silences sound
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Silent Stampede spell silences the sounds made by a group of characters or animals, including movement, talking, breathing, horse whinnying, and so on. While weaving the spell threads, the magician wanders around the group touching each person and animal affected by the spell, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target. If the test succeeds, any sounds made by the group are suppressed by the spell. All members of the group gain a +4 bonus to any stealth-based Action Tests they make during the spell's duration. They also add +4 to the Detection Difficulty of any hearing-based Perception Tests made to detect any members of the group. The magician may affect a maximum number of characters and animals equal to his Spellcasting rank × 3.

This spell does not conceal the group from sight, smell or touch-based Perception Tests. Any Action Test that could reveal the group's existence is considered to be a Sensing Test. If more characters join the group after the spell is cast, they give any listeners a Perception Test as a Sensing Test to penetrate the illusion; their movement is not muffled by the spell's effect.

Stampede

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 17
Range: 120 yards **Duration**: Rank + 1 rounds
Effect: Causes target characters to become Harried
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Stampede spell creates an illusion of a stampede descending on the target characters. The magician stamps and snorts while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target. If the test succeeds, the target characters believe that a stampede is about to hit them. They are considered Harried for the duration of the spell (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408).

Use of this spell in an area where a stampede would normally be impossible (indoors, on an airship, and so on) enables those affected to make an automatic Disbelief Test. The magician may affect a maximum number of characters equal to his Spellcasting rank.

Time Flies

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 23
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: Willpower + 3
Casting Difficulty: 6

This spell is an illusion. The Time Flies spell alters one or more characters' perception of time, slowing it down or speeding it up. The magician needs a candle, torch or lantern to which he weaves the spell's threads. After weaving the spell threads, the magician lights the candle or torch, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is compared against the Spell Defense of each character currently within, or entering, a 60 yard radius of the light source. If this test succeeds, the spell alters the temporal perception (perception of time) of the character; time seems to pass faster or slower within the area of effect than outside it.

The magician specifies whether time slows down or speeds up at the time of casting, as well as the degree to which it does (up to a factor of 10 times). For example, the magician can cause a target to believe that 10 hours have passed for every hour of real time, or only 1 hour has passed when 10 hours have actually gone by.

The Time Flies spell changes only the target's perceptions—it has no effect on the duration of other spells and talents, or on Recovery Tests. If an affected target notices that these durations seem different or unusual, he may make a Perception Test as a Sensing Test to detect the illusion (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322).

Twisted Tongues

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 14 / 18
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Jumbles targets' speech
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

This spell is an illusion. The Twisted Tongues spell so jumbles a target's speech that no one can understand what he's saying. While weaving the spell thread, the magician mutters nonsense syllables, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target. If the test succeeds, the targets' words are reduced to nonsense, for example, "Kill them all!" translates to "Slig covo bebop buttery!"

No one can understand what the character or characters are saying until the spell expires or is dispelled. The magician may affect a maximum number of characters equal to his Spellcasting rank.

Vertigo

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 16
Range: 75 yards **Duration**: Rank + 7 rounds
Effect: Suffers a –6 penalty to target's Action tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Vertigo spell totally disorients a target character. While weaving the threads, the magician spins around in a tight circle, making himself slightly dizzy in the process, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target can no longer tell which way is up or which is down, becoming severely disoriented as a result. During the spell's duration, the character suffers a –6 penalty to his Action tests.

Walk Through

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 17
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 6 rounds
Effect: Creates a temporary pathway through an obstacle
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. Mastered by Illusionists during their experiments with unreality, the Walk Through spell creates a temporary pathway through a wall, gate, or other obstacle no more than 2 yards thick. After weaving the spell thread, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the obstacle's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, an opening is created, although not a very stable one. It writhes, expands, and contracts at random moments.

The result level determines how big an opening is created. On an Average result, one character can try to wriggle through each round, requiring a successful Dexterity (7) Test to do so; a Good result allows one character to move easily through the gap each round; an Excellent result allows a number of characters equal to the magician's Spellcasting rank to move easily through the opening each round.

Eighth Circle Spells

Astral Nightmare

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 21
Range: 25 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Astral Nightmare spell deceives the target character into believing he has been sent to the astral plane. While weaving the spell threads, the magician conjures up memories or imaginings of astral space, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target believes he has been transported to astral space.

The magician is in control of the illusion, but this requires his concentration; if the magician stops concentrating, the spell expires and the illusion fades away. Action Tests for any effects or creatures that the magician conjures up are made using the spell's Effect step; the magician may voluntarily lower the Effect step to simulate low-power Action Tests, such as those made by minor effects or small creatures.

Any damage inflicted on the target through use of this spell allows him a Perception Test as a Sensing Test (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322). Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

Dreamsend

Threads: 3 (ritual; see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 24
Range: 1 mile **Duration**: Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Dreamsend spell allows a magician to interact with the dreams of a target character. The target must be asleep in a location known to the magician when the spell is cast, or it fails. The magician must also possess something personal that belongs to the target; the object does not need to be a pattern item, just something that the target has used or worn recently. The magician weaves one spell thread each hour, sprinkling a little fine dust over the object as he does so. After weaving all of the spell threads, the magician picks up the object and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the subject's Willpower step. If the test succeeds, the magician can create dreams for the subject while the spell is in effect.

The dreams created cause different effects. If they are used to soothe and relax a subject, the target receives a number of additional Recovery Tests based on the Effect Test's result level: an Average result gives the target 1 bonus Recovery Test; a Good result gives 2 Recovery Tests; an Excellent result gives 3 Recovery Tests; an Extraordinary result gives the target 4 bonus Recovery Tests. These bonus tests are added to the number of Recovery Tests the target would normally receive after a night's sleep and must be used within 24 hours of the spell's expiration. If the spell is used to frighten a subject, the target loses Recovery Tests, based on the Effect Test's result level as described above.

When the spell is cast, the target makes a Perception Test as a Sensing Test (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322). If the test succeeds, the target immediately wakes up and the spell has no effect. The Dreamsend spell can only be used once against a particular character each day.

Form Exchange

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 21
Range: 25 yards **Duration**: Rank + 7 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Form Exchange spell swaps the location and the appearance of the magician and a target character. While weaving the spell threads, the magician looks intently at the target, noting his appearance and position, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the target's highest Attribute step. If the test succeeds, the magician exchanges form with the target.

The magician, looking like the target character, now stands where the target originally stood; the target character now occupies the magician's position and looks like him.

Illusory Spell

Threads: 2+ (see text)
Weaving Difficulty: 14+ / 24 (see text)
Range: 120 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 12 (or less; see text)
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Illusory Spell allows a magician to imitate the effects of attack spells cast by other magicians. To mimic a spell, the magician must have seen it cast and used the Memorize Image talent to memorize the effects (see the **Talents** chapter, p. 192). The magician makes a Memorize Image Test against the Dispel Difficulty of the spell he intends to mimic. If the test succeeds, he commits the elements of the spell to memory; each spell memorized counts as an image toward the maximum number of images the magician can remember. Only spells of Eighth Circle or lower can be duplicated by this spell. No rituals of any Circle can be duplicated.

The illusory version of a spell uses the same statistics as the original, with the following exceptions. First, the illusory spell is an illusion, which allows targets to Sense and Disbelieve it; if a Knockdown or Willpower Test is required to resist the original spell, such tests act as Sensing Tests for the illusory version. Second, the illusory version of a spell lasts for only 1 round, regardless of the original spell's duration. This means that illusory versions of spells with long durations, such as Doom Missile or Shift Skin, do not damage their targets after the first round. Third, the magician must weave either 2 threads or however many threads the original spell requires, whichever is greater. Likewise,

the Weaving Difficulty for the illusory version is either 14 or the original spell's Weaving Difficulty, whichever is greater.

The illusory spell inflicts the lower of the mimicked spell's normal damage or the Illusory Spell's Effect Test result on the target. The type of armor that provides protection against this damage is the same as the original spell.

Leaping Lizards

Threads: 3
Weaving Difficulty: 9 / 21
Range: 150 yards
Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: Willpower + 7
Casting Difficulty: 6

This spell is an illusion. The Leaping Lizards spell allows a magician to create illusory monsters. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, a number of illusory monsters up to the magician's Spellcasting rank are created. Despite its name, the spell can create monsters other than lizards. The creature's Attribute steps are each equal to the spell's Effect step, though the magician may choose to reduce some Attributes to improve the illusion's realism. The magician must stay within range of the creatures or they are instantly dispelled. The monsters are controlled by the magician, requiring his concentration to direct their actions.

Any Action Tests made against the monsters are considered Sensing Tests (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322). Likewise, if damage inflicted on a target through use of this spell causes a Wound, the Knockdown Test counts as a Sensing Test. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Massive Missiles

Threads: 4
Weaving Difficulty: 12 / 21
Range: 250 yards
Duration: Rank + 3 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 12
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Massive Missiles spell increases the size and effectiveness of missiles fired by one or more characters. The magician must hold an arrow or a sling bolt from each character benefitting from the spell. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target. If the test succeeds, the target characters make an Effect Test in place of a Damage Test for their missile attacks.

Target characters within spell range of the magician use his Willpower step (including Willforce, if the magician so desires) for the Effect step. If they are out of range of the magician, they use their own Willpower step instead. Physical Armor protects against this damage. The magician may affect a maximum number of target characters equal to his Spellcasting rank.

Other Place

Threads: 3
Weaving Difficulty: 9 / 21
Range: 1 mile
Duration: Rank + 3 hours
Effect: Links two doorways
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Other Place spell joins two entrances that are no more than 1 mile apart. This spell must be cast twice within a two hour period, first on the destination portal and then on the departure portal. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against his own unlowered Spell Defense for each portal. If the magician succeeds at both Spellcasting Tests, characters passing through the entrances instantly cross the distance between them. The portals are linked by a warping of astral space. The warping is real, but this spell takes a number of illusory "shortcuts" that can be broken to disrupt the link. A successful Disbelief Test destroys the links, and dispels both spells.

Shadow Spell

Threads: 2
Weaving Difficulty: 14 / 21
Range: 60 yards
Duration: Rank + 1 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 12
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The potent Shadow Spell reduces the effects of a target magician's own spell magic by diverting most of that spell's power back into astral space. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is subtracted from the result of any Effect Test made by the target magician, thereby reducing the effects of any spell the target casts. If the Shadow Spell reduces a target's Effect Test result below 1, the spell becomes a harmless shadow of itself—appearance without substance. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the spell's Effect step. If the test succeeds, the effect of the Shadow Spell is broken, and the spell ends. The Shadow Spell does not affect talents, creature powers, or any form of magic other than spell magic.

Ninth Circle Spells

Do Unto Others

Threads: 3
Weaving Difficulty: 14 / 20
Range: 15 yards (see text)
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: Creates illusory spell effects
Casting Difficulty: Varies (see text)

This spell is an illusion. The Do Unto Others spell allows the magician to cast an illusory version of any non-Illusionism spell that has been successfully cast upon him. The magician must know the Memorize Image talent and have committed the image of the spell used against him to memory (see the **Talents** chapter, p. 192). The magician makes a Memorize Image Test against the Dispel Difficulty of the spell he intends to mimic. If the test succeeds, he commits the elements of the spell to memory; each spell memorized counts as an image toward the maximum number of images the magician can remember.

The magician carries out any gestures needed for the spell he is casting while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the mimicked spell's Casting Difficulty. If the test succeeds, he creates an illusory version of the mimicked spell. The illusory spell has the same effect as the original, but uses the magician's Spellcasting rank and Willpower step to determine the spell's damage, duration, and other statistics. The range of the illusory spell is limited to a maximum distance of 15 yards, even if the original version has a greater range. All spells cast with the Do Unto Others spell are illusions; they may not kill a target and may be disbelieved.

Any tests made in response to the spell, such as Knockdown Tests, act as Sensing Tests. Sensing and Disbelief Tests are made using the original spell's Circle to determine the Difficulty Numbers (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322).

Parien, an ork Illusionist, wants to use the Do Unto Others spell to cast an illusory version of the Razor Orb spell (a Sixth Circle Wizardry spell). Parien has had Razor Orb cast at him in the past, and successfully used Memorize Image against the spell's Dispel Difficulty of 14 to commit the effect to memory. He weaves the 3 threads required for the Do Unto Others spell, then makes a Spellcasting Test against his target's Spell Defense—the Razor Orb spell's Casting Difficulty. The test succeeds, so his target is hit by an illusory ball of green glowing energy. Parien's Willpower step (he chooses to use his

Willforce talent, paying 1 Strain to do so) is 15, so the illusory Razor Orb has an Effect step of 30! After making his Effect Test, the target suffers a Wound and must make a Knockdown Test. If the Knockdown Test result is 22 or more (the normal Sensing Difficulty of a Sixth Circle spell), the target not only remains upright, but also senses the illusion and takes no damage.

Grim Reaper

Threads: 5
Weaving Difficulty: 13 / 21
Range: Touch
Duration: Rank × 10 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 13
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Grim Reaper spell creates the semblance of a spirit of death, scaring those who witness the transformation. While weaving the spell threads, the magician's face briefly takes on a skull-like appearance. The magician touches the target, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target takes on the appearance of a spirit of death. The magician makes an Effect Test against the Social Defense of any living character witnessing the "grim reaper." If the test succeeds, the character will avoid contact with the spirit of death at any cost. The character flees from the "grim reaper" at his fastest Movement rate until he can no longer see the spirit of death. Each round, the character may make a Willpower Test against the spell's Effect step to throw off the effects of the fear.

One of the Crowd

Threads: 5
Weaving Difficulty: 14 / 21
Range: 15 yards
Duration: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

This spell is an illusion. The One of the Crowd spell allows a magician to change his appearance to better blend into the local populace. The magician blanks his mind, relaxing his features as if sleeping, and passes his left hand over his face each time he weaves a spell thread. With each pass, his face changes appearance, perhaps becoming a t'skrang merchant on the first pass, then a dwarf clown on the next, and an ork mercenary on the third. After weaving the spell threads, his appearance returns to normal and he makes a Spellcasting Test against his own Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician merely nods toward a target character, then makes an Effect Test against the target's Spell Defense. If this test succeeds, the magician's appearance is altered to match that of the target character. The magician may later choose a different target and adopt his appearance. He may change his appearance as often as he wishes on different individuals for the duration of the spell. Any Interaction Tests made against the magician while he is under the effect of this spell count as Sensing Tests (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322).

Revulsion

Threads: 4
Weaving Difficulty: 15 / 21
Range: Touch
Duration: Rank + 1 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 13
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Revulsion spell changes a target character's appearance into a grotesque parody of itself, filling those who see him with disgust. After weaving the spell threads, the magician touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target's appearance becomes grotesque; those who see him are filled with revulsion. Each round, the magician selects a character within

sight of both himself and the spell's target, then makes an Effect Test against the viewer's Spell Defense. If this test succeeds, the viewer is repulsed by the spell's victim, and can take no action other than turning his head to avoid seeing him or fleeing from the recipient. On an Excellent result, the target becomes physically sick at the grotesque sight, and can do nothing but retch for the duration of the spell. Any Interaction Tests made against the target of the spell count as Sensing Tests (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322).

Shift Walls

Threads: 5
Weaving Difficulty: 15 / 21
Range: 15 yards
Duration: Rank + 3 hours
Effect: Willpower + 9
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

This spell is not an illusion. The Shift Walls spell allows a magician to move one or more wall sections. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the wall's Spell Defense. For walls of magical origin, use the creator's Spell Defense as the Casting Difficulty. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the wall's Spell Defense. For each result level achieved on this test, the magician may move up to 2 wall sections. Each section of wall can be a maximum of 3 yards by 3 yards by 1 yard in size. The wall section detaches itself from the rest of the wall, following closely behind the magician until it reaches its new position. This requires the magician's concentration while moving the sections around.

The walls actually move under the effect of this spell, using illusory forces to suppress the natural elemental forces holding them in place. Once the spell's duration expires, these same forces glide the walls back into their original position, taking 1 minute per wall section to do so.

Thundering Walls

Threads: 3
Weaving Difficulty: 15 / 21
Range: 75 yards
Duration: Rank + 7 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 9
Casting Difficulty: 6

This spell is not an illusion. The Thundering Walls spell causes walls to reverberate with thunder and lightning. The effect of the spell is limited to a single room or other walled enclosure. After

weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the walls of the room shudder, then roil with clouds; flashes of lightning can be seen in the clouds.

Each round of the spell's duration, the magician has a choice of two options:

Thunder: This option creates an impossibly loud boom of thunder that reverberates throughout the room. The magician makes an Effect Test, comparing the result against the Social Defense of each character in the target room. If the test succeeds, the character will flee from the room at his fastest Movement rate. The character will not return unless he makes a successful Willpower Test against the Effect step of the spell, or the room stops thundering.

Lightning: This option creates a horrific barrage of lightning bolts. The magician makes a second Spellcasting Test, comparing the result against the Spell Defense of a target character in the room. If the test succeeds, the character is struck by lightning. The magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the character. Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

Tenth Circle Spells

Afterlife

Threads: 5
Weaving Difficulty: 16 / 21
Range: 25 yards
Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: Willpower + 14
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. For those watching, the Afterlife spell makes both the magician and the target character appear to vanish. The magician hums a dirge while weaving the spell threads, then bows toward the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target character suddenly finds himself to be part of a panoply where he believes he is being judged by the spirits of the dead, the actions of whom are controlled by the magician. The magician makes an Effect Test in place of any Interaction Tests, such as Deceit or Intimidation, needed to make the target believe that he really is in the afterlife (see the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 92 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**).

The target need not believe that he is dead, just that the spirits of the dead are eager to judge him. Unless the illusion is disbelieved, the target is likely to uphold his end of any bargains he makes with the "spirits of the dead." The magician must concentrate during the spell's duration, or the illusion fades and the spell expires. Any Interaction Tests the target makes against the illusory spirits created by this spell count as Sensing Tests (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322).

Astral Materialization

Threads: 4
Weaving Difficulty: 15 / 22
Range: 25 yards
Duration: 1 hour
Effect: Willpower + 13
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. The Astral Materialization spell forces a target entity to materialize in the physical plane from the astral plane for a short period of time. The magician must have some way of seeing into astral space to use this spell. The magician grimaces and clenches his fists while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, he makes an Effect Test against the target's highest Attribute step. If the test succeeds, the target materializes on the physical plane, often accompanied by a cold fog and a glowing ichor.

The target will remain on the physical plane for the spell's duration, during which time it falls under the control of the magician. The magician can verbally control the target from a distance of up to 25 yards. Beyond this distance the target will act on his most recent instructions. The target may make a Willpower Test against the magician's Willpower step each round. If the test succeeds, the target breaks free from the magician's influence and can act normally.

The target can remain on the physical plane until the spell expires or is dispelled or, if it wishes, it can attempt to return to the astral plane by making a successful Perception or Spellcasting Test against its own Spell Defense to return.

Eclipse

Threads: 6
Weaving Difficulty: 15 / 21
Range: 20 miles
Duration: Rank days
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: 6

This spell is an illusion. The Eclipse spell conjures a dark cloud which billows upward to block the sun. While weaving the spell threads, the magician pulls his cloak down over his face or blocks his eyes with his hands, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, a cloud of darkness in the shape of a large disk rises out and away from the magician, completely blocking the sun for a 20 mile radius in every direction of where he is standing. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is the spell's Disbelief Difficulty.

The darkness created by the Eclipse spell simulates the effects of natural darkness for the spell's duration. The Eclipse spell can be used to cancel the effects of the Eternal Day spell. The magician makes an Effect Test against the Effect Test result of the Eternal Day spell. If the test succeeds, the Eclipse obscures the light created by the Eternal Day spell, which immediately expires.

Eternal Day

Threads: 5
Weaving Difficulty: 18 / 21
Range: 20 miles
Duration: Rank days
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: 6

This spell is an illusion. The Eternal Day spell conjures a small bright spark, which rises upward and expands in size until it replaces the sun. While weaving the spell threads, the magician rearranges his clothing, ensuring he has complete visibility, then points his hand upward and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, a spark flies from the magician's hand, streaking toward the sky, where it takes on the shape of the sun. The spark hangs in the same place in the sky; the sun is no longer seen. The light radiates outward for a 20 mile radius in every direction from where the magician is standing. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is the spell's Disbelief Difficulty.

The light created by the Eternal Day spell cancels the effects of natural darkness in combat. The Eternal Day spell can be used to cancel the effects of the Eclipse spell. The magician makes an Effect Test against the Eclipse spell's Effect Test result. If the test succeeds, the Eternal Day light obscures the darkness created by the Eclipse spell, which immediately expires.

Haunted House

Threads: 5
Range: 75 yards
Effect: Willpower + 11
Casting Difficulty: 6
Weaving Difficulty: 15 / 20
Duration: Rank days

This spell is an illusion. The Haunted House spell turns a house or other dwelling into a hotbed of supernatural activity. The magician must have an item from inside the target house to cast this spell. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the magician can produce phenomena typical of a haunted house, adding one new phenomenon each night during the spell's duration. These phenomena include moving furniture, temperature changes, creaking noises, altered reflections, voices, blood dripping from the walls, inexplicable shadows, the appearance of ghosts, and so on. The magician can also invent his own special effects, borrowing from local legends for authenticity. He must concentrate to activate the phenomena, but once conjured the effect remains after the magician stops concentrating.

To determine if the phenomena affects a character inside the house, the magician makes an Effect Test against the target's Physical, Spell, or Social Defense, as appropriate. The gamemaster determines the effect, based on the type of phenomena. If the phenomena is capable of causing harm to the target, Physical Armor protects against this damage. Any Action Tests that the target makes against the phenomena count as Sensing Tests (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions**, p. 322).

Thirteenth Circle Spells

Restore Pattern

Threads: 3 (ritual; see text)
Range: Touch
Effect: Willpower + 15
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense
Weaving Difficulty: 20 / 31
Duration: 1 round

This spell is not an illusion. The Restore Pattern ritual spell restores a target's damaged or warped pattern to wholeness. Weaving each spell thread requires 1 hour, during which time the magician must be within 5 yards of the target. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which acts as a Recovery Test, reducing the amount of damage the character may have suffered, reduced as normal for Wounds (see **Effects of Injury** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 402).

The magician then compares his Effect Test result against the Effect Test result or step number of any spell or magical ability that has altered or damaged the target's pattern, such as the Shatter Pattern or Talent Shredder spells. If the test succeeds, the damaging effect of the spell or ability is dispelled or ended.

Fourteenth Circle Spells

Shadow Palace

Threads: 6 (ritual; see text)
Range: Touch
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: 8
Weaving Difficulty: 21 / 32
Duration: Rank days

This spell is not an illusion. The Shadow Palace ritual spell creates a doorway into astral space that houses a palatial dwelling of the magician's device. The magician slowly constructs a doorway in the air as he weaves the spell threads at a rate of 1 thread per hour. Once the last thread is woven, he makes a Spellcasting (8) Test. If the test succeeds, the magician opens the door and reveals a beautiful palace, which both he and his guests can enter. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the Detection Difficulty for anyone attempting to detect the closed entrance to the shadow palace. To enter the palace without the magician's permission, a character must make a successful Willpower Test against the spell's Effect step.

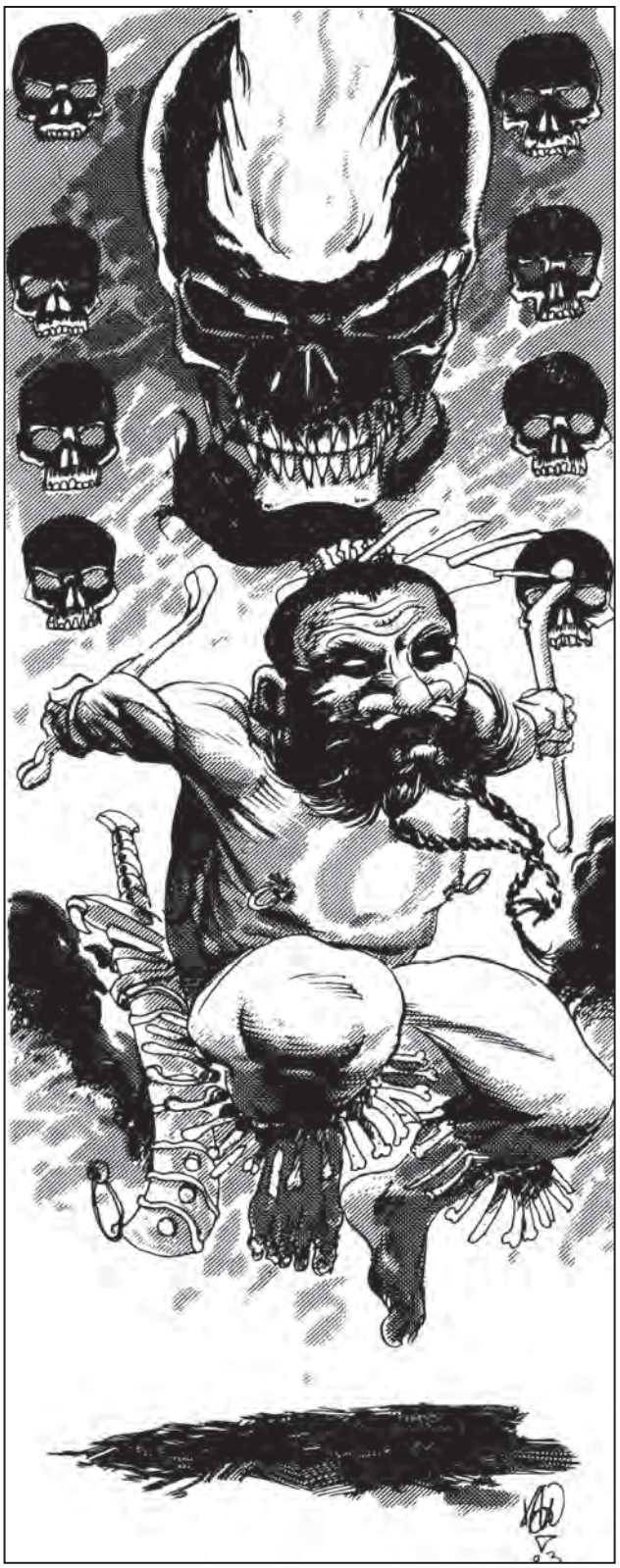
The shadow palace occupies a pocket of astral space up to 10,000 square yards in size, furnished and appointed as the magician desires. Characters in the palace are free from the constraints of the physical space they just left. The palace is safe, clean and dry: an ideal place to rest and recuperate. Food and drink are provided in whatever form the magician desires; otherwise, the only things in the palace are those the guests bring with them. When the characters leave the palace or when the spell expires, the magician and all his guests reappear at the same spot in the physical world from which they left.

Blood magic can be used to extend the spell's duration. By taking 1 permanent Damage Point, the magician may extend the duration of the Shadow Palace spell to a year and a day. For each additional permanent Damage Point he takes, the magician may further extend the spell's duration by another year and a day. The magician cannot heal this damage unless the palace is destroyed, the duration expires, or the spell is dispelled.

NETHERMANCY SPELLS

Sir, you look at me as if I were Horror-marked. Do you think I am the scion of some creature from the netherworlds? Curb your fear. All I desire is a tankard of your finest ale.

• Caelarion, Elven Nethermancer •



Nethermancers deal with the netherworlds and their inhabitants. Nethermancy magic often involves spirits and other non-worldly entities. Their spells are also heavily involved with the workings of life and death and the nature of astral space.

First Circle Spells

Astral Spear

Threads: 1
Weaving Difficulty: 6 / 12
Range: 120 yards
Duration: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Astral Spear spell weaves energy from the astral plane into a phantom spear that the magician throws at a target character. The magician pulls his arm back while weaving the spell thread, then hurls it forward as if throwing a spear and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, an ethereal spear forms that crosses the distance between the two adversaries and strikes the target. The magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

Bone Dance

Threads: 1
Weaving Difficulty: 7 / 15
Range: 25 yards
Duration: Rank + 3 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Bone Dance spell infuses a character's skeleton with an independent living force, which then moves the target against his will. While weaving the spell thread, the magician does a herky-jerky jig, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the target's Strength step each round. If this test succeeds, the magician can haphazardly direct the target's movements, forcing him to move Step 4 yards in a random direction. If the test fails, the target regains some control that round; while he may move and act of his own accord, he is considered Harried (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408).

The spell requires the magician's concentration each round while directing the target through his marionette-like dance.

Chilling Circle

Threads: 2
Weaving Difficulty: 6 / 15
Range: Touch
Duration: Rank + 6 minutes
Effect: Causes Step 4 cold damage to anyone in the circle
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Chilling Circle spell creates a circle of cold that can harm those inside it. While weaving the spell threads, the magician spins around in a circle, slowly increasing speed, then he stops

suddenly and kneels to touch the center of the circle. A wave of cold ripples outward in a 5 yard radius from the circle's center. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense, comparing the result against the highest Spell Defense of any characters currently inside the circle, including himself. If the test succeeds, everyone in the circle takes Step 4 damage from the intense cold each round they remain within. Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

Anyone, including the magician, may leave the circle at any time, thus avoiding taking any further damage. If a new target enters the circle the magician makes another Spellcasting Test to determine if the cold remains effective.

Command Nightflyer

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 5 / 13
Range: 120 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 2
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Command Nightflyer spell allows the magician to converse with and command nocturnal flying creatures, such as owls, bats and krilworms. While weaving the spell thread, the magician imitates the flying or speaking sounds of the animal, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the spell allows him to converse with the creature and to issue simple commands. The magician makes an Effect Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the creature obeys the magician's commands.

The Command Nightflyer spell cannot override a creature's survival instincts or force it to behave against its basic nature. For example, a bat could not be forced to scout around during daylight hours when it would normally be resting.

Detect Undead

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 7
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Detect Undead spell allows a character to detect undead creatures. The magician smears the target character's brow with dust or dirt, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target is able to detect the presence of undead entities.

The target character makes an Effect Test against the highest Spell Defense among any undead within 25 yards of where he is standing, using his own Willpower step. If the test succeeds, the character determines the number, but not the exact position, of all undead within range. Detecting undead requires the character's concentration during the round it is used; a break in concentration does not end the spell, however.

Dry and Wet

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 8
Range: 15 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Dry and Wet spell dries soaked items or soaks dry ones. The magician gathers saliva in his mouth while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If he spits, "wet" is cast; if he swallows, "dry" is cast. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which determines the number of pounds that can be soaked or dried.

Experience Death

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 12
Range: 20 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Experience Death spell allows a magician to see and experience everything a dead target character experienced at the time of his death. By doing this, the magician touches the spirit world to recreate the events of the character's death. While weaving the spell thread, the magician closes his eyes, then points his hand palm-out toward the corpse and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense, as if he were still alive. If the test succeeds, the last few rounds of the target's life are played out to the magician, up to the spell's duration.

The magician must concentrate to maintain the spell, effectively entering into a trance. While in this state, the magician senses everything from the point of view of the deceased. Unfortunately, this also includes taking any damage the deceased suffered before he died. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which gives him a Spirit Pool of extra Damage Points. Any damage inflicted on the magician first reduces this Spirit Pool and is not added to his current Damage Points. Once the Spirit Pool is exhausted, the magician takes damage normally. No armor is effective against this damage.

Only Damage Points are inflicted through this spell; if the target took one ore more Wounds, they are not transferred to the magician. The magician never takes Wounds from the Experience Death, even if the damage he takes equals or exceeds his Wound Threshold. If the magician takes damage in excess of his Unconsciousness or Death Rating, he passes out or dies, as normal.

Insect Repellent

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 7
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Insect Repellent spell repels insects of all sizes. While weaving the spell thread, the magician makes a buzzing sound like the sound of flying insects, the droning becoming softer as he touches the target and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, he makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the Repellent Difficulty. Any insects wanting to bite or otherwise attack the target must make a successful Willpower Test against the Repellent Difficulty to do so.

Mount Call

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 5 / 13
Range: 50 yards **Duration**: Rank + 5 rounds
Effect: Spooks target mount
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Mount Call spell scares an opponent's mount. The magician snorts loudly while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the rider's or his mount's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target animal runs away from the magician in fear at its fastest Movement rate for the duration of the spell. On an Extraordinary result, the animal bucks its rider off first before bolting. The rider makes a Knockdown Test against the Spellcasting Test result. If the test fails, he falls off the mount and is Knocked Down. The rider takes Falling damage as normal (see **Mounted Combat** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 413).

Each round, the animal may make a Willpower Test against the magician's Willpower step. If the test succeeds, it overcomes its fear and the spell ends. The Sure Mount talent or skill is useful for avoiding being thrown (see the **Talents** and **Skills** chapters).

The spell works equally well against both tame and wild animals, even though it was originally designed to be used against mounted troops during times of war.

Putrefy

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 9
Range: 25 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Putrefies food
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Putrefy spell allows a magician to cause food to putrefy with but a glance. The magician makes a swallowing noise, accompanied with a slight grimace, then looks at the food he wishes to putrefy and makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the food or anyone eating it, whichever is higher. If the test succeeds, the food immediately putrefies.

When cast on the diner, all of the food he has eaten, including the bite just taken, is putrefied. Up to 20 pounds of food is affected by each casting of this spell.

Spirit Dart

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 7
Range: 25 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 2
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Spirit Dart spell attacks a target character with a small dart shaped from astral energy. The magician pinches himself and flicks his wrist as if throwing a dart, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

Spirit Grip

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 7
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Spirit Grip spell draws on the malevolent energy of the spirits of the dead to harm others. The magician touches his victim and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, he makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Spirit Grip cannot be cast on sacred ground (such as a shrine devoted to one of the Passions) or other ground that has been proofed against spirits. Even a Life Circle of One is enough to stop this spell from being cast.

Undead Struggle

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 7
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

Although considered a risky endeavor, the Undead Struggle spell allows a magician to engage an undead target directly in magical combat. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician and the target are locked in a magical force of will. Neither character may move or take any actions other than those required for Undead Struggle until the spell expires or one of the contestants is destroyed.

Each round, the magician makes an Effect Test and compares the result against the target's Willpower Test result. The winner takes no damage; the loser takes Damage Points equal to the full result of his opponent's test result. Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

Second Circle Spells

Bone Circle

Threads: 3 (ritual; see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 17
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 3 months
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Bone Circle ritual spell invites a wandering spirit to live within a circle made of bones. The magician needs the bones of one or more non-sentient animals for the ritual, which are used to construct a bone circle up to 10 yards in diameter. While weaving the spell threads, the magician walks the circumference of the circle, scratching or tracing magical inscriptions and placing the animal bones to form the circle's outline. This takes 1 hour for each thread woven. After completing the circle, he touches the bone circle and makes a Spellcasting Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a spirit is summoned to live within the circle.

The spirit that takes up residence is not very intelligent. It cannot leave the circle, but it can try to prevent others from entering. The spirit can take physical action against those attempting to enter or who are already within the circle. Other Nethermancy spells, such as Grave Message and Spirit Portal, make use of a bone circle. A magician may have more than one bone circle in existence at a time. Kicking away the bones and erasing the inscriptions that make up a bone circle is not sufficient to destroy a bone circle; it simply makes it more difficult to see the circle's outline, and thus avoid disturbing the spirit that dwells there. A bone circle can be dispelled, but the magician who does so must touch the circle. The bone spirit will not harm its summoner, but cannot otherwise be controlled by the magician.

The bone spirit has the following statistics:

Bone Spirit

DEX: Effect step/2* **STR**: Effect step/2* **TOU**: 8
PER: 7 **WIL**: 7 **CHA**: 7

* The magician allocates the spell's Effect step as evenly as possible between the spirit's Dexterity and Strength steps.

Initiative: DEX
Number of Actions: 1
Attack: DEX
Damage: STR

Physical Defense: 12**
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 14
Physical Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 3

Death Rating: 43
Wound Threshold: 12
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Recovery Tests: 3
Knockdown: STR

Combat Movement: 30+** **Full Movement**: 60+**

\+ This value is the spirit's flying Movement rate.
** The gamemaster may decrease or increase these values, to reflect a higher or lower Dexterity step.

Powers: None

Legend Points: 70

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Detect Nethermancy Magic

Threads: 2
Range: 60 yards
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: 6

Weaving Difficulty: 5 / 15
Duration: Rank + 10 minutes

The Detect Nethermancy Magic spell allows the magician to detect Nethermancy (only) magic. Magicians use this spell to detect the effects of Nethermancy spells, spirit powers and other nethermantic magic. Magicians can also use the spell to detect items enchanted with trapped spirits.

The spell otherwise works in the same manner as the Astral Sense spell, but on the physical plane only (see the **Wizardry Spells** chapter, p. 374).

Ethereal Darkness

Threads: 1
Range: Touch
Effect: Creates magical darkness
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

Weaving Difficulty: 8 / 16
Duration: Rank + 6 rounds

The Ethereal Darkness spell allows the magician to draw a piece of darkness from another dimension. While weaving the spell thread, the magician cups his hands together. He then touches the target character or object, commands the darkness to billow forth, and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the target is an unwilling recipient of the Ethereal Darkness spell, the magician requires a Good result on his Spellcasting Test. If the test succeeds, the darkness summoned expands to fill a 10 yard radius sphere, centered on the target character or object.

The darkness extinguishes all light, causing those within the spell's radius of effect to suffer a Complete darkness penalty to all sight-based Action Tests (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 407). Ordinary light does not penetrate Ethereal Darkness. Attempts to banish the darkness with magical light, or to dispel it with the Dispel Magic spell, are made against a Spell Defense of 9.

Characters with knowledge of Nethermancy are unaffected by Ethereal Darkness—they can see normally, as if the spell had never been cast.

Fog Ghost

Threads: 2
Range: 25 yards
Effect: Summons fog ghost
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

Weaving Difficulty: 6 / 15
Duration: Rank + 3 rounds

The Fog Ghost spell coalesces fog from the surrounding air and coaxes a maleficent spirit to briefly inhabit it. While weaving the spell threads, the magician blows openly into the air, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the fog ghost appears anywhere the magician wishes within the spell's range, whereupon it immediately attacks the nearest character (even if this is the magician). The fog ghost continues to indiscriminately attack whoever is nearest to it during each round of its existence, until it is destroyed or the spell is dispelled or expires.

Destroying the fog does not harm the spirit, which simply returns to the netherworld and waits for another chance to harm the living. A fog ghost will not attack undead or entities. The Fog Ghost spell cannot be cast in desert or other very dry environments, nor can it be cast when the temperature is below freezing. Fog ghosts are vulnerable to damage from normal weapons. Their high Physical Defense represents the difficulty of hitting the "thicker" areas of fog that house the spirit.

The fog ghost has the following statistics:

Fog Ghost

DEX: 7 **STR**: 7 **TOU**: 5
PER: 6 **WIL**: 7 **CHA**: 6

Initiative: 7
Number of Actions: 1
Attack (1): 8
Damage:
Unarmed (3): 10

Physical Defense: 14
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 12
Physical Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 4

Death Rating: 31
Wound Threshold: 8
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Recovery Tests: 1
Knockdown: 7

Combat Movement: 38+ **Full Movement**: 76+

\+ This value is the spirit's flying Movement rate.

Powers: None

Legend Points: 75

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Gadfly

Threads: 1
Range: 30 yards
Effect: Causes the target to be Harried
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

Weaving Difficulty: 6 / 14
Duration: Rank + 4 rounds

The Gadfly spell summons a tiny, glowing spirit that buzzes annoyingly around the target's head, shouting taunts and insults in a high, squeaky voice. After weaving the spell thread, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the gadfly appears, harassing and taunting the target while he remains within the spell's range. The gadfly makes an Annoy Target Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the gadfly is so distracting that the target is considered Harried while the spirit continues to annoy him (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408). Once the gadfly affects a target, it does not need to use its Annoy Target power against that target again; it simply continues to be annoying. The magician can direct the gadfly against a different target within range at any time during the spell's duration, but this requires a successful Spellcasting (10) Test.

The gadfly can be attacked, but is immune to abilities that target Social Defense, such as Interaction Tests. If the gadfly takes damage equal to or greater than its Death Rating, the spell expires and the gadfly is banished into astral space.

The gadfly has the following statistics:

Gadfly

DEX: 11 **STR**: NA **TOU**: NA
PER: 7 **WIL**: NA **CHA**: 7

Initiative: 11
Number of Actions: 1
Attack: NA
Damage: NA

Physical Defense: 16
Spell Defense: 10
Social Defense: Immune
Physical Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 0

Death Rating: Wound Threshold* **Recovery Tests**: NA
Wound Threshold: NA **Knockdown**: Immune
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 82+ **Full Movement**: 164+

+ This value is the spirit's flying Movement rate.
* This value is equal to the magician's Wound Threshold.

Powers: Annoy Target (2): 9 (see text)

Legend Points: 90

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Life Circle of One

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 15
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: 6; Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Life Circle of One spell creates a magical circle that can resist any undead, Horror, or Horror construct that attempts to enter it. While weaving the spell threads, the magician spits into his hand, then outlines a circle no more than 10 yards in diameter with his finger and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the circle resists any undead, Horror, or Horror construct who attempts to enter. When an entity attempts to enter or reach into the circle, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the entity's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the circle repels the entity and inflicts harm on it. The magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage the being suffers as it is repelled. Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

Life Circle of One can only repel a single creature each round. Numerous enemies can easily swamp the circle if they manage to surround it. When more than one entity crosses the circle's perimeter, the circle will attempt to repel the being with the highest Spell Defense. Given sufficient preparation time, a magician may cast more than one Life Circle of One within an existing life circle, creating concentric circles to protect those standing in the innermost one. This can afford some protection from multiple entities for a few minutes.

Pocket Guardian

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 13
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank + 1 days
Effect: Summons a diminutive spirit guardian
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Pocket Guardian spell summons a diminutive spirit to guard items in a magician's pocket or pouch. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the guardian spirit's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a spirit is summoned, often appearing as a small rat or large stinging insect. The spirit resides entirely within the pocket, and cannot leave it. It will permit the magician to insert and remove items from the pocket it is guarding.

The spirit will attack anyone other than the magician who attempts to reach into the protected pocket, making as much noise as possible to alert the magician. Unless the character is forewarned of the presence of the pocket guardian, the spirit will usually gain the benefit of Surprise against the pick-pocket (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 409).

A pocket guardian has the following statistics:

Pocket Guardian

DEX: 5 **STR**: 3 **TOU**: 3
PER: 5 **WIL**: 3 **CHA**: 3

Initiative: 7 (see text)
Number of Actions: 1
Attack (1): 6
Damage:
Bite (1): 4

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 9
Physical Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 0

Death Rating: 26 **Recovery Tests**: 1
Wound Threshold: 6 **Knockdown**: Immune
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: NA **Full Movement**: NA

Powers: None

Legend Points: 30

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Repel Animal

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 13
Range: 5 yards **Duration**: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Repel Animal spell creates a magical circle to keep out animals. While weaving the spell threads, the magician draws a circle up to 10 yards in diameter on the ground. He then touches the center of the circle and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the circle's Repulsion Difficulty. Any animal attempting to enter the glowing white circle must make a Willpower Test against the Repulsion Difficulty. If the test succeeds, the animal enters the circle unhindered, although if it leaves and re-enters the circle it must make another Willpower Test to do so. If the test fails, the animal is gently pushed away from the circle.

Only animals are affected by this spell—undead, Horrors, Horror constructs, or sentient beings can enter the circle freely.

Shadow's Whisper

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 11
Range: 100 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Shadow's Whisper spell allows a magician to hear anything spoken beside any nearby shadows. After weaving the spell thread, the magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the Spell Defense of a target character within the spell's range. If this test succeeds, the magician can hear any sound the target makes while he is within 2 yards of any shadow (including the target's own). The target may make a Perception Test against the Effect Test result. If the test succeeds, the target has a "strong feeling" that he is being observed.

Shield Mist

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 13
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank + 3 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Shield Mist spell creates a shield of mist that hardens and moves to deflect blows directed against the magician. While weaving the spell thread, the magician moves his hands over his form while wisps of mist pour from his fingertips, then makes a Spellcasting Test against his own Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test in place of an Avoid Blow Test against close and ranged combat Attack Tests directed at him. If the Avoid Blow Test succeeds, the mist deflects the blow and the magician suffers no harm. There is no Strain cost for this test and the magician cannot be Knocked Down on a Pathetic result.

The shielding effect only works against attacks that the magician can see, as per the Avoid Blow talent (see the **Talents** chapter, p. 171). The magician may make a maximum number of Effect Tests each round equal to his Spellcasting rank. Only one test may be made against a single attack. **The magician is visible within the mist, and he can easily see out. The mist does not hinder his actions.**

Third Circle Spells

Arrow of Night

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 15
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: +8 bonus to missile Damage Test
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Arrow of Night spell covers an arrow with a chilling sheath of darkness, which becomes a silhouette of itself. The arrow must be loosed during the round that the spell is cast or the enchantment is lost. The magician wraps his hand around the head of the arrow as he weaves the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, darkness drawn from astral space wraps itself around the arrow and adds a +8 bonus to the missile's Damage Test. Handling the shaft causes the character who fires it 1 Strain Point of damage.

The Arrow of Night spell can only be cast on non-magical arrows, but the spell is not compatible with other spells or talents, such as Flame Arrow, which would dispel the sheath. The spell consumes the arrow, which crumbles to dust the round after it strikes.

While the spell's name indicates it can only be cast on arrows, it works equally well on other missiles, including crossbow bolts, sling stones or bolts, and blowpipe darts.

Astral Sense Nethermancy

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 5 / 15
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: Rank + 10 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Astral Sense Nethermancy spell allows the magician to sense the presence of people, creatures, magic doors, magic items, and so on, in astral space. See the **Wizardry Spells** chapter, p. 374, for a full description.

Dark Messenger

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 15
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: Sends a nightflyer to deliver a message
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Dark Messenger spell commands a nocturnal flying creature to deliver a message. This spell must be cast after sunset, and only on a nightflyer already under the magician's control, either by being a familiar, or through use of the Command Nightflyer spell. The magician strokes the nightflyer while weaving the spell thread, then whispers his message to it and makes a Spellcasting Test against the creature's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician can give the creature a short message, no more than his Spellcasting rank + 15 words in length, to deliver to a designated recipient. On the magician's command, the creature flies off, unerringly seeks out the recipient of the message and delivers it in a whispery version of the magician's own voice.

If the nightflyer cannot reach the designated recipient before the spell expires or before sunrise (whichever comes first), the message is lost.

Death Trance

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 12
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 3 hours
Effect: Places the target into hibernation
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Death Trance spell places a willing or unconscious target character into a state of suspended animation. The magician holds his breath while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target enters a state of hibernation. While in the trance, the target's heart does not beat, he does not breathe or exhibit any other signs of life. Because the character is not dead, however, he does not decay or suffer any other normal symptoms of death. The target remains in suspension for the duration of the spell and awakens at the end of it with no ill effects.

The magician can extend the duration of the spell to a year and a day by taking 4 permanent Damage Points. This damage cannot be healed until the spell expires or is dispelled. Death Trance spells are sometimes made permanent as a curse, with a Pattern Item, certain Key Knowledges, or a Deed necessary to end the spell and awaken the target. The exact nature of the circumstances for the target to wake up are defined by the magician when the spell is made permanent.

Death's Head

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 9
Range: Self (see text) **Duration**: Rank + 5 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Death's Head spell transforms the magician's head into a gore-spattered skull, terrifying those on whom he sets his gaze. The magician touches his face and makes a Spellcasting Test against his own Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, he can attempt to target one character within sight each round of the spell's duration. The magician makes an Effect Test against the target's Spell Defense. If this test succeeds, the target flees away from the magician at his fastest possible Movement rate, until he is out of the magician's line of sight. The spell's fear effect is a Simple action and does not require the magician's concentration.

Each round, an affected target may make a Willpower Test against the spell's Effect step. If the test succeeds, he throws off the effects of the fear, otherwise he continues to flee. Once out of sight of the magician, the target may act normally; however, if

he sees the magician again he will react in fear until he makes a successful Willpower Test or the spell ends.

Dispel Nethermancy Magic

Threads: 1
Range: 60 yards
Effect: Willpower
Casting Difficulty: 6
Weaving Difficulty: 6 / 13
Duration: 1 round

The Dispel Nethermancy Magic spell dispels Nethermancy (only) spells. It otherwise works in the same way as the Dispel Magic spell (see the **Wizardry Spells** chapter, p. 375).

Fog of Fear

Threads: 2
Range: 60 yards
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: 6
Weaving Difficulty: 8 / 18
Duration: Rank + 6 rounds

The Fog of Fear spell conjures a mist that causes fear in those wrapped in its misty tendrils. While weaving the spell threads, the magician wraps his arms about him as if cold, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, a luminous, wispy-gray, and slightly cold fog coalesces into a 10 yard diameter sphere at a position specified by the magician within the spell's range. Once conjured, the fog cannot be moved. The magician makes an Effect Test, comparing the result against the Spell Defense of each character—friend or foe—within the fog. If the test succeeds, the character immediately flees away from the cloud at his fastest Movement rate.

Each round, a character affected by the Fog of Fear spell may make a Willpower Test against the spell's Effect step. If the test succeeds, he throws off the effects of the fear, otherwise he continues to flee. Once out of sight of the fog, the target may act normally; however, if he sees the mist again he will react in fear until he makes a successful Willpower Test or the spell ends. Under no circumstances will he voluntarily re-enter the cloud.

Grave Message

Threads: 4
Range: 100 miles
Effect: Sends a message to a Nethermancer
Casting Difficulty: 6+ (see text)
Weaving Difficulty: 7 / 19
Duration: Rank days

The Grave Message spell allows a magician to magically send a message to another practitioner of Nethermancy magic. The magician speaks the message into a bone circle or a cemetery or place where spirits are active while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against a Difficulty Number based on the distance the message must travel, as shown in the Spell Distance Difficulty Table. If the test succeeds, the message relayed by the magician during the spell's casting, is successfully sent to a target bone circle or cemetery in which spirits are active.

SPELL DISTANCE DIFFICULTY TABLE

Distance	Difficulty Number
Up to 5 miles	6
6–10 miles	8
11–25 miles	11
26–50 miles	14
51–100 miles	17

The message must be sent to a specific location and addressed to either a specific magician or "any magician who happens by." The target magician must possess knowledge of Nethermancy or the message will not be delivered. The message cannot exceed 50 words in length and is delivered by a quavering spirit voice. The spirit speaks the message once, then the enchantment is broken.

Pack Bags

Threads: 1
Range: 5 yards
Effect: Willpower – 1
Casting Difficulty: 6
Weaving Difficulty: 7 / 11
Duration: 1 round

The Pack Bags spell summons a number of small spirits to pack the magician's belongings for him. The magician must gather all the items to be packed, ensuring the chest, satchel, or other container to be packed is open. After weaving the spell thread, he makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the air fills with swarming, multi-colored points of light—tiny spirits come to pack the bags. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is the combined Strength value of the spirits. The spirits can pack a total weight of goods equal to their Carrying Capacity (see **Determine Characteristics** and **Encumbrance** in the **Creating Characters** chapter, p. 48).

Pain

Threads: 0
Range: 10 yards
Effect: Willpower
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense
Weaving Difficulty: NA / 11
Duration: Rank + 3 rounds

The Pain spell inflicts excruciating agony on a target character. The magician makes stabbing motions with his hands, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target is racked with excruciating waves of agony. Each round, the magician makes an Effect Test against the result of the target's Willpower Test; this requires the magician's concentration. If the test succeeds, the target is overcome by the pain and cannot perform any actions that round. While doubled over in agony, the target is considered Knocked Down, even if standing (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 409). The Pain spell has no effect on creatures that neither feel pain, or are otherwise used to or inured against it. This includes undead, most Horrors or Horror constructs, and blood elves. If used against cadaver men (see the **Animate Dead** spell, p. 368), it immediately sends them into a frenzy. The pain effect doesn't immobilize cadaver men, however.

Preserve

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 12
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank days
Effect: Prevents target from decaying
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Preserve spell keeps inanimate matter from spoiling and decaying. The spell affects an area up to 3 yards by 3 yards in size. After weaving the spell threads, the magician touches an item in the area, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, all items within the area of effect are held in stasis and do not decay or rot during the spell's duration. Magicians often use this spell to preserve cadavers for study, as well as for more mundane tasks such as preserving alchemical herbs or food.

Shadow Meld

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 15
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Shadow Meld spell allows a target character to become virtually invisible in shadows or darkness. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the Detection Difficulty for sight-based Perception Tests made to spot the target while he is in the cover of shadows or darkness. Though the target can still be seen normally in light, the presence of light does not end the spell; the target can become virtually invisible simply by stepping back into a shadow.

Spirit Double

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 19
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank + 10 rounds
Effect: Creates spirit double of the magician
Casting Difficulty: 10

The Spirit Double spell allows a magician to summon a spirit to act as his double. After weaving the spell thread, the magician makes a Spellcasting (10) Test. If the test succeeds, the spirit appears, assuming a shaggy material form that resembles the magician. The magician can issue verbal commands to the spirit, which it loyally obeys. Once created, the spirit can travel anywhere its form allows it. The spirit possesses the same Attribute values as the magician. It has a Spell Defense of 10, but knows no magical abilities.

Summon Bone Ghost

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 15
Range: 10 yards (see text) **Duration**: Rank + 1 minutes
Effect: Summons a bone spirit
Casting Difficulty: 9 (see text)

The Summon Bone Ghost spell summons the bone spirit from a previously formed bone circle (see **Bone Circle**, above), enabling the spirit to exist outside the circle for a brief period. The magician must have first created an active bone circle somewhere within a distance equal to his Spellcasting rank × 10 miles. After weaving the spell thread, the magician makes a Spellcasting (9) Test—the spirit's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the bone spirit appears before the magician and serves him for the duration of the spell. The bone spirit cannot move more than 10 yards from the magician. If it is forced to do so, the spell is dispelled and the spirit returns to its bone circle. A summoned bone spirit obeys any command the magician gives it: entering combat, reporting happenings within sight of its bone circle, and so on.

Bone spirits do not enjoy leaving their circles, so they may resist being summoned more than once per day. The spell's Casting Difficulty is increased by +1 for each additional attempt to cast this spell within a 24 hour period. The bone spirit returns to its circle when the spell expires. If it is destroyed in combat before then, its bone circle is also destroyed.

Fourth Circle Spells

Animate Skeleton

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 18
Range: 100 yards **Duration**: Rank + 8 minutes
Effect: Animates skeletons
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Animate Skeleton spell animates and controls the skeletal remains of the dead. So long as the magician has access to a sufficient quantity of skeletal remains, such as a graveyard or an old battle site, he may animate a number of skeletons equal to his Spellcasting rank. The magician chants aloud while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the skeleton's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the skeletons are animated, rising from their resting place within a round.

The magician can mentally command the skeletons to a distance of 100 yards, although this requires his concentration. The skeletons will act on their most recent instructions if left uncontrolled. If the skeletons move beyond 100 yards of the magician, the magic that animates them fails and they crumble into a heap of lifeless bones.

Skeletons are usually armed with short swords or hand-axes fashioned from spare bones by the magic of the spell. At the gamemaster's discretion, if the skeleton was originally buried with a better weapon it uses that instead. Also at the gamemaster's discretion, if the skeleton wore armor, then it can benefit from it when animated (although the armor will likely not provide more than half of its original protection due to age).

A skeleton has the following statistics:

Skeleton

DEX: 5 **STR**: 5 **TOU**: 4
PER: 4 **WIL**: 7 **CHA**: 5

Initiative: 5 **Physical Defense**: 7
Number of Actions: 1 **Spell Defense**: 6
Attack (1): 6 **Social Defense**: 11
Damage: **Physical Armor**: 2 (see text)
Bone Weapon (4): 9 **Mystic Armor**: 3

Death Rating: 27 **Recovery Tests**: 1
Wound Threshold: 6 **Knockdown**: Immune
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 20 **Full Movement**: 40

Powers: None

Legend Points: 70

Equipment: Bone short sword or hand axe (Damage step 4); old padded leather armor (Phys 2)

Loot: Usually nothing, but at the gamemaster's discretion, one-in-five skeletons yields jewelry valued at 2D6 × 10 silver pieces. This is most often the case for skeletons animated from older burial grounds.

Astral Flare

Threads: 2
Range: 25 yards
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: 6
Weaving Difficulty: 7 / 17
Duration: Rank + 5 rounds

The Astral Flare spell releases an intense flare of light into the astral plane. The magician makes soft "boom, boom" sounds under his breath as he weaves the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, comparing the result against the Spell Defense of anyone within the spell's range who is in, or looking into, astral space. If the test succeeds, the astral flare blinds the viewer.

Anyone trying to view astral space while the flare is in effect must make a Willpower Test against the spell's Effect step. If the test succeeds, the viewer can see into astral space normally, otherwise he is blinded. The blindness lasts for the duration of the spell or until the viewer makes a successful Willpower Test. During this time the blinded character suffers a Complete darkness penalty to his sight-based Action Tests (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 407).

Blood Servitor

Threads: 2
Range: Rank miles
Effect: Creates a flying servant
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)
Weaving Difficulty: 7 / 17
Duration: Rank hours

The Blood Servitor spell allows the magician to conjure a minor servitor by combining a small amount of his own blood with energy from astral space. While weaving the spell threads, the magician envisages the shape his servitor will take, then pricks his finger, taking 3 Strain Points of damage, and makes a Spellcasting Test against the blood servitor's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a blood servitor is conjured, which takes the form of a small flying creature. The magician can issue verbal commands to the servitor, but they must be simple—a number of words no greater than the magician's Spellcasting rank. Because the blood servitor is essentially a part of the magician, he can spend an action to use the servitor's senses to see and hear while the spell is active. The magician uses his own Perception step for any Perception Tests he makes.

The blood servitor can fly at a speed equal to the magician's Movement rate. If the servitor takes damage equal to or greater than its Death Rating, it immediately vanishes.

A blood servitor has the following statistics:

Blood Servitor

DEX: Magician **STR**: Magician **TOU**: Magician
PER: Magician **WIL**: Magician **CHA**: NA

Initiative: DEX
Number of Actions: 1
Attack: DEX
Damage: STR
Physical Defense: Magician
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: Immune
Physical Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: Magician

Death Rating: Wound Threshold* **Recovery Tests**: 1
Wound Threshold: NA **Knockdown**: 6
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: Magician+
Full Movement: Magician+

\+ This value is the spirit's flying Movement rate.
* This value is equal to the magician's Wound Threshold.

Powers: None

Legend Points: 30

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Dark Spy

Threads: 1
Range: 10 yards
Effect: Allows magician to see through a nightflyer's eyes
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)
Weaving Difficulty: 10 / 20
Duration: Rank minutes

The Dark Spy spell allows the magician to see and hear through a nightflyer's senses. This spell can be cast only on a nightflyer already under the magician's control, either by being a familiar, or through use of the Command Nightflyer spell. The magician closes one eye while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the creature's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician takes control of the creature's senses, allowing him to make Perception Tests as if he were the nightflyer itself. The maximum distance at which the magician can use the target nightflyer's senses is equal to his Spellcasting rank in miles.

While the magician is using the creature's senses, his own senses are considerably numbed, leaving him unable to react well to external stimuli; the magician is considered Harried for any Action Tests he makes other than Perception Tests using the target creature's senses (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408).

Evil Eye

Threads: 2
Range: 25 yards
Effect: Causes a –5 penalty to target's Action Tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense
Weaving Difficulty: 7 / 17
Duration: Rank + 10 rounds

The Evil Eye spell causes the magician's pupils to shimmer with the appearance of a flickering greenish flame. While weaving the spell threads, the magician stares intently at his intended target, then closes one eye and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target is cursed by the magician's evil eye and suffers a –5 penalty to all of his Action Tests for the duration of the spell.

Each round, the target can attempt to break the curse by making a Willpower Test against the magician's Willpower step; this test is not subject to the penalty caused by the spell's curse. If the test succeeds, the curse is lifted and the spell ends.

Fatal Food

Threads: 3
Range: 10 yards
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense
Weaving Difficulty: 9 / 17
Duration: Rank + 10 minutes

The Fatal Food spell creates an effect in different foods, causing an explosive reaction when they are combined and ingested. While weaving the spell threads, the magician points at three different types of food, envisaging the end result of the spell on the target. Each thread is woven to a different piece of food; the foods cannot be touching or mixed together. For example, the Fatal Food spell cannot be cast on a bowl of soup because the ingredients are already mixed together.

If a character eats even a taste of each type of food, thus mixing them together, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the meal inside the target causes three explosions, one for each food type. The magician makes three Effect Tests to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Base Mystic Armor protects against this damage. Food left uneaten after the spell ends returns to normal.

Friend or Foe

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 20
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank + 5 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is an illusion. The Friend or Foe spell makes it nearly impossible for anyone except the magician to tell the difference between friend and foe among combatants in a fight. While weaving the spell threads, the magician drags his nails over his face hard enough to draw blood (the scratches do no real damage, and heal when the spell is cast), then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense of any combatants, both friends or enemies, within the spell's range. If the test succeeds, all the combatants take on the appearance of corpses of the same height and build as the magician.

The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the spell's Disbelief Difficulty. The magician can affect a number of combatants equal to his Spellcasting rank. The spell can only be cast on characters involved in close combat. All Action Tests made during the fight, including Attack, Damage, and Knockdown Tests, are considered to be Sensing Tests (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions** in the **Illusionism Spells** chapter, p. 322).

Last Chance

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 17
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Grants a bonus Recovery Test with a +8 bonus
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Last Chance spell pulls a target character back from the brink of death. The spell must be cast within 1 minute of the character's death. After weaving the spell thread, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target makes an immediate Recovery Test with a +8 bonus. He gains this Recovery Test even if he has already used all of the Recovery Tests available to him that day (in which case, he makes a Step 8 Recovery Test). If the target's Current Damage is reduced below his Death Rating then he survives, otherwise he remains dead.

Nightflyer's Cloak

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 17
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank + 10 minutes
Effect: Transforms the caster into a nightflyer
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Nightflyer's Cloak spell allows a magician to assume the form of any creature able to be affected by the Command Nightflyer spell. The magician must know the Command Nightflyer spell to cast this spell. The magician mimics pulling on a cape or cloak while weaving the spell threads, then whispers the type of creature he is attempting to turn into and makes a Spellcasting Test against his own Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician is transformed into the designated type of nightflyer. Any clothing or equipment worn by the magician is transformed along with him for the duration of the spell; it reappears as normal when the spell expires.

While in creature form, the magician can use all of that creature's normal abilities, including flight and enhanced senses. The magician cannot speak or cast spells while in nightflyer form but he can use talents and other abilities that require only thought or eye contact (such as the Frighten talent). Because the magician takes the physical form of a nightflyer, using this spell makes him vulnerable to the effect of Command Nightflyer spells cast by others.

Spirit Servant

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 8 / 20
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 3 days
Effect: Summons a spirit servant
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Spirit Servant spell allows a magician to conjure a spirit servant to do his bidding. The magician draws a circle on the ground and inscribes it with the name he has chosen for his servant. The circle must lie undisturbed for a full night before the spell can be cast. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the spirit servant appears within the circle as an ethereal humanoid of a gender and race of the magician's choosing.

For the duration of the spell, the servant loyally serves the magician. The spirits summoned usually serve as porters, scullery help, or even butlers, for they are not much good at combat. The spirit servant will protect itself should it be attacked, but will never initiate combat against another being, even if commanded to do so. They have a Carrying Capacity of 60 pounds and a Lifting Capacity of 120 pounds. While usually quiet, spirit servants are quite intelligent and capable of speech. Many magicians become attached to a particular spirit servant, summoning the same one time and again.

A spirit servant has the following statistics:

Spirit Servant

DEX: 4 **STR**: 4 **TOU**: 4
PER: 7 **WIL**: 7 **CHA**: 5

Initiative: 6 **Physical Defense**: 6
Number of Actions: 1 **Spell Defense**: 9
Attack: 4 **Social Defense**: 11
Damage: **Physical Armor**: 0
Unarmed: 4 **Mystic Armor**: 3

Death Rating: 27 **Recovery Tests**: 1
Wound Threshold: 6 **Knockdown**: Immune
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 22✦ **Full Movement**: 44✦

✦ This value is the spirit's flying Movement rate.

Powers: None

Legend Points: 50

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Viewpoint

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 9 / 17
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 6 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 9
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Viewpoint spell creates a one-way window through a wall or other barrier. After weaving the spell thread, the magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, a window is created on the wall. The material of the barrier is unaffected—a stone wall is still as tough as stone, a wooden fence still provides the same protection, and so on. The window can be as small as the magician wishes or as large as 1 yard by 1 yard in size. The maximum depth of barrier that can be seen through is 1 yard.

There is a chance that someone on the other side of the wall notices the window. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is the Detection Difficulty for anyone attempting to spot the window with a Perception Test.

Visions of Death

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 9 / 17
Range: 100 yards **Duration**: Rank + 6 rounds
Effect: Immobilizes target character with horror and fear
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Visions of Death spell calls upon the spirit world to present a very personal horror show to a target character. After weaving the spell thread, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target—and only the target—sees a detailed vision of his own death. The magician can control how the target character dies in the vision. While watching the vision unfold, the target knows he is not dying, but the fear and horror has a mesmerizing effect.

Each round he is transfixed by the vision, the target cannot move or act unless he makes a Willpower Test against the magician's Willpower step. If the test succeeds, the character breaks free of the spell, which immediately expires.

Fifth Circle Spells

Animate Spirit Object

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 19
Range: 25 yards **Duration**: Rank × 10 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Animate Spirit Object spell summons a spirit to inhabit an inanimate object. When animating the object, the spirit alters the item's shape to give it ambulatory and sensory capabilities, forming limbs, eyes and other organs as required. The object retains much of its original shape, however, and is still recognizable as such. The magician stays silent while weaving the spell threads, then points at the object and makes a Spellcasting Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a spirit is summoned, which immediately takes possession of the object.

The spirit provides the object's intellect, but the magician makes an Effect Test to determine the object's physical Attributes, allocating the test result among the object's Dexterity, Strength, and Toughness steps. The gamemaster may exercise his discretion at this stage, deciding which Attributes should have more or fewer steps allocated to them.

Caelarion, an elven Nethermancer, successfully summons a spirit to inhabit a stone statuette that he has procured for the purpose. He makes an Effect Test with a result of 16, which he allocates over the statue's Attribute steps as follows: Dexterity 9, Strength 3, Toughness 4. On reviewing the player's allocations, the gamemaster rules that the statue should have a higher Toughness and Strength compared to its Dexterity, and asks Caelarion's player to reallocate the Effect Test result. The player obliges, as follows: Dexterity 5, Strength 5, Toughness 6.

The gamemaster may also set a limit on the object's Attribute steps. He might, for instance, limit small objects such as a brush, a comb, or a dagger, to a maximum Attribute step of 3, but allow larger pieces of furniture a maximum Attribute step of 7. Likewise, he may also decide that a minimum Attribute step is in order for the object.

Reviewing the Attribute steps for the statuette, the gamemaster decides that the stone statue should have a minimum Toughness step of 7. Taking into account the requirements noted in the previous example, Caelarion's player rearranges the spell's Effect Test result and comes up with the following Attribute steps for the object: Dexterity 4, Strength 5, Toughness 7. The gamemaster gives his approval and the spell is complete.

The spirits summoned are reasonably intelligent and can follow complex commands. Although they willingly obey their summoner, they are somewhat erratic and capricious; if they can possibly create some mischief while still acting within the boundaries of their instructions, they will often do so.

The magician can verbally control the spirit object up to a distance of 25 yards, although this requires his concentration. If the object is further away, then the spirit will act on its most recent instructions, which may be less than perfect, depending on how mischievous it is feeling.

A spirit object has the following statistics:

Spirit Object

DEX: Effect Test* **STR**: Effect Test* **TOU**: Effect Test*
PER: 7 **WIL**: 7 **CHA**: 6

* Distribute the Effect Test result among these Attribute steps (see text).

Initiative: DEX **Physical Defense**: 5**
Number of Actions: 1 **Spell Defense**: 9
Attack: DEX **Social Defense**: 8
Damage: STR + 3 **Physical Armor**: 4**
Mystic Armor: 3

Death Rating: 27** **Recovery Tests**: 1
Wound Threshold: 6** **Knockdown**: STR
Unconsciousness Rating: 18**

Combat Movement: 14** **Full Movement**: 28**

** The gamemaster may decrease or increase these values, to reflect the spirit object's Attributes.

Powers: None

Legend Points: 55

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Astral Horror

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 9 / 19
Range: 120 yards **Duration**: Rank + 1 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

This spell is an illusion. The Astral Horror spell creates the illusion of a Horror conjured from a tiny bit of spiritual essence. Those who practice Nethermancy are known for conjuring abominable things from astral space (and beyond), and this spell plays on that fact. The fact that practitioners of Nethermancy are not normally known for conjuring illusions also adds to the efficacy of the Astral Horror spell. The magician makes threatening gestures while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the astral Horror's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the astral Horror appears as a fog ghost, but is far more lethal (see **Fog Ghost**, p. 348).

The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the spell's (and the illusion's) Disbelief Difficulty (see **Sensing and Disbelieving Illusions** in the **Illusionism Spells** chapter, p. 322). During the spell's duration, the astral Horror obeys the mental commands of the magician. This requires no concentration on the magician's behalf; he may perform other actions and still command the illusion. The illusion must not stray beyond spell range of the magician or it dissipates.

The astral Horror has the following statistics:

Astral Horror

DEX: 8 **STR**: 8 **TOU**: 10
PER: 7 **WIL**: 9 **CHA**: 6

Initiative: 9 **Physical Defense**: 15
Number of Actions: 2 **Spell Defense**: 12
Attack (2): 10 **Social Defense**: 14
Damage: **Physical Armor**: 0
Unarmed (3): 11 **Mystic Armor**: 6

Death Rating: 51 **Recovery Tests**: 4
Wound Threshold: 15 **Knockdown**: 8
Unconsciousness Rating: 44

Combat Movement: 46[+] **Full Movement**: 92[+]

[+] This value is the astral Horror's flying Movement rate.

Powers: None

Legend Points: 195

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Astral Mount

Threads: 2 *or* 4 (see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 17
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: Conjures an astral mount
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Astral Mount spell conjures a mount from the astral plane. The size of the mount determines the number of threads needed for the spell. Weaving 2 spell threads allows the magician to conjure an astral version of most common mounts, including riding horses, war horses, troajins, huttawas, kues, zoaks and granlains; weaving 4 spell threads allows the magician to conjure an astral thundra beast, elephant or dyre. The magician mentally calls to the mount while weaving the spell threads, then places his hand where he envisages the mount's head would be and makes a Spellcasting (8) Test—the Spell Defense of the astral mount. If the test succeeds, wisps of astral energy are drawn from astral space and the mount coalesces in the physical plane.

The mount can be ridden by anyone designated by the magician when he casts the spell. The astral mount has the same statistics as its physical world counterpart, apart from Spell Defense—which is always 8—and can also walk or gallop on water or air when unburdened and sink into the earth in the same way a spirit mount can (see **Spirit Mount** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 203). Talent knacks that can be used on a spirit mount cannot be used on an astral mount, however.

Example statistics for an astral riding horse and an astral thundra beast are as follows:

Astral Riding Horse (2 Threads)

DEX: 6 **STR**: 7 **TOU**: 8
PER: 3 **WIL**: 4 **CHA**: 4

Initiative: 6 **Physical Defense**: 8
Number of Actions: 1 **Spell Defense**: 8
Attack (1): 7 **Social Defense**: 6
Damage: **Physical Armor**: 0
Trample (2): 9 **Mystic Armor**: 0

Death Rating: 44 **Recovery Tests**: 4
Wound Threshold: 13 **Knockdown**: 8
Unconsciousness Rating: 36

Combat Movement: 52 **Full Movement**: 104

Powers: Enhanced Senses (Listen, Smell) (2): 5, Great Leap[S] (2): 8

Legend Points: 70

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Astral Thundra Beast (4 Threads)

DEX: 6 **STR**: 11 **TOU**: 12
PER: 5 **WIL**: 7 **CHA**: 4

Initiative: 7 **Physical Defense**: 8
Number of Actions: 1 **Spell Defense**: 8
Attack (1): 7 **Social Defense**: 10
Damage: **Physical Armor**: 8
Charge (8): 19 **Mystic Armor**: 2
Horns (4): 15
Trample (2): 13

Death Rating: 60 (66) **Recovery Tests**: 6
Wound Threshold: 17 **Knockdown**: 12
Unconsciousness Rating: 53 (58)

Combat Movement: 40 **Full Movement**: 80

Powers: Charge (4), Durability (1), Enhanced Senses (Listen, Smell) (2): 7

Legend Points: 215

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Astral Whisper

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 18
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Astral Whisper spell allows the magician to hear sounds originating in astral space, such as those made by spirits or Horrors. The magician cups his hands to his ears while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is compared against the Spell Defense of any astral being (including Name-givers or Horrors in astral form) within the spell's range. If the test succeeds, the magician can hear any sounds the entity makes. At his discretion, the gamemaster may ask the magician to make a Perception Test to identify specific sounds or speech.

Many magicians using this spell have been driven mad, particularly in such Horror-infested areas as Parlainth or the Badlands.

Blind

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 15
Range: 20 yards **Duration**: Rank + 5 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Blind spell turns the target character's eyes into empty unseeing pits. The magician claws at his own eyes and mutters under his breath while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target's eyeballs disappear, leaving behind dark empty holes. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is subtracted from the target's Perception value, to a minimum value of 1. The target uses his new Perception step for all sight-based Perception Tests; it does not affect any Perception-based talents or abilities that function in a non-visual way (smell, taste, touch, hearing). While under the spell's effect, the "blind" target also suffers a Complete darkness penalty to his other sight-based Action Tests (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 407). Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the spell's Effect step. If the test succeeds, the spell expires and the character can see normally again. Target characters with no visual capability—who don't require vision to "see"—are unaffected by the Blind spell.

Circle of Astral Protection

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 19
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 1 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Circle of Astral Protection spell creates a circle that provides magical protection for those standing within it. While weaving the spell threads, the magician walks the circumference of the circle, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense of any characters within the circle. If the test succeeds, a black circle with glowing yellow lines is created, 10 yards in diameter. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the Mystic Armor rating of any character within the circle when the spell was cast. This effect remains in place during the spell's duration so long as the character remains inside the circle. If a character leaves the circle, his Mystic Armor returns to its original value.

Incessant Talking

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 14 / 18
Range: 40 yards **Duration**: Rank + 1 minutes
Effect: Forces target to babble nonsense
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Incessant Talking spell conjures a mischievous spirit that forces a target character to babble nonsense. The magician babbles nonsense of his own while he weaves the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the spirit takes over the target, who babbles meaningless words for the duration of the spell. During this time, the target cannot use any social talents or skills, or make any Interaction Tests. A target magician may still cast spells that do not require him to speak specific words or phrases.

Each round, the target may attempt to drive off the spirit by making a Willpower Test against against the magician's Willpower step. If the test succeeds, the spell ends and the target regains control of his speech.

Pass Ward

Threads: 5 (6, 7; see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 21
Range: Touch
Duration: Rank weeks (months, years; see text)
Effect: Willpower + 12
Casting Difficulty: 6; Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Pass Ward spell places a ward on an area determined by the magician. Pass Ward is an extremely difficult enchantment to cast. The minimum number of woven threads required for the spell to succeed is 5. If the magician weaves 6 threads, the duration is a number of months equal to the magician's Spellcasting rank. If he weaves 7 threads, the duration is his Spellcasting rank in years. The magician must weave all of the spell threads in 7 rounds or less. If he fails, the spell fails, and the magician takes 5 Strain Points of damage. After weaving the spell threads, the magician touches the spot to be warded and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the ward is created with a Spellcasting step equal to that of the magician at the time of casting.

The magician may attach a key word or phrase to the ward when it is created, allowing those who speak it aloud to pass without triggering the ward. Whenever someone comes within 3 yards of the ward without first uttering the correct key word or phrase, the ward makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the approaching character. If the test succeeds, the ward places a white star on the target and tells him to "halt" (or some other message chosen by the magician when the ward was created). Unless the character immediately stops or backs away, the ward makes another Spellcasting Test. If the test succeeds, the ward makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage. The ward can target any number of targets in the same round; if a character enters the warded area, he can be zapped in the same round as another previously targeted character. Once it has discharged, the ward expires at the end of the round.

Sculpt Darkness

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 18
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank + 4 minutes
Effect: +4 bonus to stealth-based Action Tests
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Sculpt Darkness spell allows a magician to mold an existing area of darkness or shadow into any shape he desires. The darkness cannot change in volume, nor can actual objects be formed from it; only the shape of a given shadow can be made. While weaving the spell threads, the magician moves his hands as if shaping or sculpting an invisible medium, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the darkness is molded to the desired shape. The spell masks the activity of a character hidden within its depths; he gains a +4 bonus to any stealth-based Action Tests he makes. The character adds +4 to the Detection Difficulty for Perception Tests made to detect him while he hides in the sculpted shadow. A shadow sculpted with this spell can only hide one character.

At the gamemaster's discretion, this spell also adds a bonus of up to +4 to the Spellcasting or Effect Test results for other shadow / darkness spells, such as Shadow Hunter or Ethereal Darkness, cast by a magician hiding in the sculpted shadow.

Sense Horror

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 18
Range: 30 yards **Duration**: Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Sense Horror spell allows a magician to sense Horrors or Horror constructs. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, he makes an Effect Test, the result of which is compared against the Spell Defense of any target entities within the spell's range. If this test succeeds, the magician senses the target's presence, though not its exact location or nature. The spell does not detect Horror marks, but may pick up lingering traces of Horror corruption in a place.

Shadow Hunter

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 18
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: Summons a hunter spirit from the shadows
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Shadow Hunter spell conjures a vaguely humanoid form from a mass of shadow, featureless save for faintly glowing red eyes. The magician must be standing near a dark or shadowy area to cast this spell. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the shadow hunter's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a hunter is summoned, which carries out a single task for the magician before dissolving back into its formless state. Shadow hunters can track and hunt their prey unerringly if the magician possesses some personal item that belongs to the target; any Tracking Test the hunter is required to make is automatically successful.

Shadow hunters can be affected by all types of weapons and magic, though their high Physical Defense reflects the difficulty of harming them with mundane weaponry. Although able to slip around in the shade during the day, shadow hunters are susceptible to light; characters employing a light-based attack against a

shadow hunter, such as from certain spells and powers, gain a +4 bonus to their Effect or Damage Tests. A shadow hunter that is trapped in an area of sunlight without any shadows to hide in is destroyed if it cannot get to shade within a round.

The shadow hunter has the following statistics:

Shadow Hunter

DEX: 8 **STR**: 7 **TOU**: 7
PER: 6 **WIL**: 7 **CHA**: 6

Initiative: 8
Number of Actions: 2
Attack (2): 10
Damage:
Unarmed (5): 12
Physical Defense: 15
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 12
Physical Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 4

Death Rating: 39
Wound Threshold: 11
Recovery Tests: 3
Knockdown: 7
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 40
Full Movement: 80

Powers: None

Legend Points: 200

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Spiritual Guidance

Threads: 3
Range: Self
Weaving Difficulty: 8 / 18
Duration: 30 rounds
Effect: Summons a spirit guide to answer a question
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Spiritual Guidance spell summons a Strength Rating 5 ally spirit that can lead a magician on a journey to one of the netherworlds, where he may find the answer to a question of his choice. While weaving the spell threads, the magician focuses his mind on the question he wants answered, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the spirit guide's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a spirit appears and asks the magician to pose his question. The spirit then leads the magician into astral space, taking him to a specific netherworld where he can obtain an answer.

The answer is never straightforward, but rather comes in a vision that provides hints to the answer. For example, a magician asking where to find a legendary object might relive some events of the object's history (from the object's point of view) that point the way to its current location.

While traveling in astral space, the spirit uses its Astral Portal power to lead the magician through any gates necessary to reach the netherworld. The magician still faces all the other challenges and dangers of traveling in astral space, however. See the **Spirits** chapter on p. 358 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information on spirits and spirit powers.

Spirit Guide (Ally Spirit; Strength Rating 5)

DEX: 9 **STR**: 9 **TOU**: 9
PER: 9 **WIL**: 9 **CHA**: 9

Initiative: 10
Number of Actions: 2
Attack (5): 14
Damage:
Unarmed: 9
Physical Defense: 12
Spell Defense: 16
Social Defense: 16
Physical Armor: 9
Mystic Armor: 5

Death Rating: 48
Wound Threshold: 14
Recovery Tests: 4
Knockdown: 9
Unconsciousness Rating: 41

Combat Movement: 49
Full Movement: 98

Karma Points: 10
Karma Step: 8

Powers: Aid Summoner (5), Astral Portal (5), Astral Sight (5): 14, Empathic Sense (5): 14, Lifesight (5): 14, Manifest (5), Spellcasting (5): 14

Legend Points 355

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Star Shower

Threads: 1
Range: 10 yards
Weaving Difficulty: 11 / 17
Duration: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 9
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Star Shower spell creates a cloud of multicolored sparks that spray from the magician's outstretched hand. After weaving the spell thread, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among any targets within the spell's range. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which determines how much damage is inflicted on the targets. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Target Portal

Threads: 4
Range: 1,000 yards
Weaving Difficulty: 10 / 19
Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: Willpower + 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Target Portal spell creates a small gap in astral space, forming a pathway between the magician and a target character. The portal allows the magician to cast spells at the target, as if he was much closer to him. Although the portal has a maximum range of 1,000 yards, the magician must be able to see the target to create a path to him. As long as the target remains within this distance, the magician may cast any spell with a range greater than "Touch" through the portal.

The magician makes tearing, pulling motions with his hands while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the portal opens. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the spell's Effect step to see if he can close the portal. If the test succeeds, the portal closes and the spell expires.

Tears of the Scourge

Threads: 2
Range: 10 yards
Weaving Difficulty: 11 / 21
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Tears of the Scourge spell calls on the spirits of the legions of people killed, tortured, or emotionally destroyed by the Horrors during the Scourge and makes the targets realize how terrible it truly was. The magician must have a little salt water (tears or sweat will suffice) to cast this spell. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, a 10 yard by 10 yard area around the target group suddenly fills with the screaming, wailing spirits of the dead.

The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is compared against each target's Spell Defense. If this test succeeds, the target collapses, weeping uncontrollably, to the ground; he is effectively incapacitated for the duration of the spell. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the spell's Effect step. If the test succeeds, he recomposes himself and breaks free of the spell's effect. The magician may affect a number of characters equal to his Spellcasting rank.

The magician cannot directly or indirectly harm a character affected by this spell. If he does so, he automatically suffers the effects of the spell for an entire day, with no chance to resist it.

Whisper Through the Night

Threads: 1
Weaving Difficulty: 11 / 18
Range: 10 yards
Duration: Rank + 1 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Whisper Through the Night spell forces an ally spirit summoned by the magician to answer questions truthfully. After weaving the spell thread, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the spirit's Willpower step. Each result level achieved allows him to ask one question.

An Average result allows 1 question to be asked; a Good result 2 questions; an Excellent result 3 questions; an Extraordinary result allows 4 questions to be asked. The spirit must answer truthfully to the best of its ability (though it can tell half-truths). Asking a question takes at least 1 round. If the spell expires before the magician asks all the questions he is allowed, he loses the opportunity to ask any remaining questions.

For more information on ally spirits, see the **Spirits** chapter on p. 359 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**.

Wither Limb

Threads: 3
Weaving Difficulty: 8 / 19
Range: 60 yards
Duration: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The feared Wither Limb spell causes one of the target character's limbs to shrivel up into a useless appendage. After weaving the spell threads, the magician points at one of the victim's limbs and whispers "wither," then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

If the target suffers a Wound from the damage received, his limb shrinks and shrivels to a useless vestige. The character suffers a –3 penalty to Action Tests using the limb. The target must seek powerful healing magic, such as the Reverse Withering spell, to regain use of the limb. The Wound remains with the target until the limb is restored.

Sixth Circle Spells

Blessed Light

Threads: 1
Weaving Difficulty: 8 / 18
Range: Touch
Duration: Rank + 15 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Blessed Light spell pierces astral space, allowing the magician to gather pure light. The magician squints his eyes while weaving the spell thread, then points his finger in the air and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, a globe of light appears, hovering about 1 yard above the magician, and illuminating a 15 yard radius. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the Difficulty to enter the illuminated area. Any entity, including undead, who wishes to enter must make a successful Willpower Test against the result of the Effect test. If the test succeeds, the spell expires and the light is extinguished, otherwise the entity cannot enter the area.

Bone Puppet

Threads: 3
Weaving Difficulty: 8 / 15
Range: 25 yards
Duration: Rank + 6 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Bone Puppet spell is an advanced variant of the Bone Dance spell that provides the magician with more control over the target character. The magician pretends to be manipulating a string-puppet while weaving the spell threads, then points at the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the target's Strength step. If this test succeeds, the magician forces the target to imitate any movement the magician himself makes—for example, if the magician steps 1 yard to the left, the target steps 1 yard to the left. If the test fails, the target regains control that round and may move and act of his own accord.

The spell requires the magician to concentrate, directing the target's actions each round. While the magician has control of the target, all of the target's Attribute steps are considered to be equal to the spell's Effect step for the purpose of making Action Tests. The magician cannot use any of the target's talents or magical abilities. The target is incapable of fine motor control while under the spell's effect, but may attempt to break free of the spell each round by making a Willpower Test against the spell's Effect step. If the test succeeds, the spell expires and the target regains full control.

Bone Shatter

Threads: 2
Weaving Difficulty: 12 / 20
Range: 60 yards
Duration: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Bone Shatter spell splinters and cracks the target's bones, inflicting horrific damage. The magician makes cracking sounds as he weaves the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test for each result level achieved on the Spellcasting Test, directing no more than two such tests against an individual target. The Effect Test result determines how much damage is inflicted on the target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage. A target who takes a Wound adds +3 to the Knockdown Difficulty.

Caelarion, an elf Nethermancer, makes a successful Spellcasting Test against a group of ork scorchers who have decided to attack the elf and his companions. He achieves an Extraordinary result, and can make four Effect tests. Caelarion can direct 1 Effect Test against 4 different scorchers, or 2 Effect Tests against the ork scorcher leader and 1 Effect Test each against 2 more of his followers, or any other combination that totals no more than 4 Bone Shatter Effect Tests.

Bone Walker

Threads: 3 (ritual; see text)
Weaving Difficulty: 12 / 18
Range: Touch
Duration: Rank + 2 days
Effect: Creates a bone walker
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Bone Walker ritual spell creates a large animated skeleton. This spell must be cast within an active bone circle and requires additional bones to make the bone walker—about as many as would make up a troll-sized skeleton. Each day, the magician spends 1 hour weaving a spell thread to the collection of bones, carefully placing them in the shape of the skeleton. After weaving

the spell threads, he touches the bones and makes a Spellcasting Test against the bone walker's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the bones join together and animate in the shape of a humanoid figure. The magician can mentally control the bone walker from a distance of up to 100 yards, although this requires his concentration while issuing commands. Otherwise, the creature follows the last command it received, such as guarding a given place, attacking any living creature that passes, and so on.

Blood magic can be used to extend the spell's duration. By taking 3 permanent Damage Points, the magician keeps the bone walker animated for a year and a day. This damage cannot be healed until the spell is dispelled or expires, or the bone walker is destroyed.

The bone walker has the following statistics:

Bone Walker

DEX: 8 **STR**: 12 **TOU**: 10
PER: 4 **WIL**: 5 **CHA**: 3

Initiative: 8 **Physical Defense**: 10
Number of Actions: 2 **Spell Defense**: 10
Attack (4): 12 **Social Defense**: 12
Damage: **Physical Armor**: 10
Unarmed (3): 15 **Mystic Armor**: 5

Death Rating: 51 **Recovery Tests**: 4
Wound Threshold: 15 **Knockdown**: 13
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 43 **Full Movement**: 86

Powers: None

Legend Points: 295

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Dust to Dust

Threads: Varies (see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 22
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 11
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Dust to Dust spell destroys large groups of undead creatures. The magician weaves 1 spell thread for each undead creature he wishes to target, then he swallows hard and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target within the spell's range. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on each target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage. Undead creatures that take damage in excess of their Death Rating immediately crumble to dust.

The magician can target a number of undead creatures equal to his Spellcasting rank. This spell does not affect disembodied spirits, corrupt Name-givers or Horrors, but it does affect undead Horror constructs, such as cadaver men. If there is any doubt, the gamemaster determines whether the creature is undead, and therefore affected by this spell.

Foul Vapors

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 19
Range: 25 yards **Duration**: Rank + 6 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Foul Vapors spell taps into the uglier regions of astral space, drawing the vapors found there to the physical plane. The magician holds his breath while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target within the spell's range. If the test succeeds, vapors are brought forth from astral

space, completely filling a 25 yard radius sphere centered on the magician. The Foul Vapors do not move once conjured.

The magician is immune to the vapors' effect. He may extend this immunity to a number of additional characters equal to his Spellcasting rank, declared when the magician makes his Spellcasting Test. Those not immune to the spell's effect take damage for every round they are caught in the vapors. They do not have to breathe the fumes to take damage; only contact is necessary—the spell therefore affects both living and undead creatures alike. The magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on each target within the vapors' area of effect. Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

Friendly Darkness

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 9 / 20
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: Creates magical darkness; +5 bonus to one type of Action Test for friendly characters
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Friendly Darkness spell draws darkness from another dimension, extinguishing all light nearby. The magician cups

his hands together while weaving the spell threads, commands the darkness to billow forth and touches the target character or object. He then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the target is an unwilling recipient for the Friendly Darkness spell, the magician requires a Good result on his Spellcasting Test. If the test succeeds, the darkness conjured fills a 15 yard radius area centered on the target. The darkness extinguishes all light, causing those within the spell's radius of effect to incur a Complete darkness penalty to all sight-based Action Tests (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 407).

The magician may nominate a number of characters up to his Spellcasting rank within the darkness' radius of effect to gain a +5 bonus to one type of Action Test. All those benefiting from being within the Friendly Darkness add this bonus to the same type of Action Test, such as an Attack Test, Spellcasting Test, Recovery Test, and so on, as determined by the magician. This bonus serves to negate the Complete darkness penalty for friendly characters within the area of darkness.

Ordinary light does not penetrate the Friendly Darkness. Attempts to banish the darkness with magical light, or to dispel it with the Dispel Magic spell, are made against a Spell Defense of 14. Characters with knowledge of Nethermancy are unaffected by Friendly Darkness—they can see normally, as if the spell had never been cast.

Recovery

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 9 / 20
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 15
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Recovery spell gives a fierce boost to the life force of a character. After weaving the spell threads, the magician touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target makes an Effect Test in place of one of his own Recovery Tests.

If he has no Recovery Tests available to him, he receives no benefit from the Recovery spell.

Soul Armor

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 17
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 15 minutes
Effect: +5 bonus to Mystic Armor
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Soul Armor spell enhances a character's Mystic Armor. After weaving the spell thread, the magician touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a glimmering suit of blue chain mail appears, momentarily covering the target before it sinks into his body. The target adds +5 to his Mystic Armor for the duration of the spell.

Wall of Darkness

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 19
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Wall of Darkness spell conjures a barrier of darkness. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, a wall of inky blackness is created, 10 yards by 10 yards in size, and 1 yard thick, that blocks sight from both sides. The wall absorbs attacks made through it, banishing the force of the attack to astral space.

The magician makes an Effect Test against any Attack Test made against the wall. If the test succeeds, the attack fails. Characters on either side of the wall add +3 to their Physical Defense against attacks launched through the wall.

The wall of darkness has no physical substance; anyone can step through the wall without harm.

Seventh Circle Spells

Astral Beacon

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 23
Range: 40 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Creates a beacon in astral space
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Astral Beacon spell creates a bright flare of energy in astral space around a character. The spell exposes the target to the risk of being Horror-marked as if he had just used raw magic. The magician crouches down while weaving the spell threads, then leaps up, throws his arms into the air, and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense.

If the test succeeds, the magician makes a Warping Test against the target's Spell Defense, using a step number equivalent to that for a Seventh Circle spell (see **Casting Raw Magic** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 289). If this test succeeds, the magician makes a Damage Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target, using a step number equivalent to that for a Seventh Circle spell. The target's base Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

Finally, the magician makes a Horror Mark Test against the target's base Spell Defense, using a step number equivalent to that for a Seventh Circle spell. If the test succeeds, the target is Horror-marked. The gamemaster determines the type or nature of the Horror involved, and the results of the Horror mark.

Astral Maw

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 17
Range: 25 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Astral Maw spell summons a huge fanged mouth from astral space. Rumors abound that the spell summons a real Horror, which does little to diminish the fearsome reputation of magicians, especially those who practice Nethermancy. The magician makes chewing noises while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against his own Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a giant fanged mouth large enough to swallow a troll, and surrounded by writhing tentacles, is summoned from the depths of the netherworlds. Each round, the maw attacks a target designated by the magician within the spell's range. The magician must concentrate to maintain and direct the maw; if the magician's concentration is broken, the spell expires and the maw disappears.

The astral maw has the following statistics:

Astral Maw

DEX: Magician **STR**: NA **TOU**: NA
PER: NA **WIL**: NA **CHA**: NA

Initiative: DEX **Physical Defense**: Magician
Number of Actions: 1 **Spell Defense**: Magician
Attack: Spellcasting step **Social Defense**: Immune
Damage: **Physical Armor**: 0
Bite: Effect step **Mystic Armor**: 0

Death Rating: Magician **Recovery Tests**: NA
Wound Threshold: NA **Knockdown**: Immune
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: NA **Full Movement**: NA

Powers: None
Legend Points: 330
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Rules

The following special rules apply to the astral maw:

Swallow: If the astral maw achieves an Extraordinary result on an Attack Test, any troll-sized or smaller target is swallowed whole. Each round, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target, unless it escapes. The target must make a successful Strength Test against the spell's Effect step to escape from the maw. Characters killed while inside the astral maw disappear permanently into astral space.

Banquet of Dis

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 17
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank days
Effect: Eliminates hunger and fatigue
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Banquet of Dis spell allows a character to survive without food, water or sleep for extended periods, solely subsisting on magical energy. The magician rubs his stomach and licks his lips while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target's cravings for eating, drinking or sleeping are suppressed. The target loses 1 Recovery Test for each day he goes without food and water and 1 Recovery Test for each night he goes without sleep. A character with only 1 Recovery Test per day will need to choose which effect he wants to ignore—food and water, or sleep. The spell has no effect on a character with less than 1 Recovery Test per day.

While under the spell's influence, the target suffers no lasting ill effect from such deprivation and can remain active, acting normally with no penalties from the lack of real nutrition or sleep. The target character's ability to heal is reduced, however; he suffers a –3 penalty to his Recovery Tests during the spell's duration.

Bone Pudding

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 20
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: 1 round (see text)
Effect: Inflicts 6 Wounds on target
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Bone Pudding spell turns a target character's bones into a pudding-like consistency. While weaving the spell threads, the magician eats a messy substance, such as pudding, porridge, or some other suitably glutinous dish, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target's shin, knee, and elbow bones turn into the sludgy consistency of whatever the magician was eating. This effect causes the target to suffer 6 Wounds (although he takes no Damage Points) and collapse to the ground.

The target is affected by the usual penalties for sustaining multiple Wounds (see **Wound Effects** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 403). A target may only be affected by one Bone Pudding spell at a time. Within 2 to 3 hours of the spell being cast, the target's bones return to their original consistency. After this time has elapsed, the Wounds caused by the Bone Pudding spell may be healed normally.

Cold Storage

Threads: 8 (ritual; see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 20
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank months
Effect: Preserves organic matter
Casting Difficulty: 8

The Cold Storage ritual spell is used to keep bodies and food from rotting, and is often used during magical experiments or on lengthy travel to far-off lands. The spell affects a 10 yard diameter circle—the diameter of the bone circle employed in the ritual. Weaving each spell thread takes 1 hour, during which time the magician must describe, stack and sprinkle water over all of the targeted items, which are placed in an active bone circle.

After weaving the spell threads, the magician throws a last handful of water into the bone circle and makes a Spellcasting (8) Test. If the test succeeds, the items in the circle will remain free of rot and decay for the spell's duration. Once the spell has been successfully cast, the items can be moved from the bone circle.

Food preserved with this spell cannot be eaten until the effect is dispelled or the spell expires.

Constrict Heart

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 18
Range: 25 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Constrict Heart spell surrounds the target's heart with a constricting layer of astral force. While facing the victim, the magician extends his hand in a grasping motion, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target feels his heart being squeezed in a vice-like grip. Each round, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. No armor protects against this damage.

The magician must concentrate during each round in which he makes an Effect Test, or the spell is broken. While under the spell's effect, the target is immobilized unless he makes a successful Willpower Test against the spell's Effect step, the magician's concentration is broken, or the spell is otherwise dispelled or expires. At the gamemaster's discretion, some creatures are not affected by this spell. Generally, this is because they are undead and feel no pain, or because they have no heart or a similar organ to constrict.

Damage Shift

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 20
Range: Self **Duration**: 3 rounds
Effect: Shifts damage to another target
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Damage Shift spell shifts damage that the magician has taken in combat or another dangerous situation to another character. The magician shakes his clothing vigorously while weaving the spell threads, then taps his forehead and makes a Spellcasting Test against his own unlowered Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician can attempt to shift any damage that he takes while the spell is in effect to another target within his line of sight.

The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense as soon as the result of any Damage Test made against the magician, after armor, has been determined. If the test succeeds, the damage taken by the magician shifts to the target. Mystic armor protects against this damage. This spell is patterned after an ability used by some Horrors.

Marathon Run

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 20
Range: 80 yards **Duration**: Rank + 1 minutes
Effect: Forces target to flee
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Marathon Run spell summons a spirit that possesses the target character, forcing him to run wildly away from the magician. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target is overcome by the spirit and runs away as fast as he can in the direction that most easily allows him to put distance between himself and the magician.

The target continues to run each round of the spell's duration at his fastest possible Movement rate. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the magician's Willpower step. If the test succeeds, the target regains control of himself and the spell expires.

Restrain Entity

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 14 / 20
Range: 25 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 12
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Restrain Entity spell traps a target undead creature, Horror, Horror construct, or physically manifested spirit, within a circle of light. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a brilliant circle of red light, limned with gold writing, encircles the target. The circle is rooted to the spot; neither it nor the target can be moved. The target can still communicate, if the magician wishes to talk to such a creature.

Each round, the target may attempt to free itself by making a Willpower Test against the spell's Effect step. If the test succeeds, the circle is broken and the spell expires.

Reverse Withering

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 18
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 3 rounds
Effect: Restores withered limb
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Reverse Withering spell reverses the effects of the Wither Limb spell, restoring the injured limb. After weaving the spell threads, the magician touches the target limb, infusing it with energy from another plane, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's unlowered Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the limb returns to its normal condition.

The withered limb is not instantly restored to full health. The character still suffers a –3 penalty to Action Tests made using the limb until the Wound associated with the withering is healed (see **Wither Limb**, p. 359). After this Wound is healed, the limb returns to full strength.

Spirit Bolt

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 23
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 12
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Spirit Bolt spell directs a beam of violet energy to strike a target spirit, disrupting its pattern. After weaving the spell thread, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

The Spirit Bolt spell does not affect Name-givers or purely physical Horror constructs, such as cadaver men, but it can harm Horrors and physically manifested spirits. The magician can use this spell against a spirit in astral space if the magician can see it, using the Astral Sight talent or a similar ability.

Spirit Portal

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 14 / 19
Range: Touch **Duration**: 10 × Rank minutes
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Spirit Portal spell creates a doorway into astral space through which spirits may enter the physical plane or characters enter astral space. The spell must be cast within a bone circle built by the magician. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the magician punctures a small hole in astral space, continuing to widen the opening until he has created a doorway into astral space. The magician has some control over who uses the Spirit Portal, but he must be within sight of the portal to contest entry. To prevent a being from crossing through the portal, the magician makes an Effect Test against the being's Willpower Test result. If the test fails, the being can pass through the portal. If the test succeeds, it is prevented from passing through the portal for the remaining duration of the spell; the entity cannot try to pass through that same portal again. Regardless of the outcome, the magician takes 1 Strain Point of damage from the exertion.

Steal Strength

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 23
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: 6 or Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Steal Strength spell saps a character's strength, imbuing the magician with the stolen energy. After weaving the spell

threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, his hands are surrounded with a faint blue aura. To steal strength from another character, the magician touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is subtracted from the target's Strength value and added to that of the magician. The target's Strength value cannot be reduced below 1.

Every 3 points of Strength stolen reduces the target's Strength step by –1, to a minimum of Step 1. The magician only increases his Strength value by the amount he is actually able to steal from the target; a weak target will correspondingly only increase the magician's Strength to a smaller degree. A magician can only increase his Strength value to twice its original value with the Strength stolen by this spell. Instead of increasing his Strength value, the magician may instead use the stolen strength to heal Damage Points in the same manner as a Recovery Test.

Stolen Strength points vanish when the spell ends, but any damage healed by this spell is permanently restored. The target's Strength is immediately returned to him at the spell's expiration.

Step Through Shadow

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 24
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank + 3 rounds
Effect: Creates an astral passageway
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Step Through Shadow spell allows a magician to move from one shadow to another through astral space. The magician must be standing beside one or more shadows, including his own, for the spell to be cast. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against his own Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the nearby shadows become temporary "gates" at the ends of a "tunnel" through the astral plane. The maximum distance the magician can travel between shadows is 100 yards. He must move through astral space at his normal Movement rates and can be seen and attacked by Horrors, spirits and various magical effects while moving through the astral plane.

While the spell is in effect, the shadow-gates also enable entitles in astral space to pass into the physical world. Once the magician passes through the gateway opposite the one he entered, the spell ends. If, for some reason, the magician does not exit the opposite gate before the spell expires, he remains trapped in astral space. Trapped magicians can leave the astral plane via other means, if available to them.

Wit Friend

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 8 / 19
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 10 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Wit Friend spell summons a spirit to assist the target with mental activities. After weaving the required threads, the magician taps the target's head and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician summons a spirit, which slowly glides into the target's mind.

During the duration of the spell, any time the target fails a mental Skill or Talent Test (except for Spellcasting or Thread Weaving Tests), the spirit allows him a second chance. The target makes an Effect Test in place of the Skill or Talent Test. If this test fails again, the action fails.

Eighth Circle Spells

Control Being

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 14 / 20
Range: 25 yards **Duration**: Rank + 10 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Control Being spell allows the magician to take complete control of a target character. While weaving the spell threads, the magician holds his body perfectly still, eyes closed, then he opens his eyes, flings his arms out, and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician takes control of the movements of the target's body. The target still controls his thoughts and speech, but the magician dictates all movement.

The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the Difficulty Number for any Willpower Tests the target makes to break free of the magician's control. The magician must concentrate to force the target to move, but a break in concentration does not end the spell. If the target wishes to break free of the spell's effect, he must make a successful Willpower Test against the magician's Effect Test result. If the test succeeds, the target regains control of his body and the spell expires.

While under the effect of the spell, the target moves and acts with own Attribute steps. The magician cannot use any of the target's talents or spells, but if the target possesses any skills then the magician can direct the target to use those, as long as they do not require the target to think or speak.

Globe of Silence

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 14 / 20
Range: 40 yards **Duration**: Rank + 2 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Globe of Silence spell creates a zone which completely smothers all sound. The magician pulls out a glass or crystal bead or another hard object while weaving the spell threads, then shatters it on the ground at the spot where the spell is intended to take effect and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, a 6 yard diameter sphere is conjured, inside which no sound can be heard. This makes verbal communication impossible and also prevents the casting of spells that require speech.

The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is the Dampening Difficulty of the spell. Sound-based talents, such as Battle Shout and Emotion Song, are affected by this spell, but can dispel the Globe Of Silence if their Action Test result is at least equal to the spell's Dampening Difficulty.

Horror Call

Threads: 6 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 22
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: Willpower + 16
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The dangerous Horror Call spell summons a Horror from astral space. The magician must first learn the Name of the Horror he wishes to call. He then carefully inscribes a 3 yard diameter circle, painting it white and gold. Using the Horror Call spell is both debilitating and dangerous to the magician; casting the spell requires the use of blood magic. Each casting causes the magician 1 permanent Damage Point. This damage can never be recovered. In addition, the magician permanently loses +1 additional Damage Point for each spell thread he fails to weave. Should

the magician break off the spell before completing it, the magical backlash causes him Step 25 damage. Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

After weaving the spell threads, the magician touches the circle, calls aloud the Horror's Name, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the Horror's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the Horror is summoned from astral space into the protective circle. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the Dispel Difficulty of the circle. The Horror remains in the protective circle until it makes a successful Willpower or Dispel Magic Test against the Dispel Difficulty, or it is released from the circle by the magician, or the spell expires. The Horror may attempt a Willpower or Dispel Magic Test each hour. If the test succeeds, the spell expires and the Horror is returned to astral space. The Horror also returns to astral space at the end of the spell's duration.

Many Horrors will bargain with a magician, offering great treasure in return for release into the physical plane. They have been known to offer more than 100,000 Legend Points in treasure. If their offer is accepted, the Horror will usually pay what is promised, but often return to take back the treasure at a later date. Few magicians teach this spell. A character should wonder about the motives of one who does, because Horrors often make teaching the Horror Call spell to others part of any deal they make with a magician.

Netherblade

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 14 / 17
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 6 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Netherblade spell magically enhances melee weapons so they can be used against targets in astral space. After weaving the spell threads, the magician touches the weapon and makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the wielder's or the weapon's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against a Difficulty Number equal to the weapon's Damage step + the wielder's Strength step. If the test succeeds, the weapon takes on a dark, smoky luster; it is now attuned to inflict damage against targets in astral space. Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

During the spell's duration the weapon cannot be used against targets in the physical world; it simply passes through such opponents, leaving them slightly chilled but unharmed. The weapon must be wielded with a melee combat talent or skill, and the wielder must be able to see the target to hit it. Most often, this means that the wielder must use the Astral Sight talent, or a similar ability or spell, in order to see or strike a target in astral space.

Restrain Horror

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 19
Range: 25 yards **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: Willpower + 16
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

A quicker, more powerful version of the Restrain Entity spell, the Restrain Horror spell traps a target Horror (not a Horror construct) within a circle of light. After weaving the spell thread, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the Horror's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a brilliant circle of red light encircles the target. The circle is rooted to the spot; neither it nor the Horror can be moved.

The Restrain Horror spell has a short duration, so a backup plan is advised. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the Dispel Difficulty of the spell. Each round, the Horror may attempt to free itself by making a Willpower or Dispel Magic Test against the spell's Dispel Difficulty. If the test succeeds, the circle is broken and the spell expires.

Shadow Tether

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 16 / 19
Range: 50 yards **Duration**: Rank + 10 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Shadow Tether spell anchors characters to the ground by their shadows. The magician may target a number of characters equal to his Spellcasting rank. Both the targets and their shadows must be visible to him. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target within the spell's range. If the test succeeds, the target characters' shadows are affixed to the ground, holding their owners in place.

The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which determines the strength of the bond. Each round, a tethered character makes a successful Strength Test against the Effect Test result to pull free of the spell's effect.

Translator Spirit

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 19
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank × 10 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Translator Spirit spell summons an ally spirit to act as a translator (see the **Spirits** chapter on p. 358 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information on spirits). After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a spirit is summoned which can speak any language the magician desires, and translates anything said by the magician. When the spirit is talking, the magician makes an Effect Test in place of a Speak Language Test to determine if its quavery voice is understood by those listening.

The spirit has the following statistics:

Translator Spirit
(Ally Spirit; Strength Rating 2)

DEX: 5 **STR**: 5 **TOU**: 5
PER: 5 **WIL**: 5 **CHA**: 5

Initiative: 6 **Physical Defense**: 7
Number of Actions: 1 **Spell Defense**: 7
Attack (2): 7 **Social Defense**: 7
Damage: **Physical Armor**: 5
Unarmed: 5 **Mystic Armor**: 2

Death Rating: 32 **Recovery Tests**: 2
Wound Threshold: 8 **Knockdown**: 5
Unconsciousness Rating: 24

Combat Movement: 22 **Full Movement**: 44

Karma Points: 4 **Karma Step**: 5

Powers: Translate (see text)

Legend Points 40

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Visit Death

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 24
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 1 days
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Visit Death spell inflicts a vision of death on a character. After weaving the spell threads, the magician touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target briefly sees himself dying a horrific and painful death, the experience leaving him disoriented and disturbed; the specifics of the vision are determined by the magician. The magician makes an Effect Test against the target's Spell Defense. If this test succeeds, the target suffers a –1 penalty to all of his Action Tests for each result level achieved.

Each day, after waking from his nightly sleep, the target can attempt to throw off the malaise. If he makes a successful Willpower Test against the spell's Effect step, the disorientation fades and the spell expires.

Wall of Bones

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 14 / 21
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Creates a wall of bones
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Wall of Bones spell creates a wall from the bones of those interred nearby. The magician must be standing on open ground in an area where creatures have died, such as a cemetery or old battleground, to cast this spell. The magician draws a line along the ground while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the wall's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the earth erupts along the line the magician has drawn, drawing up the bones of those buried within it to form a wall 10 yards high and up to 100 yards long and 1 yard thick.

The wall can be physically or magically attacked. A character who fails an Attack Test against the wall has still struck it, but his blow has no effect. Only an Extraordinary result can defeat the bone wall's Physical or Mystic Armor. When the wall takes damage equal to its Death Rating, or when the spell expires, it immediately crumbles.

A bone wall has the following statistics:

Bone Wall

Physical Defense: 9 **Physical Armor**: 8*
Spell Defense: 7 **Mystic Armor**: 6*
Social Defense: Immune

* Requires an Extraordinary result to defeat.

Death Rating: 40 **Wound Threshold**: NA
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Wither Away

Threads: 5 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 21
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank months
Effect: Willpower
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Wither Away spell causes a character to slowly wither away and possibly die. While weaving the spell threads, the magician utters a dire prophecy about the target, then touches him and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is the number of pounds of weight the target loses each month. This continues until the spell expires or is dispelled or the character dies. The Wither Away spell may only be dispelled or removed with talents or spells that affect curses.

When the target character's weight sinks below 50 percent of the average for his race, he begins to feel weak and dizzy; the target is considered Harried while in this condition (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408). If his weight drops below 25 percent of the average for his race, he also begins to take damage; each month, the target loses a number of Damage Points equal to the Effect Test result (the weight loss continues as well).

Ninth Circle Spells

Create Life

Threads: Varies (ritual; see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 21 / 26
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 7 years
Effect: Creates a life form
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

Create Life is a time-consuming, difficult, and expensive ritual spell that enables the magician to literally "make" a new life form. The target must be created from a special blood broth, which consumes 100 silver pieces worth of materials each day of use. If the materials are not kept replenished during the entire ritual, the life form will be "stillborn" on arrival.

The number of spell threads required is determined by the number of Attributes and abilities the magician wants to give the life form. Each thread adds more mystic energy to the blood broth, increasing the potency of the life form and adds +1 to one Defense Rating, or Attribute step, or talent step of the magician's choice. Each spell thread takes 1 hour to weave, and the magician may attempt to weave only one thread each day. While the thread is being woven, the magician must remain within 10 yards of the target, or he loses all of his previously woven threads and must start the spell anew.

To increase a target's abilities, the blood broth must contain blood from a character or creature with the desired ability rating at a higher level than that of the target. For example, to increase a talent from Rank 5 to Rank 6 the magician would need blood from a character with Rank 6 or more in the same talent.

Once the magician has woven all the Attributes and abilities, the life form is complete. Once the magician has woven all of the spell threads, he weaves +1 additional final thread to bind all the others together and make the life form viable outside the blood broth, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target rises from the blood broth, taking whatever shape the magician desires.

The life form created can never be a Name-giver. Once created, a magician will often enhance the creature's abilities further by using the Alter Life ritual spell.

Dark Sword

Threads: 6 **Weaving Difficulty**: 15 / 19
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank days
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Dark Sword spell is an incarnation of the power of the night. The spell must be cast at night and requires the use of an amulet or medallion. The magician grasps the amulet in one hand while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the amulet's or its wearer's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a shadowy two-handed sword appears, which melts into the amulet. The amulet's wearer may use the Dark Sword spell's Effect step as his Melee Weapons step or the Damage

step for a successful strike with any melee weapon he is wielding—he may not do both. Physical Armor protects against this damage. The magician is restricted when casting the Dark Sword spell. He is able to maintain a maximum number of spells equal to his Spellcasting rank at any time.

When the amulet's wearer is in combat, darkness erupts from the melee weapon he is wielding. This darkness has a radius of 10 yards; those within it suffer a Full darkness penalty to their sight-based Action Tests, unless they are able to see in normal darkness (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 407). The amulet's wearer is not affected by this darkness, nor are those who have knowledge of Nethermancy (see **Thread Weaving** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 207). The character makes an Effect Test to determine how many rounds the darkness lasts for, using his own Willpower step.

Disrupt Magic

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 19
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Disrupt Magic spell disrupts any magical force or pattern, from a spell with a sustained duration, to the talents and magical abilities of an adept or a magical item. The magician intently focuses while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the target's Spell Defense or, in the case of a spell, the spell's Circle. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the Dispel Difficulty of the target spell or ability (see **Dispelling Magic**, p. 291). If the test succeeds, the talent, spell, or ability cannot be used again until the target spends a Recovery Test to restore it or recasts the spell.

The Disrupt Magic spell can also be used against astral creatures, characters in astral space, and other denizens of the astral plane such as spirits or Horrors. In these cases, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage. This spell is patterned after an ability used by some Horrors.

Mystic Vessel

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 15 / 23
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Mystic Vessel spell was created by magicians who needed to conceal themselves from Horrors, and in some cases, other Name-givers. The spell can only be cast on a living Name-giver. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician places his mystic essence into the living "vessel" for the duration of the spell. The Name-giver need not be a willing target of the spell, though a willing vessel makes casting the spell much easier. A Good result is required to affect an unwilling target with this spell.

While the spell is active, the magician cannot use any of his talents or magical abilities but also cannot be detected as being an adept or magician by a successful Astral Sensing Test. Instead, the magician appears as a normal, non-magical Name-giver character. The vessel gives off a faint magical aura, however, that can be detected through astral sensing. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the Detection Difficulty for any Astral Sensing Tests made to determine the true nature of the vessel. The target does not gain any of the magician's abilities when acting as a vessel. The magician can regain his abilities and

end the spell at any time by simply touching the target. If the target dies, or is the subject of a successful Dispel Magic spell, the Mystic Vessel spell expires and the magician returns to normal, regaining all of his abilities.

Shift Skin

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 17 / 18
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Shift Skin spell literally rips the skin from a character. After weaving the spell threads, the magician touches his victim, making a quick wrenching motion, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target's skin starts to tear free from its muscle and fat, twisting and distorting around his body. Each round the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. The first round is the worst for the victim; regardless of the number of Damage Points inflicted, the Shift Skin spell always causes a minimum of 5 Wounds to the target. No armor protects against this damage. Creatures who have no skin or muscle are not affected by this spell.

This horrible spell is patterned after an ability used by some Horrors. It was probably taught by a Horror and passed down through the society of magicians. Use of this spell is illegal in most nations, and the mere knowledge of it is a crime in the Kingdom of Throal.

Silent Darkness

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 15 / 22
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank + 5 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Silent Darkness spell combines the effects of the Globe of Silence and Ethereal Darkness spells to create a darkened area capable of suppressing noise. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against his own Spell Defense.

If the test succeeds, the magician creates an area of complete silence and darkness in a 10 yard radius around him.

Characters within the spell's area of effect cannot see, hear or speak, and suffer a –8 penalty to all Action Tests requiring use of these senses from the resulting disorientation; the magician is immune to the effects of his own spell, and can act normally.

The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the spell's Dispel Difficulty. Spells, talents and skills making use of sound or light, such as Battle Shout, can dispel the sphere if the Action of Effect Test result is at least equal to the spell's Dispel Difficulty.

Talent Shredder

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 17 / 19
Range: 100 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Talent Shredder spell suppresses an adept's ability to use his talents. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a spiral coil of inky darkness shoots from his hands to the target. The magician makes an Effect Test against the step number of the talent he wants to shred. If this test succeeds, the target is unable to use the talent again until he next makes a Recovery Test.

Talents that have a permanent effect, such as the Durability and Karma Ritual talents, are not affected by this spell.

Void Wave

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 15 / 22
Range: 100 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 13
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Void Wave spell creates a powerful wave of roiling blackness in which can be seen the faint movement of tortured spirits. The wave is 10 yards wide and rolls out from the magician to a distance of 100 yards, like a murderous ground mist. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test, comparing the result against the Spell Defense of each target in the wave's path. If the test succeeds the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target, otherwise the wave passes over the target with no other effect than leaving a slight chill in its wake. Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

Walking Dead

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 19
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank days
Effect: Willpower
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Walking Dead spell raises a recently deceased character as a zombie. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the corpse's Spell Defense or the number of days it has been dead. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which determines the maximum Attribute value for the zombie. An Effect Test result of 9, for example, would cap each of the zombie's Attribute values at 9. Any higher Attribute value would be reduced to a 9, while anything lower would remain at that number.

The zombie's original Initiative, Perception, and Willpower steps are reduced by –3 each, to a minimum of Step 1. Its Movement rates are halved, and its Death Rating is increased by +30. The zombie has an Unconsciousness Rating of "Immune." During the spell's duration, the zombie obeys the magician's commands. If its Willpower and Perception steps are 3 or more, the zombie can obey complex instructions, such as "Wait for the next person to enter this room and attack him until he's dead."

Tenth Circle Spells

Animate Dead

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 15
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 5 days
Effect: Creates cadaver men
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Animate Dead spell allows a dead corpse to be temporarily returned to a semblance of life. The magician roughly massages the corpse while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the cadaver man's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the corpse animates, creating a cadaver man that falls under the magician's control for the spell's duration. The magician can mentally control the cadaver man to a distance of up to 500 yards, although this requires his concentration.

Blood magic can be used to extend the spell's duration. By taking 1 permanent Damage Point, the magician keeps the cadaver man animated for a year and a day. This damage cannot be healed until the cadaver man is killed (again), or the spell expires or is dispelled. This spell is patterned after an ability used by some Horrors.

A cadaver man has the following statistics:

Cadaver Man

DEX: 4 **STR**: 6 **TOU**: 7
PER: 4 **WIL**: 6 **CHA**: 4

Initiative: 4 **Physical Defense**: 6
Number of Attacks: 1 (4; see text) **Spell Defense**: 6
Attack (3): 7 **Social Defense**: 11
Damage: **Physical Armor**: 0
Claws (3): 9 **Mystic Armor**: 1

Death Rating: 39 **Recovery Tests**: 3
Wound Threshold: 11 **Knockdown**: 6
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 18 **Full Movement**: 36

Powers: None

Legend Points: 150

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Rules

Cadaver men are easily enraged, flying into a manic fury if they experience any significant pain, such as being subjected to a Pain spell or receiving a Wound.

Rage: An enraged cadaver man makes 4 attacks per round until it has killed the source of the pain or 10 rounds have passed, whichever comes first. If a cadaver man cannot determine who caused it pain, it attacks and kills the nearest living creature. When enraged, a cadaver man will often use the Aggressive Attack combat option (see **Combat Options** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 403). The effect of the rage overcomes any penalties they may suffer from the pain itself; this means the cadaver man ignores Wound penalties, or any Harried or Knocked Down penalties that the pain would normally cause. See the **Horrors** chapter on p. 448 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information on cadaver men.

Astral Slice

Threads: 5 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 26
Range: 80 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 15
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Astral Slice spell attacks a target character from astral space. The magician uses a knife or dagger to haphazardly cut at the air while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. On an Excellent result, the spell slices the target from the inside out. The magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. No armor protects against this damage. Regardless of the number of Damage Points inflicted, the Astral Slice spell always causes a minimum of 5 Wounds to the target. This spell is patterned after an ability used by some Horrors.

Damage Transfer

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 14 / 19
Range: 100 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Damage Transfer spell removes damage from one living character and transfers it to another. The magician gestures as if pulling on a rope while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher Spell Defense of the two target characters involved in the exchange. If the test succeeds, a white light illuminates the target from whom the damage is removed, while a dark aura surrounds the target who takes the damage. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which determines how many Damage Points are transferred between the two characters. Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

The Damage Transfer spell can only transfer a maximum number of Damage Points equal to that currently taken by the target from whom the damage is being removed.

Caelarion, an elven Nethermancer, successful casts the Damage Transfer spell on a companion adventurer and a Theran guard, the latter who has just struck Caelarion's companion, inflicting a total of 9 current Damage Points on him. Caelarion makes an Effect Test with a result of 16. Because his companion has only taken 9 Damage Points, this is the most that he can transfer to the guard. Needless to say, the guard is somewhat surprised to find himself on the receiving end of the damage from his own attack.

Fragile Pattern

Threads: 7 **Weaving Difficulty**: 14 / 23
Range: 100 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 12
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Fragile Pattern spell erodes the True pattern of an item, such as a thread weapon or object. The magician makes ripping, tearing, gestures while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target item's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the item's Spell Defense. The result level achieved determines how effective the spell is against the object's True pattern.

An Average result damages the item, inflicting a number of Damage Points to the item equal to the Effect Test result; a Good result damages the item's True pattern—new threads may no longer be woven to the object, but existing threads are unaffected, and can continue to be improved; an Excellent result further ruins the weave of the item's True pattern—any existing threads are destroyed if the magician makes a successful Effect Test against the item's Spell Defense; an Extraordinary result completely destroys the object and its True pattern.

Gateway

Threads: 5
Weaving Difficulty: 12 / 19
Range: 5,000 miles
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Gateway spell opens a rift in astral space and connects it to one of the magician's bone circles. The rift forms a gateway between the magician's current position and the target bone circle. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense of any character within 10 yards, including himself. If the test succeeds, a gateway is created, 3 yards tall and 2 yards wide, outlined by pinwheels of green sparks.

SPELL DISTANCE DIFFICULTY TABLE

Distance	Difficulty Number
Up to 5 miles	6
6–10 miles	8
11–25 miles	11
26–50 miles	14
51–100 miles	17
101–200 miles	20
201–500 miles	23
501–1,000 miles	26
1,001–2,000 miles	29
2,001–5,000 miles	32

To connect the rift to his bone circle, the magician makes an Effect Test against a Difficulty Number based on the distance to the Bone Circle as shown on the Spell Distance Difficulty Table. If the test succeeds, the gateway stabilizes long enough for characters to pass through.

One character can pass through the gateway each round, arriving safely inside the bone circle linked to the portal. Of course, the character may subsequently need to deal with the spirit guarding the bone circle (see the **Bone Circle** spell, p. 347).

Soul Trap

Threads: 6
Weaving Difficulty: 13 / 23
Range: Touch
Duration: Rank hours
Effect: Traps the soul of the deceased
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Soul Trap spell allows a magician to trap the spirit of a dead Name-giver in his body for a short time. The target character must have been dead for a number of hours no longer than the magician's Spellcasting rank. After weaving the spell threads, the magician touches the corpse, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense as if he were still living. If the test succeeds, the period during which the target can be saved from final death through magical forms, such as a last chance salve, is extended to a number of hours equal to the magician's Spellcasting rank. This spell can be cast again just before it expires, further extending the period. If the spellcasting attempt fails, the Name-giver is dead; no further attempts to cast the spell on the target will succeed.

Spirit Tempest

Threads: 4
Weaving Difficulty: 16 / 23
Range: 25 yards
Duration: Rank rounds
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Spirit Tempest spell summons minor tasked spirits to attack one or more target characters. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the spirits' Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician summons 2 spirits for each result level achieved. Starting in the round after the spell has been cast, each spirit attacks a single target character within a 10 yard by 10 yard by 10 yard area of effect within the spell's range; this includes the magician and his allies, if they are within the area of effect.

The spirits attack by passing through the target's body, causing him extreme physical pain. If the spirit's Attack Test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage. After the first round, the tempest spirits will vacate the area occupied by the magician, up to the maximum range of the spell. However, if the only targets available to the spirits include the magician within the area of effect, then he will be included as a valid target again. Tempest spirits have no spirit powers or Karma. They do not follow any orders given to them, even by the magician—they only attack. The spirits can be attacked, but not banished; dispelling the Spirit Tempest spell does not cause the spirits to disappear.

A tempest spirit has the following statistics:

Tempest Spirit

DEX: 8 **STR**: 7 **TOU**: 8
PER: 8 **WIL**: 8 **CHA**: 7

Initiative: 9
Number of Actions: 1 (see text)
Attack: 9
Damage: Effect step (see text)
Physical Defense: 15
Spell Defense: 10
Social Defense: 14
Physical Armor: 10
Mystic Armor: 4

Death Rating: 46
Wound Threshold: 13
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune
Recovery Tests: 4
Knockdown: 7

Combat Movement: 55✦
Full Movement: 110✦

✦ This value is the spirit's flying Movement rate.

Powers: None

Legend Points: 150

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Strong Pattern

Threads: 6 **Weaving Difficulty**: 18 / 23
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 7 years
Effect: Willpower + 12
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Strong Pattern spell is cast against a pattern item, such as a magic weapon, enhancing the item's durability. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the item's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the item's Spell Defense to determine the spell's effectiveness. An Average result makes the item more durable, increasing its Physical Armor by +5. A Good result strengthens the item's pattern, increasing its Mystic Armor by +5. An Excellent result fortifies the weave of the pattern, adding +5 to the item's Spell Defense. An Extraordinary result adds another +5 to the item's Physical Armor, Mystic Armor and Spell Defense. All increases are made only to the item's Armor or Defense Ratings; they are not bestowed upon the item's user.

Tap Horror Karma

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 18 / 20
Range: 50 yards **Duration**: 2 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Tap Horror Karma spell drains Karma from a Horror. While the magician weaves the spell threads, both characters are engulfed in cold blue flames, then he makes a Spellcasting Test against the Horror's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the Horror's Spell Defense. If this test succeeds, the magician steals 1 Karma Point from the Horror for each result level achieved. The magician may incorporate the Karma as his own, discarding the most evil portions of the energy, in which case he uses his own Karma dice. Or he may try to use the Horror's Karma whole, using the Horror's Karma dice. Using the Horror's Karma in this way causes the magician 2 Strain Points of damage for each Karma Point he spends.

Dealing with such malevolence is not easy, even for an advanced magician. Karma tapped from a Horror must be used before the end of the following round or it is lost.

Eleventh Circle Spells

Alter Life

Threads: Varies (ritual; see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 21 / 26
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 7 years
Effect: Alters a life form's pattern
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Alter Life ritual spell is a variation of the Create Life spell, and is used to add to or increase a target character's abilities or change his appearance. The number of spell threads required is determined by the number of alterations the magician wants to perform on the target. For each ability added or improved, or appearance aspect changed, the magician must weave +1 additional thread. The magician can weave a maximum number of threads equal to his Thread Weaving rank. Each spell thread takes 1 hour to weave, and the magician may attempt to weave only a single thread each day. While the thread is being woven, the magician must remain within 10 yards of the target, or he loses all of his previously woven threads and must start the spell anew.

The target must be submerged in a specially prepared blood broth for the entire ritual, or the magician must begin the spell anew. To add to or increase a target's abilities, the blood broth must contain blood from a character or creature with the desired ability or rating at a higher level than that of the target. The blood broth consumes 100 silver pieces worth of materials each day.

Once the magician has woven all of the spell threads, he weaves +1 additional final thread to bind all the others together and make the life form viable outside the blood broth, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target rises from the blood broth, its True pattern permanently altered by the magic of the spell, and its abilities changed.

Unlike the Create Life spell, Alter Life can be used on Namegivers and on live or dead targets. Corpses can have been dead no longer than 72 hours before the magician begins the ritual. The Alter Life spell reanimates dead targets, creating a form of "enhanced" cadaver man.

Shatter Pattern

Threads: 7 (see text)
Weaving Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense / 23
Range: Touch **Duration**: Varies (see text)
Effect: Willpower + 15
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The powerful Shatter Pattern spell disrupts and damages a target's pattern, thereby inflicting damage or reducing the target's Defense Ratings or Attribute values. The magician weaves the spell threads through the target's pattern. He must achieve an Excellent result on each Thread Weaving Test to achieve the full potency; if any Thread Weaving Test achieves an Average or Good result, those threads are not fully integrated with the target's pattern and so the target does not suffer the spell's full effect.

Once the magician has woven all the necessary spell threads, he makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the target's Spell Defense to determine the potency of the spell. On an Average result, the effect lasts a number of days equal to the magician's Spellcasting rank; on a Good result, the effect lasts for a number of months equal to the magician's Spellcasting rank; on an Excellent result, the effect lasts for a number of years equal to the magician's Spellcasting rank; on an Extraordinary result, the effect is permanent. The spell's effect is reduced by poorly woven spell threads. For each thread that was woven with an Average or Good result, the result level of the spell's Effect Test is lowered by 1 level, to a minimum of an Average result.

The Effect Test result also represents the number of points the magician can use to weaken the target. The magician can use each point to inflict 1 Damage Point to the target, or subtract –1 from one of the target's Defense Ratings, or subtract –3 from one of the target's Attribute values (also lowering the Attribute step). This effect is also reduced by poorly woven spell threads. For each thread that was woven with an Average or Good result, the Effect Test result is reduced by –3, to a minimum of 1. The target suffers total or near-total amnesia for the duration of the spell because his pattern has been weakened to the point of collapse. If the Effect Test result lowers all the target's Attribute values to 0 or inflicts damage to the target at least equal to his Death Rating, the target dies.

When examined astrally, the victim of this spell appears to have a shattered pattern. Assuming the target survives, only a Dispel Magic spell or the magician's death can reverse the spell's effects. Dispelling the Shatter Pattern spell requires a result level on a Dispel Magic Test equal to that earned by the magician as a result of his Effect Test against the target when he cast the spell. While a less successful Dispel Magic Test will not heal the target's pattern, it helps the target by reversing some of the spell's effects. The Dispel Magic Test result determines the number of points restored to the target, distributed evenly among all the Attribute values or Defense ratings reduced by the spell.

Unless the magician makes the spell permanent, its effects wear off soon after its duration expires. Damage caused by the spell heals at a rate of +10 Damage Points per minute until completely healed. Attribute values and Defense Ratings return at a rate of +1 per minute.

While the Shatter Pattern spell can be used to lower the target's Spell Defense to make it easier to perform the Alter Life ritual on the same target, it also enhances the ritual. The weakening of the target's pattern grants the magician a +2 bonus to his Spellcasting Test when casting the Alter Life spell against the target.

Unnatural Life

Threads: 7 (ritual; see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 19 / 25
Range: Touch (see text) **Duration**: Rank years
Effect: Restores target to "unnatural" life
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Unnatural Life ritual spell raises a corpse from death, imbuing the target with unnatural life. The spell only works on corpses that have been dead for less than a year and a day. Each spell thread takes the magician 1 day to weave, during which time he must remain within 100 yards of the corpse. Once the last spell thread is woven, the magician touches the corpse and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the corpse lives (again) for the duration of the spell. The corpse remains visibly decayed and retains the distinctive odor of rotting flesh. Aside from a horrific appearance and smell, the animated character can function as he did in life; the Unnatural Life spell revives him with all of his Attributes and talents intact. Each use of the Unnatural Life spell costs the magician 1 permanent Damage Point. This damage cannot be healed until the target "dies" again, or the spell is dispelled or expires.

Characters animated by the Unnatural Life spell are hard to destroy. They may make a Recovery Test during any combat round, which counts as their action that round. Additionally, the unnaturally living may make unlimited Recovery Tests in the course of a day. The magician may dispel the effects of the Unnatural Life spell any time the unnaturally alive character is nearby; however, the magician must touch the target character. This spell is patterned after an ability used by some Horrors.

Twelfth Circle Spells

Forge Falsemen

Threads: 7 (ritual; see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 20 / 29
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank years
Effect: Creates falsemen
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Forge Falsemen ritual spell creates falsemen—animated statues of straw, wax, stone and steel originally created during the Scourge by Theran magicians as servants and guards in the city of Parlainth. Prior to beginning the ritual, the magician must first have constructed the statues that are to become falsemen. He then begins weaving the spell threads. Each spell thread takes 1 week to weave, and the magician may attempt to weave only 1 thread each month. After weaving all of the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the type of falseman he intends to create, +1 for each additional falseman of the same type he is attempting to animate. For example, the Casting Difficulty to create five strawmen would be 7 (3 for the first strawman's Spell Defense, +4 for the four additional strawmen).

If the test succeeds, the target statues are animated, becoming falsemen. Falsemen will respond to verbal commands issued by the magician. See the **Horrors** chapter on p. 449 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information on falsemen, how to issue instructions to them (and how they respond to those instructions), and other special rules.

This spell cannot create Named falsemen, like those who fight their endless battles in the region of Parlainth known as the War Zone. This spell can only be learned by finding it somewhere in the ruins of Parlainth, or from another magician who has already learned it this way.

The different falsemen have the following statistics:

Strawman

DEX: 5 **STR**: 5 **TOU**: 5
PER: 2 **WIL**: 2 **CHA**: 2

Initiative: 6 **Physical Defense**: 6
Number of Actions: 1 **Spell Defense**: 3
Attack (2): 7 **Social Defense**: 3
Damage: **Physical Armor**: 0
Unarmed (1): 6 **Mystic Armor**: 0

Death Rating: 31 **Recovery Tests**: 2
Wound Threshold: 8 **Knockdown**: 5
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 20 **Full Movement**: 40

Legend Points: 35

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Waxman

DEX: 6 **STR**: 6 **TOU**: 6
PER: 4 **WIL**: 4 **CHA**: 4

Initiative: 6 **Physical Defense**: 7
Number of Actions: 1 **Spell Defense**: 6
Attack (2): 8 **Social Defense**: 6
Damage: **Physical Armor**: 0
Unarmed (1): 7 **Mystic Armor**: 0

Death Rating: 35 **Recovery Tests**: 2
Wound Threshold: 9 **Knockdown**: 6
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 26 **Full Movement**: 52

Legend Points: 50

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Stoneman

DEX: 6 **STR**: 12 **TOU**: 12
PER: 7 **WIL**: 4 **CHA**: 4

Initiative: 6 **Physical Defense**: 8
Number of Actions: 2 **Spell Defense**: 9
Attack (4): 10 **Social Defense**: 6
Damage: **Physical Armor**: 15
Unarmed (2): 14 **Mystic Armor**: 0

Death Rating: 59 **Recovery Tests**: 5
Wound Threshold: 20 **Knockdown**: 12
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 18 **Full Movement**: 36

Legend Points: 385

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Steelman

DEX: 8 **STR**: 20 **TOU**: 18
PER: 10 **WIL**: 4 **CHA**: 4

Initiative: 6 **Physical Defense**: 10
Number of Actions: 2 **Spell Defense**: 13
Attack (4): 12 **Social Defense**: 6
Damage: **Physical Armor**: 18
Unarmed (2): 22 **Mystic Armor**: 0

Death Rating: 83 **Recovery Tests**: 8
Wound Threshold: 23 **Knockdown**: 20
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 30 **Full Movement**: 60

Legend Points: 1,230

Equipment: None

Loot: None

Pervert Emotion

Threads: 10 **Weaving Difficulty**: 23 / 29
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 1 days
Effect: Twists the target's thoughts and emotions
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Pervert Emotion spell allows a magician to pervert a target character's emotions. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, he can twist the target's thoughts and emotions in any way he wishes. The gamemaster determines the severity of the effect based on the result level achieved. For example, an Average result might allow the caster to change strong anger into affection, while turning bitter hatred into euphoria might require an Extraordinary result. The gamemaster should also take into account the circumstances of the situation when determining the effect.

When the spell expires, the target remembers everything experienced while under the spell's influence. Repeated use of this spell on the same individual has been known to cause insanity. This spell is patterned after an ability used by some Horrors.

Thirteenth Circle Spells

Erase Horror Mark

Threads: 6 (ritual; see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 17 / 22
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Removes Horror mark
Casting Difficulty: Horror's Spell Defense (see text)

The Erase Horror Mark ritual spell removes a Horror mark from an afflicted subject. Before attempting to cast the spell, the magician must have previously detected the Horror mark using some form of astral sensing (see the **Horrors** chapter on p. 443 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information on Horror marks). Secondly, the spell requires one of the target's pattern items—a group pattern item is not adequate for this task. The magician weaves 1 spell thread into the pattern item each hour. Once the last thread is woven, the magician touches the target character and makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the Horror that marked him. If the test succeeds, the Horror mark is erased from the target's pattern.

The action of removing the Horror mark may alert the Horror that marked the subject. The gamemaster makes a Horror Mark Test for the Horror against the magician's Spellcasting Test result. If the test succeeds, the Horror senses the removal of the mark and may take appropriate action, as determined by the gamemaster.

Eternal Youth

Threads: 6 (ritual; see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 17 / 31
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank years
Effect: Temporarily stops the magician aging
Casting Difficulty: 12

The powerful Eternal Youth ritual spell allows the magician to resist the effects of aging and thus cheat death, albeit temporarily. Each hour, the magician carefully cleanses his face and body, and weaves 1 spell thread. He also takes 1 permanent Damage Point, which can never be healed. Once the spell threads are woven, the magician makes a Spellcasting (12) Test. If the test succeeds, the magician ceases to age for the period of the spell's duration.

The Eternal Youth spell does not reverse the ravages of time; it merely postpones them. The ritual can be cast again before the current effect expires, thus allowing the magician to extend his life indefinitely, as long as his spellcasting is successful. Because of the amount of damage caused by casting the spell, some magicians use death magic to provide the necessary permanent Damage Points. Otherwise, they slowly grow weaker and weaker as their lives stretch on. If any attempt to cast the Eternal Youth spell fails, that failure undoes all the results of any previously-cast Eternal Youth spells; all of the magician's postponed years of aging instantly catch up with him. If the magician has lived past his natural life span, he immediately turns to dust.

Fourteenth Circle Spells

Call Forth the Army of Decay

Threads: 8 (ritual; see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 21 / 29
Range: 5 mile radius **Duration**: Rank days
Effect: Summons an army of cadaver men
Casting Difficulty: 10

The Call Forth the Army of Decay ritual spell animates a number of corpses, creating a veritable army of the dead. The spell must be performed within an active bone circle. Each hour, the magician weaves one spell thread, while pouring the blood of a new sacrifice on the ground; the sacrifice may be an animal, but the ritual is often performed using death magic, involving Name-giver sacrifices. After weaving the last spell thread, the magician stands in the circle, raises his arms and makes a Spellcasting (10) Test. If this test succeeds, all Name-giver corpses within a 5 mile radius of the magician rise from their resting-place as cadaver men under the magician's command. The gamemaster determines exactly how many corpses the spell animates. This spell can be devastatingly effective when cast in areas that contain many corpses, such as large graveyards, catacombs or old battlefields.

The magician can mentally control the army from a distance of up to 1 mile, although this requires him to concentrate while issuing commands. Otherwise, the army follows the last orders received. The cadaver men obey the magician's instructions for the duration of the spell, then return to the realm of Death. Before the spell expires, the magician can re-cast the spell to maintain the undead army, as well as raise other cadaver men, if desired.

Wizardry Spells

My mind is my own, my thoughts incomprehensible to others.
Should you wish to understand my wisdom, that will cost you extra.

• Alianar, Human Wizard •

Wizards are the most scholarly of all magicians, primarily concerned with the workings of magic. Their spells usually deal with magic and its effects, but they do operate through the interaction of magic with a target, most often living. Wizardry spells cover those areas that other magicians are not able to affect.

First Circle Spells

Astral Sense

Threads: 2
Range: 60 yards
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: 6
Weaving Difficulty: 5 / 15
Duration: Rank + 10 minutes

The Astral Sense spell allows the magician to sense the presence of people, creatures, magic doors, magic items, and so on, in astral space. The magician rolls his eyes upward while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the magician is able to detect other presences in astral space. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is compared against the Spell Defense of any target within the spell's range. If the test successful, the magician detects the target. The magician can make an Effect Test once each round, enabling him to discover one target each round. If more than one target is in range, the magician will detect that with the lowest Spell Defense first. Once detected, a target stays detected as long as he remains in range of the spell. Once this spell has been cast, a magician will often take a minute or so to sense nearby members of his group to verify that an astral presence is not coming from a comrade. Once all members are sensed, the magician knows the next target detected is not a known presence. Making an Effect Test does not prevent the magician from taking another action that round; the effort of detecting the target is a Simple action (see **Actions** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 397). A magician may attempt to cast spells on a target that he has astrally sensed, even if he cannot otherwise see the target.

Magicians use the Astral Sense spell for many different reasons. They use it to determine if an item or object has an astral presence, or to detect the presence of entities or Horrors within astral space. A character using Astral Sense to view a magical item, can sense the item's magical pattern, and would therefore know if it was magical in nature, however he would not gain any information about the item's history or learn any Key Knowledges. There are also Discipline-specific versions of the Astral Sense spell designed to sense specific types of magic in astral space.

Bedazzling Display of Logical Analysis

Threads: 0
Range: Self
Effect: +6 bonus to verbal Charisma-based Tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)
Weaving Difficulty: NA / 7
Duration: Rank minutes

The Bedazzling Display of Logical Analysis spell bolsters the magician's statements when he is engaged in arguments or debates.

The magician draws himself up to his full height, and makes a Spellcasting Test against his own unlowered Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician gains a +6 bonus to any Charisma-based Tests involving conversation, debate, argument, or other verbal forms of oratory, during the spell's duration.

Crushing Will

Threads: 1
Weaving Difficulty: 8 / 16
Range: 120 yards
Duration: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Crushing Will spell directly attacks the will of the target character. While weaving the spell threads, the magician furrows his brows and peers intently at the target, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

Dispel Magic

Threads: 1
Weaving Difficulty: 6 / 13
Range: 60 yards
Duration: 1 round
Effect: Willpower
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Dispel Magic spell disrupts the pattern and threads of a spell. While weaving the spell thread, the magician makes gestures as if pulling apart an object, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the spell's Dispel Difficulty. If this test succeeds, the spell effect is dispelled—the spell immediately expires. Unless the spell's description notes otherwise, consult the Dispel Difficulty Table to determine the Dispel Difficulty for spells at each Circle.

The Dispel Magic spell can also be used to dispel other forms of magical effects, such as talents, talent knacks, Discipline abilities, and creature powers, including those of spirits, dragons and Horrors. Only magical effects with an extended duration can be dispelled. See **Dispelling Magic** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 291, for more information.

DISPEL DIFFICULTY TABLE

Spell Circle	Dispel Difficulty
1	12
2	13
3	14
4	15
5	17
6	18
7	20
8	21
9	22
10	24
11	25
12	26
13	27
14	28
15	29

Divine Aura

Threads: 1
Weaving Difficulty: 6 / 14
Range: 25 yards
Duration: Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Divine Aura spell allows the magician to detect changes in the aura of living beings. The magician peers intently at the target while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician chooses what he wishes to divine from the target's aura—this could be anything from an emotional state like anger or fear, to hurt or fatigue.

The magician makes an Effect Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician determines the target's state. During the duration of the spell, the magician may concentrate to divine the same or different aspects of the same target character's aura, each attempt requiring a separate Effect Test. The Divine Aura spell only works on living entities.

Flame Flash

Threads: 1
Weaving Difficulty: 7 / 15
Range: 25 yards
Duration: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Flame Flash spell creates a burst of flame directed against a single target. While weaving the spell thread, the magician makes wild, fanning gestures and crackling, whooshing sounds, then extends his hands outward and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, flames flash from the magician's fingertips, bathing the target in fire.

The magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Ignite

Threads: 0
Weaving Difficulty: NA / 11
Range: 5 yards
Duration: 1 round (see text)
Effect: Ignites flammable objects
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Ignite spell sets things alight. The magician snaps his fingers and makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the object's or it's bearer / wearer's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a small jet of flame hovers over the target, setting it on fire. If clothes are ignited, the fire inflicts Step 4 damage during the first round, reduced by –1 step each round thereafter until the fire goes out of its own accord (after 3 more rounds) or is extinguished. Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

The Ignite spell may only be used on small inanimate objects, such as torches, furniture and, of course, clothing.

Iron Hand

Threads: 1
Weaving Difficulty: 5 / 13
Range: Touch
Duration: Rank + 10 rounds
Effect: +3 bonus to melee weapon Damage Tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Iron Hand spell enhances the target's melee weapon damage. The magician mimics striking someone with a melee weapon while weaving the spell thread, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target character gains a +3 bonus to all melee weapon Damage Tests he makes during the duration of the spell. A character may benefit from only one Iron Hand spell at a time.

Mind Dagger

Threads: 0
Weaving Difficulty: NA / 7
Range: 40 yards
Duration: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 2
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Mind Dagger spell attacks a target character through sheer force of will. The magician whips his arm forward as if throwing a dagger, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

Silent Converse

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 5 / 13
Range: 100 yards **Duration**: Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Silent Converse spell allows a magician to carry on a whispered conversation with a target character, regardless of intervening noise. After weaving the spell thread, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the target's Spell Defense. If this test succeeds, the magician and the target may whisper to each other.

Each round, the magician may change the target character to whom he is whispering by making another successful Effect Test against the new target's Spell Defense. The conversation can only be overheard by someone standing within 1 yard of either participant. The target character must remain in the magician's line of sight and within the spell's range, or the effect ends.

Triangulate

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 10
Range: 500 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Determines distance to target
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Triangulate spell allows a magician to determine the exact distance between himself and a specific object or person. The magician must be able to see the target to cast this spell. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, he determines the distance to the target in yards and feet. Magicians often use this spell in combat to determine the exact range to potential targets.

Wall Walker

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 14
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 10 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 5 (see text)
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Wall Walker spell improves a target character's climbing ability. While weaving the spell thread, the magician crouches down, walking on all fours to mimic a spider, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target's climbing ability is improved. The target makes an Effect Test in place of any Climbing Tests he makes during the spell's duration. The Effect step is based on the target's Willpower step, not the magician's; the target may use Willforce if he knows that talent.

Second Circle Spells

And His Money

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 16
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: –4 to Social Defense against Interaction Tests involving finances
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The And His Money spell makes a character more amenable to requests of a financial nature. The magician clinks a couple of coins together in his hand or pocket while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target subtracts –4 from his Social Defense against Interaction Tests involving finances, including Fencing or Haggle Tests. The target's Social Defense is not reduced against other types of Interaction Tests; the spell simply makes him more susceptible to suggestions related to monetary transactions.

Astral Shield

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 7
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 7 rounds
Effect: +3 to Spell Defense
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Astral Shield spell enhances the target's ability to resist magic. The magician pantomimes the outline of a shield, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target adds +3 to his Spell Defense. The Astral Shield spell is not cumulative with any other spell that increases Spell Defense.

Clean

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 5 / 13
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 minute
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Clean spell removes visible stains, dirt, or foreign substances from an object or objects. While weaving the spell threads, the magician makes wiping motions with his hands, then sprinkles water on the object or objects to be cleaned and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target objects. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is the number of square yards cleaned—4 square yards is sufficient to nicely clean a human-sized character, 3 square yards is enough for a dwarf, while 6 square yards is needed for an obsidiman or a troll. Substances that are not visible to the magician are not cleaned up by the spell.

Dodge Boost

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 8
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 5 rounds
Effect: +3 bonus to Avoid Blow Tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Dodge Boost spell improves a character's ability to dodge attacks in combat. The magician sways sideways, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target gains a +3 bonus to any Avoid Blow Tests he makes during the spell's duration.

After the spell has been successfully cast, the target must attempt an Avoid Blow Test against the next attack directed against him or else the Dodge Boost spell expires.

Rope Ladder

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 14
Range: 50 yards **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: Create ladder from rope
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Rope Ladder spell creates a ladder out of a length of rope. The magician uncoils the rope while he weaves the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the rope moves at 10 yards per round to a location of the magician's choosing within the spell's range.

The magician cannot control the rope with enough precision for it to tie itself off on the bars of a window, for example; it moves directly from point A to point B. Those climbing the rope gain a +4 bonus to their Climbing Tests. The rope can hold a maximum weight of 600 pounds at a time.

Seal

Threads: 1
Weaving Difficulty: 6 / 11
Range: 20 yards
Duration: Rank + 8 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Seal spell magically closes and locks doors, windows, gates or sealable containers. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the target door, gate, window or container shuts and remains closed for the duration of the spell. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is the Difficulty Number for Strength Tests made to open the sealed object. This spell cannot be cast on empty doorways or gateways—its use requires an actual door or container lid.

Vines

Threads: 1
Weaving Difficulty: 6 / 15
Range: 50 yards
Duration: Rank + 3 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Vines spells forces the local flora to become animated, grabbing at a target character. There must be some form of plant-life within the spell's range for the spell to be cast. The magician waves his hands animatedly while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, vines or roots erupt from the undergrowth, grabbing and clutching at the target character. The target is held firmly until he escapes, and is considered Harried until he does so (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408).

Escape from the vines may be carried out in one of two ways. First, a successful Strength Test against the vines' Strength step will allow the target to break free. The vines have a Strength step equal to the spell's Effect step. Second, the character can attack the writhing vines, slashing and tearing at them until they relax sufficiently to release their victim. This option requires the target to inflict Damage Points on the vines equal to or greater than their Death Rating. The vines have the following statistics:

Vines

Physical Defense: 9
Physical Armor: 0
Spell Defense: 9
Mystic Armor: 0
Social Defense: Immune
Death Rating: Effect Test
Wound Threshold: NA
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Wake-Up Call

Threads: 4
Weaving Difficulty: 6 / 15
Range: Touch
Duration: Up to 24 hours
Effect: Sets an alarm to go off at a specified time
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Wake-Up Call spell sets an alarm that goes off at a specified time. While weaving the spell threads, the magician imitates the clanging of a bell, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician determines when the alarm will go off, and whether the alarm noise (clanging bells) is audible only to the target character or to everyone. The test's result level determines how precise the alarm is, as shown in the Alarm Accuracy Table. The better the result level, the closer to the stated time the alarm actually goes off.

ALARM ACCURACY TABLE

Result Level	Alarm Accuracy
Average	+/- 15 minutes
Good	+/- 5 minutes
Excellent	+/- 1 minute
Extraordinary	Exactly on time

Third Circle Spells

Aura Strike

Threads: 1
Weaving Difficulty: 7 / 12
Range: 40 yards
Duration: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Aura Strike spell allows the magician to use his astral perception abilities to carefully channel destructive energies into weak portions of the target's pattern, thereby causing damage. The magician must be using astral sight or otherwise astrally sensing the target character while casting the spell. The magician furrows his brows and peers at the target while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

If the target takes any damage, the Aura Strike spell causes a minimum of 1 Wound, regardless of the number of Damage Points inflicted.

Catwalk

Threads: 1
Weaving Difficulty: 7 / 12
Range: Touch
Duration: Rank + 8 rounds
Effect: +6 bonus to Action Tests involving climbing or balancing
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Catwalk spell improves a character's balance. The magician mutters "meow" several times while weaving the spell thread, then lightly strokes the target's hair and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target's sense of balance and coordination is markedly improved. He gains a +6 bonus to any Action Tests he makes involving climbing or balance (including Climbing and Knockdown Tests) for the spell's duration.

Combat Fury

Threads: 1
Weaving Difficulty: 9 / 16
Range: Touch
Duration: Rank + 7 rounds
Effect: +4 bonus to Attack and Damage Tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Combat Fury spell puts the target into a state of battle fury, energizing him into a frenzy in combat. The magician rants and gesticulates violently while weaving the spell thread, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target gains a +4 bonus to close combat Attack and Damage Tests for the spell's duration. While under the effect of this spell, the character can only make close combat attacks; no ranged or spell combat attacks are allowed. The target can benefit from only one Combat Fury spell at a time.

False Aura

Threads: 2
Weaving Difficulty: 7 / 12
Range: Touch
Duration: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The False Aura spell masks a target character's aura, confusing those attempting to assess the character from astral space. The magician visualizes a change to the character's aura while weaving the spell threads, then he touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test

succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target's aura changes to match that of the magician's visualization.

To see the target's true aura, a viewer must make a successful Astral Sensing Test against the Effect Test result. If the test fails, the viewer sees the aura created by the False Aura spell instead. The false aura can conceal threads, talents, the character's state of health, magical ability, or any other characteristics that are normally visible from astral space.

Healing Sleep

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 12
Range: Touch **Duration**: 8 hours
Effect: Bonus Recovery Test; +4 bonus to Recovery Tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Healing Sleep spell puts an injured character into a deep magical sleep, during which time his natural healing processes are intensified. The target character must have a current Damage Point total greater than his Wound Threshold for the spell to be effective; if not, the spell has no effect. The character does not have to have taken any Wounds. The magician makes soft crooning overtures while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. For the spell to be effective against an unwilling target, the magician must achieve a Good result. If the test succeeds, the target falls into a deep, magical sleep for 8 hours. When he wakes up he immediately makes a bonus Recovery Test. The target also gains a +4 bonus to any Recovery Tests he makes that day, including the bonus Recovery Test he makes on awakening.

While he is sleeping, attempts to rouse the target are difficult. Only if he makes a successful Willpower (10) Test, or takes any damage, or the spell is dispelled, can the target character be woken from his slumber. If the target wakes before the full 8 hours have elapsed, he gains no benefits from the Healing Sleep spell. A character can only benefit from one Healing Sleep spell each week.

Identify Spell

Threads: 0 (see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 12
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Identifies a previously cast spell
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Identify Spell allows a magician to recognize a specific spell. After the target spell has been cast, the magician must cast Identify Spell within a number of rounds equal to his Spellcasting rank. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target spell caster's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds (and if he knows or has heard of the targeted spell, at the gamemaster's discretion), the magician makes a Read and Write Magic Test against the target spell's Learning Difficulty. If the test succeeds, the magician recognizes the spell and knows its effects.

If the test fails (or he has no way of knowing the target spell, at the gamemaster's discretion), the result level of the magician's Spellcasting Test determines what he learns. An Average result allows the magician to recognize the type of magic involved—usually Elementalism, Illusionism, Nethermancy, or Wizardry; a Good result identifies the spell's approximate effect—causes damage, creates an illusion, and so on; an Excellent result lets the magician identify the spell's Circle; an Extraordinary result reveals the approximate number of threads the spell requires, as well as the best way (if any) to counter the spell's effects.

Leaps and Bounds

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 9
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 5 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Leaps and Bounds spell imbues a character with greatly increased leaping ability. Jumping up and down, the magician calls the target to leap toward him, then touches him as he lands alongside and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. The magician may cast the spell on himself, but may not lower his Spell Defense when doing so; jumping around while casting the spell absorbs all of his attention. If the test succeeds, the target gains incredible bounding ability when moving. Each round of the spell's duration, instead of his normal movement, the target character may make an Effect Test in place of a Great Leap Test to leap horizontally or jump vertically. The target uses his own Willpower for the effect, which otherwise works as described for the Great Leap talent (see the **Talents** chapter, p. 187).

Levitate

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 8 / 18
Range: 100 yards **Duration**: Rank + 10 minutes
Effect: Levitate up to 2,000 pounds
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Levitate spell moves objects vertically up or down. The spell creates an invisible 3 yard by 3 yard platform of force which affects objects and characters resting upon it. The magician raises and lowers his hands while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the characters or objects on the levitation platform. If the test succeeds, the platform and any characters and objects on it are able to be moved up and down by the magician at a Movement rate of 3 yards per round; sideways movement is not possible. A single Levitate spell can lift up to 2,000 pounds of weight to a maximum height equal to the spell's range above the ground.

The magician may 'bootstrap' Levitate spells together for improved effect. He may also cast another Levitation spell on an existing platform in order to increase the combined weight of characters and objects that the spell can support. The magician may also levitate himself to the top of the first Levitate spell's range and cast another Levitate spell (or spells) to continue to move himself and other characters and objects upwards.

Moving characters or objects up requires the magician's concentration, regardless of how many 'bootstrapped' Levitation spells he is currently manipulating. If the magician loses concentration, then those on the platform are lowered to the ground at a Movement rate of 3 yards per round. The magician must make additional Spellcasting Tests if the highest Spell Defense of a character or object on a platform increases (i.e. when another character with a higher Spell Defense jumps onto it). If one of these subsequent tests fails, the spell ends immediately.

Bootstrapped spells have to be managed carefully; as soon as any lower-altitude Levitate spell ends or is dispelled, all higher-altitude Levitate spells also immediately fail. Characters and objects on top of a platform when it fails may suffer Falling damage (see the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 107 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**).

Notice Not

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 15
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 1 minutes
Effect: +3 bonus to stealthy Action Tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Notice Not spell masks the target to make him less noticeable to others. After weaving the spell thread, the magician quietly

touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target gains a +3 bonus to any Action Tests he makes that are aimed at concealing himself, such as Silent Walk Tests.

Ork Stoke

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 15
Range: 75 yards **Duration**: Instant
Effect: Sets off *gahad* in ork target
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Ork Stoke spell sets off an ork's *gahad* in response to any comment, subject or situation. The magician mutters under his breath while weaving the spell thread, then openly makes a rude comment or gesture and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the ork's *gahad* is stirred, but does not force them to comply with it. The targeted character may resist *gahad* as normal, incurring the usual penalties for doing so. The Ork Stoke spell can overcome even the conditions which never set off an ork's *gahad* (see **Gahad** in the **Creating Characters** chapter, p. 49).

Obviously, the spell only affects orks; it cannot be successfully cast against other Name-givers.

Quicken Pace

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 13
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 4 hours
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Quicken Pace spell increase a character's walking speed. While weaving the spell threads, the magician walks briskly in a circle around the target, then touches him and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the target's Dexterity step. If this test succeeds, the target increases his Combat Movement rate by +5 yards per round per result level achieved for the duration of the spell. The Quicken Pace spell only increases the character's Combat Movement rate. Regardless of the result level, the target's modified Combat Movement rate cannot exceed his Full Movement rate.

Seeking Sight

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 15
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 1 minutes
Effect: +3 bonus to missile Attack Tests made against the target
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Seeking Sight spell marks the target character, making him easier to hit with missile weapons. After weaving the spell thread, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, glowing circles appear on the target. Any characters firing missiles at the target add a +3 bonus to their missile Attack Tests. Only one Seeking Sight spell may affect the target at a time.

Shatter Lock

Threads: 2 (3; see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 13
Range: 5 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Shatter Lock spell breaks open locks. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a cracking sound, then gestures toward the lock and makes a Spellcasting Test against the lock's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test and compares the result against the higher of the Spell Defense or Dispel Difficulty of the lock. If the test succeeds, the lock opens or the locking spell is dispelled. Against mechanical locks, the Effect Test result determines how much damage is inflicted on the locking mechanism. Most ordinary locks have a Death Rating ranging from 8 to 12; a solid wood bar might have a Death Rating of 20 or more, depending on the size; metal bars start at a Death Rating of 18.

The Shatter Lock spell can be reversed, that is, the magician can use the spell to repair a broken lock. Casting the reverse variant of the Shatter Lock spell requires the magician to weave an extra thread before making a Spellcasting Test. The variant only works on mechanical locks; it will not repair magical locks.

Water Wings

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 15
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: Waterproofs windling wings
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Water Wings spell waterproofs a windling's wings. The magician needs a few drops of a natural seed oil to cast this spell. After weaving the spell thread, the magician sprinkles the oil on the target's wings, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target's wings are waterproofed for the duration of the spell.

This protection extends only to light rain, splashes of water or a brief dunking, such as falling into a river or washbasin. It does not protect the windling's wings if he decides to go swimming or immerse himself in water for prolonged periods, or if he is exposed to torrential rain for longer than a few minutes (see **Flight** in the **Creating Characters** chapter, p. 49). The Water Wings spell only works on windlings.

Wizard Mark

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 6 / 15
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Wizard Mark spell places a symbol or mark on the target's astral pattern. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the target's Spell Defense. If this test succeeds, the spell places a mark on the target's astral imprint. The mark is visible to anyone using astral sight (such as the Astral Sight talent, p. 170, or the windling racial Astral-Sensitive Sight ability, p. 48) and can serve to brand a character for a crime or other offense. It also serves as a link between the magician and the target, acting as a weaker version of a Horror mark; as such, it allows the magician to cast spells on the target while he is within the magician's line of sight, as if the magician was touching the subject.

Rumors suggest that a Horror may have taught Name-givers this spell, so its use is often regarded with suspicion. The mark's shape or design is personal to the magician.

Fourth Circle Spells

Ball of String

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 15
Range: Varies (see text) **Duration**: Rank + 3 hours
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Ball of String spell conjures a ball formed from strands of mystical energy. While weaving the spell threads, the magician

ties an imaginary knot to an object, marking the point of return, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, a ball of magical string appears in the magician's upturned hand. The ball can be placed in a pouch or pocket; the string pays out automatically as the magician walks about. The magician makes an Effect (10) Test once each hour. If this test succeeds, the ball reels out more string and remains untangled. If the test fails, the string snaps, ending the spell.

When the magician wants to head back to the point of return, he pulls the ball out of the pocket or pouch. As he starts winding the string back onto the ball, a 3 yard length of the string begins to glow with a white light, highlighting the thread. By following the glowing thread, the character is led unerringly back to the point of return.

Binding Threads

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 17
Range: 40 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Binding Threads spell conjures a myriad of magical threads that wrap and entangle a target character. While the magician weaves the spell threads, a mass of brightly colored magical threads form in the air. The magician points at the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the colorful threads fly toward the target, entangling him in powerful magical bonds.

The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the Strength value of the threads, used to determine the spell's Strength step. Each round, the entrapped target makes a Strength Test against the Strength step of the threads. If the test succeeds, the target breaks free and the threads disappear.

Bound targets cannot use their hands to attack or cast spells. While entangled, the target is considered Harried for all other Action Tests he makes, except Strength Tests to break free of his bonds (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408).

Buoyancy

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 20
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: +3 bonus to Swimming Tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Buoyancy spell makes a character more buoyant in water. While weaving the spell thread, the magician throws his arms wide as if floating on his back, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target gains a +3 bonus to any Swimming Tests he makes during the spell's duration.

Characters who cannot swim, such as obsidimen, gain no benefit from this spell.

Dust Devil

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 9 / 13
Range: 80 yards **Duration**: Rank + 5 rounds
Effect: Causes a Harried penalty to targets' Action Tests requiring sight, hearing, or smell
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Dust Devil spell conjures a whirling dust storm, blurring and irritating those caught in it. The magician throws a handful of dust into the air as he weaves the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target characters. If the test succeeds, a dust storm billows outward from the magician, enveloping an 80 yard radius area. While within the dust storm, the affected targets are considered Harried (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408) for all Action Tests requiring sight, hearing or smell; this also includes any Knockdown Tests that the target is required to make. The magician can affect a maximum number of targets equal to his Spellcasting rank. The magician is not affected by his own Dust Devil spell.

Hair Frenzy

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 20
Range: 25 yards **Duration**: Rank + 5 rounds
Effect: The target is considered Harried
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Hair Frenzy spell causes a target character's hair to fly wildly about, creating a distracting influence. The magician grabs at his own hair, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target's hair whips back and forth around his face. The target is considered Harried for the duration of the spell (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408).

The Hair Frenzy spell only works on those characters that possess hair (t'skrang and obsidimen are not affected by this spell, unless they are wearing a hairpiece or a wig, for some reason).

Icy Fingers

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 12
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: Reduces fire- and heat-based damage
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Icy Fingers spell reduces the damage a magician suffers from flame and heat-based attacks, including open flames. The magician pinches his nose while weaving the required thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against his own Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the Damage step of any fire- and heat-based attack made against the magician is reduced. An Average result reduces fire and heat damage by –2 steps; a Good result by –4 steps; an Excellent result by –6 steps; an Extraordinary result reduces fire and heat damage by –8 steps.

The Icy Fingers spell also protects against the damage inflicted by heated metal, such as armor subjected to the Heat Metal spell, or the hilt of a weapon under the effect of a Flameweapon spell.

Identify Magic

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 20
Range: 80 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Identifies the type of magic on a person, place, or object
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Identify Magic spell provides a magician with a limited form of the Astral Sight talent (see the **Talents** chapter, p. 170) that may be used against a specific person, place or object. The magician peers intently at the target while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the result level determines what the magician learns.

An Average or Good result reveals whether the target is in some way magical; an Excellent result reveals the general type of magic the target possesses—adept abilities, innate magic, spell magic, and so on; an Extraordinary result reveals the exact nature of the magic—the target's Discipline and Circle in the case of adepts, or the target's powers and abilities in the case of magical items.

Inventory

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 9 / 18
Range: 25 yards **Duration**: 1 minute
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Inventory spell compiles a catalog of items. The magician requires a piece of parchment to cast the spell. The Inventory spell is cast on a single room that the magician can see into. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test, detecting all items within the spell's range with a Spell Defense equal to or less than the test result. Glowing yellow or orange writing appears on the parchment, listing those items among the contents of the room detected by the magician.

The inventory is often in alphabetical order, and does not list insignificant items such as dust, bins, and crates that have no real value in themselves. The inventory takes 1 full minute to create, no matter how many items are in the room. After this time has passed, the magician makes an Effect Test against the highest Spell Defense of any items he may have missed. If the test succeeds, the last note on the manifest will be "inventory complete."

Juggler's Touch

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 17
Range: 30 yards **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: 6; Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Juggler's Touch spell causes small objects in a 3 yard by 3 yard area to whirl around madly, striking all targets within the area. The magician mimes juggling while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, all of the small objects in a 3 yard by 3 yard area within the spell's range start spinning wildly around, striking those standing nearby. Each round, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense of the target group, +1 for each additional target in the area of effect. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on each target. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Juggling the objects around requires the magician's concentration; the only actions he can take without ending the spell are Spellcasting Tests to activate the spell's effects. He may shift the spell's area of effect up to 3 yards by making a successful Spellcasting (6) Test; this means he cannot damage any targets that round. If there are no objects able to be moved in the area of effect, the spell has no effect.

Kaer Knocking

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 15
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 minute
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Kaer Knocking spell creates a knocking sound when it interacts with a kaer's magical defenses. The magician taps his knuckles against the kaer's wall while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the kaer's Spell Defense, which varies according to the kaer's defenses. The average kaer has a Spell Defense of 18 for purposes of this spell, though its actual Spell Defense may be much higher. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test. Anyone inside the kaer within a number of yards equal to the test result hears the spell's knocking sound. In most cases, kaer residents will investigate the sound in the hopes that their self-imposed exile is at last at an end.

Karmic Connection

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 17
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Karmic Connection spell taps into a character's Karma, using it to save his life. Because of the high Karma Point cost to the target, magicians generally only use this spell to save those who are in imminent danger of dying. After weaving the spell thread, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target immediately spends 5 Karma Points. These points are permanently lost—the target's Maximum Karma Points are permanently reduced by –5. The target character makes an Effect Test in place of a Recovery Test to determine how much damage he recovers, using his own Willpower step (see **Effects of Injury** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 402). He gains this Recovery Test even if he has already used all of the tests available to him that day.

Once the target's Current Damage total exceeds his Death Rating, the Karmic Connection spell must be cast within a number of minutes equal to the magician's Spellcasting rank for it to have any effect. The target character must have at least 5 Karma Points available to him for the spell to work; if he doesn't, the spell fails.

Relax

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 9 / 13
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 2
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Relax spell reduces the amount of time the target character must wait before making his next Recovery Test (see

Recovering From Damage in the **Combat** chapter, p. 402). The magician sits down to cast this spell; the recipient must also sit or lie down. The magician runs his hands over the target's body while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is multiplied by 5 minutes, reducing the amount of time the target must wait until he can make his next Recovery Test. An Effect Test result of 12 or more (equal to 1 hour) earns the target an immediate Recovery Test. The target gains a +4 bonus to his Recovery Test. If the target has no Recovery Tests available, the spell has no effect.

Thorny Retreat

Threads: 1
Weaving Difficulty: 11 / 13
Range: 30 yards
Duration: Rank + 7 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 2
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Thorny Retreat spell conjures a barrier of magical thorns. After weaving the spell thread, the magician pricks his hand with a dagger or other sharp object, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the magician summons a number of sections equal to his Spellcasting rank. Each section is a 3 yard by 3 yard barrier of gnarled and twisted thorns, up to 1 yard thick. The magician directs the placement of each section within the spell's range; the thorns grow completely into place at the end of the round in which the spell is cast.

The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is the Barrier Difficulty. Any character passing through a section of thorns makes a Dexterity Test against the Barrier Difficulty. If the test succeeds, the character passes through the section unscathed. If the test fails, the character is halted and he takes Step 4/D6 damage from the thorns. Physical Armor protects against this damage. The thorns are no hindrance to the magician. They roll around him like seaweed in water.

Trust

Threads: 1
Weaving Difficulty: 13 / 17
Range: 50 yards
Duration: Rank minutes
Effect: Willpower + 3
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Trust spell inspires trust towards the magician in the target character. After weaving the spell thread, the magician smiles slightly and nods toward the target, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the target will not deceive or harm the magician (or others obviously Friendly to him) as long as the magician (and his colleagues) do not deceive or harm the target.

Wizard's Cloak

Threads: 2
Weaving Difficulty: 10 / 17
Range: Touch
Duration: Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Wizard's Cloak spell creates a magical cloak that masks the target's presence. While weaving the spell threads, the magician pantomimes placing a cloak over his shoulders and drawing the hood up over his head, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a faintly shimmering cloak of mystical energy appears momentarily, then vanishes into the target's body. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the target's Spell Defense against any spell or ability intended to detect his presence or otherwise gain information about him. This spell does not aid against attacks or other abilities targeted at the target's Spell Defense.

Fifth Circle Spells

Counterspell

Threads: 0
Weaving Difficulty: NA / 11
Range: 15 yards
Duration: Rank + 10 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Counterspell spell bolsters the target's defenses against magic. The magician designates which characters within the spell's range are to be protected, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the target characters' new Spell Defense during the duration of the spell, even if it is lower than it would normally be. Bonuses from other spells or magical items do not add to the character's Spell Defense while the Counterspell is in effect. The magician may affect a maximum number of characters equal to his Spellcasting rank.

Giant Size

Threads: 2
Weaving Difficulty: 11 / 18
Range: Touch
Duration: Rank + 2 rounds
Effect: +5 bonus to Strength- and Toughness-only Tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Giant Size spell causes the target character to grow larger. While weaving the spell threads, the magician stands on tip toes

or puffs out his clothing, making himself look bigger, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target immediately grows 50 percent larger than his normal size. He gains a +5 bonus to any Strength- or Toughness-only Tests he makes during the spell's duration.

The target's clothing and armor also change size, returning to normal when the spell ends; weapons and other equipment do not change size, however. Magicians should be careful about using this spell in confined spaces, such as in kaers or tunnels.

Heat Metal Armor

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 18
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank + 7 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Heat Metal Armor spell rapidly heats up metal armor or shields. The size of the armor has no impact on the spell's effectiveness, but the spell only works on armor that is at least 50 percent metal. The magician rubs his hands together while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the armor's or its wearer's Spell Defense—the Spell Defense of non-magical armor is normally 2. If the test succeeds, the target's armor quickly heats to an extreme temperature. Each round, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on those wearing or touching the armor. No armor protects against this damage for the wearer; Physical Armor protects against this damage for those touching it.

Invigorate

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 9 / 17
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 1 hours
Effect: +5 bonus to Recovery Tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Invigorate spell refreshes the target character, soothing him and aiding his recovery from injury. While weaving the spell threads, the magician rubs his hands together, then touches the target character on the eyebrows (or the closest equivalent) and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target gains a +5 bonus to any Recovery Tests he makes during the spell's duration. A character may only be affected by one Invigorate spell at a time.

Kaer Pictographs

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 9 / 17
Range: Touch **Duration**: 10 minutes
Effect: Creates pictures or written messages
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Kaer Pictographs spell allows the magician to relay written or drawn messages to a kaer's inhabitants. The magician traces a picture or writes a message on the wall of the kaer while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the kaer's Spell Defense, which varies according to the kaer's defenses. The average kaer has a Spell Defense of 18 for purposes of this spell, though its actual Spell Defense may be much higher. If the test succeeds, the spell reacts with the kaer's magical defenses and burns the same image onto the inside wall of the kaer.

Magicians can use this spell to "transmit" words and written messages, but the kaer's residents may be unable to read the language that the message is written in. Also, no residents may be nearby to notice the pictograph before the spell expires. For this reason, many magicians use the Kaer Knocking spell to get the kaer residents' attention before employing the Kaer Pictographs spell.

Mage Armor

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 16
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 7 minutes
Effect: +4 to Physical Armor
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Mage Armor spell enhances the toughness and resilience of a set of armor. After weaving the spell thread, the magician punches his hand into the set of armor to be enhanced, uttering a soft "thudding" sound, as if an ineffectual blow had landed, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the armor's or its wearer's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, add +4 to the armor's Physical Armor rating for the spell's duration.

Armor that has been enchanted with the Mage Armor spell has a faint violet glow that is noticeable in the dark or with astral sight. A set of armor can benefit from only one Mage Armor spell at a time. Natural armor cannot be enhanced by this spell.

Makeshift Missile

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 9 / 15
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 2 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Makeshift Missile spell enchants a small object into a wickedly sharp throwing weapon. The item weighs the same as it did before the enchantment, so the spell is normally cast on small objects that can be easily thrown, such as rocks, tankards and the like. After weaving the spell thread, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target object's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician may throw the object at a target in the following round, making a Throwing Weapons Test as normal; there is no penalty for throwing an unbalanced or improvised object as the spell "streamlines" the missile (see **Thrown Attacks** in the **Ranged Combat** section of the **Combat** chapter, p. 412). If the object hits the target, the magician makes an Effect Test in place of a Damage Test for the weapon. Physical Armor protects against this damage. Regardless of whether the object hits or misses the target, it reverts to its original form afterwards.

While the spell is in effect, the magician can pick up and convert other items into throwing weapons as long as the Spell Defense of the object is no greater than his Spellcasting Test result. The magician may pass a missile to another character to throw, but that character uses his own Willpower step for the Effect Test.

Mystic Shock

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 21
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Mystic Shock spell allows a magician to damage a target character by channeling astral energy through an object or surface that both characters are touching. This spell does not require line of sight, and can be cast through any object or surface, including floors and walls. However, the magician must be touching the object or surface when he casts the spell and must be within range of the target.

After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

Sanctuary

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 18
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 10 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Sanctuary spell magically seals all portals and entrances to a building and reinforces them to keep out intruders. The spell must be cast inside a dwelling or other building up to 100 square yards in size. After weaving the spell threads, the magician touches a window or door and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is added to the building's Death Rating. The magician also adds his Spellcasting rank to the building's Physical Armor.

The effect of the Sanctuary spell is similar to the Seal Home questor power (see the **Passions and Questors** chapter, p. 478).

Slow

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 15
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 5 rounds
Effect: Halves movement; –5 penalty to Dexterity-based Tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Slow spell reduces the target's movement. While weaving the spell threads, the magician pantomimes casting a simple spell in slow motion, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense If the test succeeds, the target's Movement rates are halved. The target also suffers a –5 penalty to all of his Dexterity-based Tests, including Initiative Tests, while the spell is in effect. A character can only be affected by one Slow spell at a time.

Solo Flight

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 7 / 18
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank + 15 minutes
Effect: Grants the power of flight
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Solo Flight spell grants the power of flight. The magician flaps his arms up and down while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against his own Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician gains the ability to fly. While flying, his Full Movement rate is 110 yards, and his Combat Movement rate is 55 yards, per round.

The act of flying does not require the magician to concentrate any more than walking or running does. It is recommended that the magician remain conscious while the spell is in effect; a magician that falls unconscious while in flight will take Falling damage based on the distance fallen (see the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 107 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**).

Study Thread

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 15
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Study Thread spell allows a magician to study threads woven to patterns in astral space. The magician must have previously detected the thread to be examined to cast this spell. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the pattern to which the thread is tied. If the test succeeds, the magician may make an Effect Test in place of an Astral Sensing Test when viewing the thread for the duration of the spell.

Sixth Circle Spells

Blood Lost

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 22
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 1 days
Effect: Target loses ability to heal Wounds
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Blood Lost spell worsens a target's injuries and prevents the character from healing any Wounds. The target character must have at least 1 Wound for the spell to work. The magician makes wringing, squeezing actions with his hands while weaving the spell threads, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target loses his ability to naturally heal Wounds until the spell expires; he may heal Damage Points, however.

Any Recovery Tests used to heal Wounds while this spell is in effect are wasted; this includes the first Recovery Test made each day if the character currently has no damage—in such a situation, the character effectively loses –1 Recovery Test per day.

During the spell's duration, the target's Wounds can only be healed through magic, such as from a healing potion or the questor Heal power, although even such magic's ability to heal the target is affected. If the target uses a healing potion, he makes a Recovery Test (including the +8 bonus conferred by the potion) against a Difficulty Number equal to the Spellcasting Test result. If the test succeeds, the subject heals 1 Wound; in this case, healing potions used to counter the effects of this spell do not also heal any Damage Points.

If the target is being treated by a questor of Garlen, the questor makes a Heal Test against the Spellcasting Test result. If this test succeeds, the questor heals only 1 Wound, regardless of the result level achieved.

Displace Self

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 9 / 16
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank + 5 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Displace Self spell moves the magician out of the way of injury. The magician hops frantically up and down while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against his own unlowered Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician is imbued with a magical "sixth sense" that detects attacks targeted directly or indirectly at the magician (including Blindside attacks), and automatically moves him out of harm's way. The spell only avoids physical attacks which occur on an Initiative Test result equal to or less than the magician's Initiative result.

Each time he is attacked, the magician makes an Effect Test against the Attack Test result. If the test succeeds, the magician moves up to 2 yards in a random direction. If there are any intervening obstacles, the magician moves as far as he can, then stops. If the distance moved is insufficient to evade the attack (against a collapsing ceiling or a Fireball spell, for example), the magician must defend against the attack normally.

The spell's displacement effect can be used against a maximum number of attacks each round equal to the magician's Spellcasting rank and requires no concentration on the part of the magician to trigger.

Doom Missile

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 21
Range: 100 yards **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: Willpower + 5
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Doom Missile spell creates a magical missile which strikes the target and explodes, engulfing the character in a series of ongoing explosions. The magician gesticulates wildly while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test each round to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage. An Armor-Defeating Hit with a Doom Missile spell can be a very ugly death.

Karma Cancel

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 18
Range: 100 yards **Duration**: Rank + 8 rounds
Effect: Prevents the use of Karma
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Karma Cancel spell neutralizes a character's ability to use Karma. The magician snaps his fingers while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician can cancel any attempt by the target to use Karma by spending one of his own Karma Points to do so. Neither character rolls Karma dice for the cancelled points. Each round, the target can attempt to dispel the spell's effect by making a successful Willpower or Dispel Magic (14) Test. If the test succeeds, the spell expires, and the target regains the ability to use Karma.

Loan Spell

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 15
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 4 rounds
Effect: Loans spell
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Loan Spell gives a character temporary access to one of the magician's spell matrices. After weaving the spell threads, the magician hands the target a small object, such as a coin or token, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target can cast the spell attuned to the loaned matrix as if it were his own. The target character uses his own Spellcasting and Thread Weaving talents to cast the loaned spell. The target must be capable of weaving any necessary threads for the loaned spell or have them woven already, as in the case of a "loaned" Enhanced Matrix. If the target does not know the Spellcasting talent or skill, he makes a Perception Test in place of a Spellcasting Test using the rules for **Default Skill Use** (see the **Skills** chapter, p. 230). While the spell matrix is on loan, the magician cannot use it to cast or change the spell stored in it. To continue using the borrowed spell, the target must remain within the magician's line of sight.

Makeshift Weapon

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 15
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 5 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Makeshift Weapon spell enchants a small object into a slim, extremely keen, melee weapon. The object weighs the same as it did before the enchantment, so the spell is normally cast on light objects that can be easily wielded. After weaving the spell thread, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target object's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician may attack a target with the weapon, making a Melee Weapons Test as normal; there is no penalty for using an improvised weapon as the spell "balances" the weapon (see **Melee Attacks** in the **Close Combat** section of the **Combat** chapter, p. 409). If the target is struck, the magician makes an Effect Test in place of a Damage Test for the weapon. Physical Armor protects against this damage. The magician may cast the Makeshift Weapon spell on an object, then hand it to another character, but that character uses his own Willpower step for the Effect Test. When the spell's duration expires, the object reverts to its original form.

Mental Library

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 19
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: Increases number of books memorized; +10 bonus to Book Memory Tests
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Mental Library spell greatly increases a magician's capacity for memorizing text using the Book Memory talent. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the number of books that the magician can memorize increases to his Book Memory Rank + 10. He also gains a +10 bonus to any Book Memory Tests he makes while the spell is in effect. During the spell's duration, the magician should copy down any memorized texts in excess of his normal Book Memory Rank limit if he wishes to retain them. Otherwise, he cannot retrieve them once the spell expires, even through use of the Book Recall talent (see **Book Memory** and **Book Recall** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 174, for more information).

Multi-Mind Dagger

Threads: Varies (see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 9 / 22
Range: 30 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 2
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

A variant of the Mind Dagger spell, the Multi-Mind Dagger spell allows a magician to attack multiple targets at once. The magician must declare the number of targets he intends to attack, to a number equal to his Spellcasting rank, before he begins to weave any spell threads. He must weave a spell thread for each of his declared targets. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test, the result of which is compared against each target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage. All of the target characters must remain within the spell's range and the magician's line of sight in order to be affected. Those that move out of range of the spell cannot be targeted by the magician, although he must still weave the designated number of spell threads for the spell to be able to be cast it against those remaining within range.

Rampage

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 19
Range: 25 yards **Duration**: Instant
Effect: Sets off a group of orks' *gahads*
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Rampage spell is an area-effect version of the Ork Stoke spell, allowing a magician to set off a group of orks' *gahads* in response to any comment, subject or situation. The magician mutters under his breath while weaving the spell threads, then openly makes a rude comment or gesture and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target. If the test succeeds, the orks' *gahads* are stirred. The targeted characters may resist *gahad* as normal,

incurring the usual penalties for doing so. The Rampage spell can overcome even the conditions which never set off an ork's *gahad* (see **Gahad** in the **Creating Characters** chapter, p. 49). Obviously, this spell only affects orks; it cannot be successfully cast against other Name-givers.

Razor Orb

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 19
Range: 100 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 15
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Razor Orb spell creates a gleaming, spinning, powerful weapon of green light and force that is directed against the target character. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. The spell is designed to deliver one devastating Armor-Defeating Hit against a tough opponent. The required result level for delivering an Armor-Defeating Hit is one lower than normal (meaning a Good result, instead of an Excellent result, on the magician's Spellcasting Test will usually deliver an Armor-Defeating Hit). If a creature's armor does not normally permit an Armor-Defeating Hit, an Extraordinary result will bypass the armor. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Sleep

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 9 / 17
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: Rank + 10 rounds
Effect: Puts target characters to sleep
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Sleep spell causes one or more target characters to fall into a deep sleep. The magician yawns widely while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, the target characters immediately fall into a magical slumber. Sleeping characters wake if they take any damage, or the spell expires or is dispelled. Each round, sleeping characters may make a Willpower Test against the magician's Willpower step. If the test succeeds, the character wakes up.

The Sleep spell only affects characters or creatures that require sleep; it will not work against most undead, for example. The magician may affect a maximum number of characters equal to his Spellcasting rank.

Spellstore

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 19
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Spellstore spell allows a magician to place a spell pattern within a target object so that the spell can be cast at a later time. The item can be anything and does not require any special enchanting. After weaving the spell threads, the magician touches the object and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the Dispel Difficulty of the spell to be stored. If this test succeeds, the spell is placed within the object. Anyone who holds the object can matrix-cast the spell, using his own Spellcasting ability. If the spell requires threads, the caster must know the appropriate Thread Weaving talent. The wielder of the object must be touching it to cast the spell stored within it. Once the stored spell has been cast or the Spellstore spell expires, the spell pattern vanishes from the item.

Blood magic can be used to extend the spell's effect and duration. By taking the equivalent of his Wound Threshold in permanent Damage Points, and a Wound as well, the magician may extend the duration of the Spellstore spell to a year and a day. During this time, the wielder of the object may cast the stored spell any number of times. The magician cannot heal this damage, or the Wound, unless the object is destroyed or until the spell expires or is dispelled.

Seventh Circle Spells

Astral Gift

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 23
Range: 30 yards **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: Gives the target Astral-Sensitive Sight
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Astral Gift spell imbues the target with the ability to view astral space. The magician squints while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target gains the equivalent of the windling racial ability of Astral-Sensitive Sight for the spell's duration (see **Racial Abilities** in the **Creating Characters** chapter, p. 48).

Blood Boil

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 17
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: 4 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 9
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Blood Boil spell causes the target's blood to boil, causing his skin and veins to ripple and steam to emanate from his pores. While weaving the spell threads, the magician makes bubbling sounds as if he were pouring boiling oil onto the target, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage. During each remaining round of the spell's duration, the magician makes another Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, he makes an Effect Test to inflict damage on the target. If the test fails, the victim simply "simmers" and takes no damage that round. The magician may not redirect the spell against another target with this Spellcasting Test.

The Blood Boil spell only works if the target remains within 60 yards of the magician. If the target manages to make his way, or somehow finds himself, outside the spell's range, then the spell expires. The Blood Boil spell is only effective against living targets which have blood. It does not work against most undead, plants (they have sap, not blood), stone statues, or other such creatures. If there is any doubt, the gamemaster determines the spell's efficacy.

Call

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 10 / 17
Range: 100 miles **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Delivers a message
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Call spell delivers a message over a great distance. The message may contain a maximum number of words equal to the magician's Spellcasting rank. It must be sent to someone the

magician knows within the spell's range. While weaving the spell threads, the magician opens and closes his mouth as if speaking, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target sees and hears a magical image of the magician speaking the message. The image vanishes at the end of the round.

The target receives only the information that the magician chooses to send, whether a threat, a warning, a cry for help or a simple greeting. This spell allows only one-way communication; the magician knows whether the spell succeeded but he cannot tell if the target understood the message, nor can he learn anything else about the target's current location and condition.

Confusing Weave

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 20
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 3
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Confusing Weave spell confounds the target's ability to weave threads. The magician shakes his head from side to side while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the highest Thread Weaving step among the target characters. If the test succeeds, all of the target characters fail their efforts to weave threads into their own spells. They lose all of the threads they are weaving, or have already woven, into their spells. The magician may affect a maximum number of characters equal to his Spellcasting rank.

Dislodge Spell

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty**: 9 / 22
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Dislodge Spell disrupts a random spell from one of the target character's spell matrices, leaving that matrix empty. The target of the spell must have one or more spell matrices, including matrix objects, or the spell has no effect. The magician squints his eyes while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the gamemaster randomly selects one of the target's spell matrices. The magician makes an Effect Test against a Dispel Difficulty based on the chosen spell matrix's rank (see **Dispelling Magic** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 291). If the test succeeds, the matrix is wiped clean of all of the spells it currently contains, leaving it empty.

If a spell in the affected matrix is currently in the process of being cast, the target can choose to abort the spell or complete it using raw magic. The Dislodge Spell can target any type of spell matrix (a Spell, Enhanced, Armor, or Shared Matrix) or matrix object. A spell matrix wiped by this spell can be reattuned to hold a new spell or the spell it previously contained.

Lightning Cloud

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 18
Range: 120 yards **Duration**: Rank + 5 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Lightning Cloud spell conjures a swirling black and purple cloud that crackles with electricity. The cloud begins to form with the second spell thread, and is completed when the last spell thread is woven. After weaving the spell threads, the magician draws lightning from the cloud and hurls it at an opponent, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Non-metal Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Each round of the spell's duration, the magician may use his action to gather a bolt of lightning from the cloud and hurl it at the same or a different opponent within the spell's range, making another Spellcasting Test to determine whether the lightning hits.

Liquid Eyes

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 23
Range: 40 yards **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: Blinds target
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Liquid Eyes spell blinds a target character by directing a bolt of energy at his eyes. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target's eyes turn to a liquid gel, rendering him blind for the duration of the spell. The Spellcasting test's result level determines the severity of the blindness. An Average result incurs a Partial darkness penalty to the target's sight-based Action Tests; a Good result imposes a Full darkness penalty; an Excellent result imposes a Complete darkness penalty to the target's sight-based Action Tests (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 407). Each round, the target may make a Willpower (15) Test. If the test succeeds, the spell expires, restoring the target's eyes (and sight) to normal.

Move On Through

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty**: NA / 17
Range: 120 yards **Duration**: 1 round (see text)
Effect: Willpower + 4
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Move on Through spell forces the target character into continuous movement. The magician nods his head at a moving target and bows low in a mocking fashion, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense.

If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the target's Strength step. If this test succeeds, the target is forced to continue his current movement during the next round in the same direction and at the same speed.

Mystic Net

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 20
Range: 40 yards **Duration**: Rank + 2 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Mystic Net spell is an area-effect version of the Binding Threads spell (p. 380), and allows a magician to entrap a group of characters. The magician requires several pieces of string to cast the spell. While weaving the spell threads, the magician ties the lengths of string together into a complex knot, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character within a 40 yard radius of the magician. If the test succeeds, a mass of glowing magical threads leaps from the magician's hands to entangle the targets.

Bound targets struggle to use their limbs effectively, and are considered Harried while entangled (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408), except when making Strength Tests to break free. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the Strength value of the net, used to determine the Strength step for any Strength Tests made to escape the bonds. The magician can affect a maximum number of targets equal to his Spellcasting rank.

Spell Cage

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 19
Range: 100 yards **Duration**: Rank + 8 rounds
Effect: –5 penalty to all Spellcasting Tests
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Spell Cage spell captures the target in a magical cage. While weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a descending whistling sound, followed by a "clang!" as he makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the spell forms a cage, 3 yards by 3 yards by 3 yards in size, around the target. If the target is longer than 3 yards in any dimension, the spell fails. Once conjured, the cage cannot be moved; the target cannot move from the cage, as it has no door. The target trapped inside suffers a –5 penalty to his Spellcasting and Thread Weaving Tests, including attempts to cast spells against the cage itself. Spells directed against the target while he is in the cage suffer no such penalty.

The spell cage has the following statistics:

Spell Cage

Physical Defense: 9 **Physical Armor**: 7
Spell Defense: 15 **Mystic Armor**: 10
Death Rating: 40 **Wound Threshold**: NA
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Eighth Circle Spells

Catch Spell

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 14 / 21
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: Willpower + 12
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Catch Spell allows a magician to catch an incoming spell, hold it, then cast it back at the original caster or another target. The magician mimics catching an object while weaving the spell thread, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the Spellcasting Test result of any spell cast directly at him by the target during the spell's duration. If the test succeeds, the magician catches the opposing spell. The magician can choose to hold it until the Catch Spell expires, or he can make a Spellcasting Test to cast the caught spell at any legitimate target within the caught spell's range, including its original caster. When recast, the caught spell's game effects (Effect, Duration, and so on) are based on the statistics of the original caster, not the magician. If the Catch Spell expires while the magician is holding a caught spell, that spell affects the magician normally.

The Catch Spell can be used to catch any type of spell, not just Wizardry spells. A magician may catch and hold only one spell at a time and cannot cast other spells of his own while he has a caught spell held through successful use of the Catch Spell.

Compression Bubble

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 15 / 22
Range: 75 yards **Duration**: Rank + 7 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Compression Bubble spell traps the target inside a magical bubble. While weaving the spell threads, the magician places his hands together, as if holding an invisible ball, then releases them and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a flexible, but resilient, bubble forms around the target. The magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target as the bubble squeezes him and constricts his actions. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Each round, the magician must concentrate on squeezing the bubble in order to inflict additional damage on the target. He may also choose to simply move away and leave the target character trapped inside the bubble until the spell expires. The bubble may be torn open from the outside by an attack causing it at least 10 Damage Points in a single blow; anything less than this and the bubble reseals itself before a large enough rent is made to free the character trapped inside. A character who fails an Attack Test against the bubble has still struck it, but his blow has no effect. Only an Extraordinary result can defeat the bubble's Physical or Mystic Armor.

The only way to break open the bubble from the inside is if the target makes a successful Strength (17) Test. Weapons or spells wielded by the target have no effect against the interior of the bubble. While constricted inside the bubble, the target is considered Harried (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408). The compression bubble has the following statistics:

Compression Bubble

Physical Defense: 7 **Physical Armor**: 10
Spell Defense: 7 **Mystic Armor**: 10
Death Rating: 10 (see text) **Wound Threshold**: NA
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Delay Blow

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 14 / 20
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 10 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 15
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Delay Blow spell enchants a melee weapon to have a delayed attack effect. The magician stands still while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the weapon's or its wielder's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the next successful melee attack that the wielder makes with the enchanted weapon becomes subject to a bonus attack, struck at the same time. After making a Damage Test with the weapon, but before determining the outcome of any Knockdown Tests or effects, the attacker immediately makes another Attack Test using the same talent or skill he employed for his previous Attack Test. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which determines how much damage is inflicted on the target from the delayed blow. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Once the delayed blow has taken effect, whether the attack was successful or not, the spell expires. A weapon may have more than one Delay Blow spell active on it at a time; each effect expires in order when the weapon's wielder successfully strikes an opponent or the spell duration ends.

Peacebond

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 11 / 21
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Peacebond spell enforces peace between two warring parties. After weaving the spell threads, the magician touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target is peacebonded for the duration of the spell. Whenever a successful attack is made against the target, he makes an Effect Test against the Spell Defense of the attacker, using his own Willpower step. If the test succeeds, the attacker takes the same damage from the attack as he inflicts

on the target. No armor protects against this damage. The peace works both ways, however. If the target successfully attacks someone, he makes an Effect Test against his opponent's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target suffers the same damage inflicted by his own attack. No armor protects against this damage.

Blood magic can be used to extend the spell's duration. By taking 2 permanent Damage Points, the magician may extend the duration of the Peacebond spell to a year and a day. The magician cannot heal this damage until the spell expires or is dispelled.

Safe Opening

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 19
Range: 5 yards **Duration**: Rank + 5 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Safe Opening spell protects against traps or wards. While weaving the spell threads, the magician mimics opening the door, chest, or whatever it is he wishes to open, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the object's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the object opens normally. The magician makes an Effect Test against the highest Disarm Difficulty or Spell Defense of any traps or wards guarding the object's opening. If the test succeeds, any wards or traps on the object are frozen for the duration of the spell; they are not disarmed, merely temporarily inactive.

Spell Snatcher

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 14 / 24
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: 1 round (see text)
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Spell Snatcher spell allows a magician to seize a spell from another magician's spell matrix and place it in one of his own matrices. Magicians commonly replace their Spell Snatcher spell with the snatched spell, but the magician may replace any of the spells in his matrices. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the gamemaster randomly selects one of the target's spell matrices; the magician does not get the choice. The magician then makes an Effect Test against a Dispel Difficulty based on the spell Circle. If this test succeeds, the spell leaves the targeted matrix and appears in one of the casting magician's matrices. The snatched spell remains in the magician's spell matrix until cast or replaced, depending on the specific spell. The snatched spell can be of any spell Circle or type.

If casting the snatched spell is beyond the magician's abilities (he does not have the proper Thread Weaving talent or is not of a high enough Circle), he may still cast it from the matrix as if it were a grimoire-cast spell or by using raw magic. In either case, the snatched spell vanishes from the magician's spell matrix as soon as it is cast. If the magician is capable of casting the snatched spell, he may use it normally. The snatched spell remains in the magician's spell matrix until replaced by another spell or erased by a reattuning failure. If the snatched spell is unknown to the magician, he can attempt a Read and Write Magic Test to learn the spell, as normal (see **Learning Spells** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 283). If the test succeeds, he can add the spell to his own grimoire.

Wound Mask

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 15
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank + 5 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Wound Mask spell conjures a mask that draws an opponent's attacks onto itself, but protects the wearer. While weaving the spell threads, the magician pushes and prods the target character's face, as if fitting something onto it, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a thin copper mask completely covers the target's face. Although there are no eye, nose, or mouth holes in the mask, the target has no trouble seeing, breathing, or speaking. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the target's Physical Defense rating, even if lower than normal. Any physical Attack Test that fails to hit the target, hits the mask instead.

The mask has a Death Rating of 25 and a Physical Armor rating of 10. The mask's armor can only be defeated by an Extraordinary result. At the end of each combat round, if the mask's Death Rating is 1 or higher, the mask fully recovers from any damage taken. If the damage taken in a single combat round is at least equal to the mask's Death Rating, it is destroyed. The wearer is spared any damage until the next attack that hits; the destruction of the mask always completely absorbs all of the damage from the blow that shatters it.

Ninth Circle Spells

Absorbing Sphere

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 13 / 19
Range: 60 yards **Duration**: Rank + 12 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Absorbing Sphere spell conjures a tiny red sphere that eccentrically orbits the target character in a protective pattern. The magician waves his finger around his head in a circle while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the Difficulty Number for any Attack Tests made against the target character. If an opponent's Attack Test result is less than the Effect Test result, the attack hits the absorbing sphere instead of the target. The attacker makes a Damage Test as normal. Regardless of the result, the sphere absorbs all of the damage.

After the sphere has been struck, the magician may make a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of a target of his choice within the spell's range. If the test succeeds, the Damage Points absorbed by the sphere are "dumped" onto the target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage. Alternatively, the magician

may "dump" the damage into astral space instead of onto another character. The magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, the damage absorbed by the sphere is discharged into the astral plane. If the absorbing sphere contains even a single Damage Point, it cannot be used to block attacks. The sphere must be emptied before it can intercept any attacks and absorb any further damage.

Channel Raw Magic

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 25
Range: 25 yards **Duration**: 3 rounds
Effect: Channels astral energy through target
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Channel Raw Magic spell damages a target character by channeling raw astral energy through his astral pattern. The magician wrinkles his brow in concentration while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the target suffers raw magic damage each round, for the duration of the spell.

The Damage step used for the Damage Test depends on the type of astral region the target is in when the spell is cast (see **Casting Raw Magic** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 289). The damage inflicted on the target is calculated as if the target had attempted to cast a Ninth Circle spell using raw magic. Because the effect is internal, only the character's base Mystic Armor protects against this damage.

Draining Eye

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 14 / 15
Range: 60 yards (see text) **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Draining Eye spell creates an eye that can drain energy from another character. The magician points a finger to his own forehead while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against his own unlowered Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a third eye is conjured, appearing upon the magician's forehead, with a pupil that looks like a starry whirlpool. Each round, the magician looks at a target character within the spell's range, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the target's highest Attribute step. If this test succeeds, he temporarily drains the target of life force, imbuing himself with that same energy. The target suffers a –1 penalty to his Action Tests for each result level achieved, while the magician gains an equivalent bonus to his Action Tests.

The magician can affect a maximum number of characters equal to his Spellcasting rank. He may take an action to direct the eye against another target during the spell's duration, making a Spellcasting and Effect Test as noted above, but only gains additional benefit if the Effect Test's result level is greater than previous attempts. He gains the higher bonus in this case; the target is drained as normal. The magician cannot drain the same target character more than once. The life force ebbs from the magician once the spell's duration expires or if the target character dies.

Glowing Swarm

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 12 / 22
Range: 10 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 rounds
Effect: Creates a swarm of glowing insects
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Glowing Swarm spell conjures a swarm of dangerous glowing insects, similar in appearance to fireflies, which can be directed to attack a target character. The magician makes buzzing noises while weaving the spell threads, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the swarm's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, a glowing swarm of insects appears and obeys the magician's orders for the duration of the spell. Controlling the swarm requires the magician's concentration; if he does not command the swarm, it simply hovers 5 yards up in the air and awaits orders.

The swarm can be attacked, but most attacks do it very little damage. For successful Attack Tests made against the swarm, each result level achieved reduces all of the swarm's step numbers (Initiative, Attack, and Damage). An Average result reduces the swarm's step numbers by –1; a Good result by –2; an Excellent result by –3; an Extraordinary result reduces the swarm's step numbers by –4. These penalties are cumulative. If any of the swarm's step numbers are reduced to zero, the swarm is destroyed. The swarm is immune to talents that target Social Defense, including Interaction Tests.

When attacking, the swarm uses the following statistics:

Glowing Swarm

DEX: 11 **STR**: 11 **TOU**: NA
PER: 9 **WIL**: 7 **CHA**: NA

Initiative: 14 **Physical Defense**: 16
Number of Actions: 1 **Spell Defense**: 12
Attack (1): 12 **Social Defense**: Immune
Damage: **Physical Armor**: 0
Bite (1): 12 **Mystic Armor**: 3

Death Rating: NA (see text) **Recovery Tests**: NA
Wound Threshold: NA **Knockdown**: Immune
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 86✦ **Full Movement**: 172✦
✦ This value is the Swarm's flying movement rate.

Legend Points: 165
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Observe Event

Threads: 5
Range: 5 yards
Effect: Willpower + 3
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense
Weaving Difficulty: 14 / 15
Duration: Variable (see text)

The Observe Event spell allows a magician to play with the flow of time, a dangerous undertaking under any circumstances. The magician may observe past events that occurred within 5 yards of where he is standing. The magician states specifically which event he wants to observe, as in "I wish to see the last crime committed here" or "I wish to see what Lord Malban last did here," then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense of any character present at the scene he wishes to observe.

EVENT MODIFIER TABLE

Event Occurred	Difficulty Modifier
A day or two ago	0
1–3 weeks ago	+1
1–2 months ago	+2
3–6 months ago	+3
7–12 months ago	+6
2–5 years ago	+9
6–10 years ago	+12
11–50 years ago	+15
51–100 years ago	+18
101–200 years ago	+21
201–500 years ago	+24
501+ years ago	Impossible

If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against the same Spell Defense, applying modifiers based on how long ago the event occurred from the Event Modifiers Table. If this test succeeds, the magician is granted a vision of the past. As he observes the scene, the magician also gets a clear sense of when the event occurred. The event is replayed as it happened, round by round, until the magician decides he has seen enough or can't take the Strain; he takes 1 Strain Point of damage each round of the spell's duration.

Reattach Limb

Threads: 6
Range: Touch
Effect: Willpower
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense
Weaving Difficulty: 15 / 15
Duration: 1 round

The Reattach Limb spell attaches a severed limb to its owner. The limb must be in good condition to allow it to be reattached; limbs that have been preserved by magic, such as the Cold Storage spell, may be attached to their owner using this spell. The magician must reopen the original Wound to attach the limb; the target character takes a number of Damage Points equal to his Wound Threshold. No armor protects against this damage. After weaving the spell threads, the magician pushes the severed limb into position and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the limb attaches itself to the target; muscles, bones and arteries are magically grafted into their original position. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is subtracted from the target's Current Damage Total due to the regenerative processes. A magician can attempt to graft a limb onto a character other than the owner. The target character must have lost a limb of that type (arm, leg, and so on) and of a similar size. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test as normal, but must achieve a Good result.

Tell Tale

Threads: 3
Range: Touch
Effect: Gains the answer to a question from the target object
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense
Weaving Difficulty: 12 / 15
Duration: 1 minute

The Tell Tale spell allows a magician to divine events that occurred in the vicinity of an inanimate object. Using this spell, the saying "if only the walls could talk" is realized. While weaving the spell threads, the magician touches the object and releases a tiny portion of his life force, causing him 1 Strain Point of damage, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the object's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician is able to ask one "yes / no" question of the object. The object will answer the question truthfully, sensing events as if the magician himself had been present to witness them. The event must have occurred within a number of days equal to the magician's Spellcasting rank for the spell to work.

Wipe Matrices

Threads: 1+ (see text)
Range: 60 yards
Effect: Willpower + 12
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense
Weaving Difficulty: 12 / 22
Duration: 1 round

The Wipe Matrices spell disrupts the target's spell matrices and erases all the spells they hold. The spell requires a number of threads equal to the number of spell matrices that the magician wishes to erase. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the magician makes an Effect Test against a Dispel Difficulty based on the rank of the highest-ranked target matrix (see **Dispelling Magic** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 291). If this test succeeds, all of the affected matrices are wiped clean of their current spells. If the number of spell matrices erased is fewer than the total the target possesses, the specific matrices affected are chosen at random. This spell can affect the target's spell matrix talents as well as specific matrix objects. If a spell is

erased in the process of being cast, the target can either abort the spell or finish casting it with raw magic. The target may reattune the wiped matrices one at a time by Reattuning on the Fly (see **Spellcasting Methods** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 288).

Tenth Circle Spells

Death Vow

Threads: 3
Weaving Difficulty: 13 / 22
Range: Touch
Duration: Rank weeks
Effect: Willpower + 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Death Vow spell enforces an agreement between the magician and another target character. The magician stipulates the terms of the contract while weaving the spell threads, then shakes hands with the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the target's or his own Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the terms of the contract take effect, as stated. The contract can be as outrageous as the magician desires, with one important catch—once the Death Vow spell has been successfully cast, both characters must abide by the contract. Once the terms have been agreed upon, and the spell is in effect, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the Vow Difficulty.

If either or both of the characters bound by the spell violate the contract, one or both may die. If the contract is broken, each character makes a Willpower Test against the Vow Difficulty. If the test succeeds, nothing happens; the vow is broken with no effect to that character. If the test fails, the character dies. Death is instantaneous, inflicting Damage Points equal to the character's full Death Rating and 2 Wounds. No armor protects against this damage. Regardless of whether the characters live or die, the spell immediately expires if the vow is broken.

The Death Vow is activated by blood magic; the magician takes 2 permanent Damage Points when the spell is cast. This damage cannot be healed until the spell expires or is dispelled. Because of the risks involved, a magician should be careful not to use Death Vow to force a character into a totally unacceptable contract. The other character might decide to expunge his shame by breaking the vow and dying, possibly taking the magician with him, rather than be bound by a dishonorable or unfair contract.

Draw and Quarter

Threads: 4
Weaving Difficulty: 16 / 26
Range: Touch
Duration: 1 round
Effect: Willpower + 15
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Draw and Quarter spell allows a magician to severely damage his target with circlets of energy. The target must be restrained for this spell to be cast. As the magician binds the target's limbs, weaving the spell threads as he does, a glowing circle of astral energy forms around each limb. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense—because of the helpless state of the target, subtract –3 from his Defense Ratings as if he were Knocked Down (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 409). If the test succeeds, the astral circlets pull away from the target, tearing at his limbs.

The magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage. If the target takes any damage, the spell causes an additional 4 Wounds.

Like the Onion Blood spell, Draw and Quarter is used as a means of execution in some parts of Barsaive.

Hold Pattern

Threads: 6
Weaving Difficulty: 14 / 23
Range: Touch
Duration: Rank days
Effect: Willpower + 8
Casting Difficulty: 6

The Hold Pattern spell allows a magician to lock a spell, complete with woven spell threads, into a spell matrix, holding it until he is ready to cast it. The magician weaves the Hold Pattern spell around one of his matrices containing the spell he wishes to lock. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, he makes an Effect Test against the spell's Dispel Difficulty. If the test succeeds, the spell is held in the matrix for a number of days equal to the magician's Spellcasting rank.

A spell can be held in this way at any point during its casting. This means a magician could weave all the threads for a spell, and then use the Hold Pattern spell's effect, leaving only the Spellcasting Test unresolved. The magician could postpone making a Spellcasting Test to release the held spell. Magicians can pack a lot of firepower into a few rounds with judicious use of this spell, but it does tie up a spell matrix until the held spell is used. As soon as the held spell is released, the Hold Pattern effect ends and this spell expires.

Journey to Life

Threads: 7 (see text)
Weaving Difficulty: 14 / 15
Range: Touch
Duration: Rank days
Effect: Willpower + 15
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Journey to Life spell guides a deceased character's spirit back from the afterlife to his body, bringing him back to life. The magician snakes a tendril of energy through a deceased character into the astral plane and beyond. The tendril acts as a beacon and a pathway for the spirit of the deceased. The operation is stressful; each round of weaving and casting causes the magician 1 Strain Point of damage.

After weaving the spell threads, the magician touches the body and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense, as if he were alive. If the test succeeds, the target's spirit can begin to find its way back to the body. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which becomes the target's Spell Defense against other spirits who might find the pathway and try to possess the body.

The Journey to Life takes as many days to complete as the deceased has been dead, counted from the time the journey starts. For example, if the deceased has been dead for a long time, say, 54 days when the spell is first cast, the magician will have to cast several consecutive Journey to Life spells before the spirit can find its way home. If a day passes without a successful casting of the spell, the journey is interrupted and must be started all over again. This time, however, the journey will be even longer, because the deceased has now been dead a longer time. Once the journey has been completed, the spirit re-inhabits the body, effectively resurrecting the dead character. The character is fully restored to health when his spirit enters his body. Any Wounds or Damage Points the character has are healed. Likewise, the effects of being dead for a period of time (decomposition and the like) are also healed by this spell.

Magicians know it is folly to attempt a Journey to Life spell anywhere but in a safe region. To conduct a Journey to Life in a tainted or corrupt region is to extend an invitation few Horrors would refuse.

Onion Blood

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 16 / 19
Range: 100 yards **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: Willpower + 6
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This ugly spell is based on an ability used by Horrors. The Onion Blood spell literally peels the target character, inflicting horrific injuries on him. While weaving the spell threads, the magician tears a parchment into pieces, plucks a flower, or peels an onion, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the spell begins to peel away the target's skin and muscle, layer by bloody layer. Each round, the magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which determines how much damage is inflicted on the target. Mystic Armor protects against this damage. If the target takes any damage, he also takes an additional Wound. Any other characters (except the magician) who see the victim flayed make a Willpower Test against the magician's Willpower step. If the test fails, the character flees out of line of sight of the victim, horrified by what they see. A Good result dispels the spell.

Use of the spell is outlawed in Throal, except for legal executions of criminals who have committed heinous crimes. Many other kingdoms in Barsaive have followed suit, although, realistically, most lack the ability to enforce the law upon a Tenth Circle magician.

Spell Fusion

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 16 / 26
Range: 40 yards **Duration**: 3 rounds
Effect: Willpower + 3
Casting Difficulty: 6; Target's Spell Defense; 12 (see text)

The Spell Fusion spell allows a magician to capture spells cast by other magicians, fuse them together and recast them as a single spell. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If the test succeeds, a sphere of astral energy forms and hovers next to the magician. Whenever another magician casts a spell within 40 yards of the magician, he can attempt to capture the spell in the sphere by making an Effect Test against the target spell's Spellcasting Test result. If this test succeeds, the sphere captures the target spell's energy and holds it until the Spell Fusion spell expires. The magician must concentrate to maintain this spell; if his concentration is broken, the spell ends.

When the Spell Fusion spell expires, the magician may focus all the spells captured within the sphere at a single target within 40 yards of him by making a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. The magician must achieve a Good result. If the test succeeds, the target suffers the effects of each captured spell, as if all of them had been cast on him at the same time. The effects of the spells are based on the Spellcasting and Willpower steps of the original casters, not of the magician casting the fused spell.

Alternatively, when the Spell Fusion spell expires, the magician may dispel the captured spells by making a successful Spellcasting (12) Test. If this test fails, the magician cannot dispel the captured spells and must cast them at a target instead.

Warp Astral Space

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty**: 17 / 23
Range: 50 yards **Duration**: Rank + 5 rounds
Effect: Warps astral space; –8 penalty to Spellcasting Tests through or in the warped area
Casting Difficulty: 15

The Warp Astral Space spell twists, stretches, punctures, and otherwise deforms astral space. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting (15) Test. If the test succeeds, the astral space in a 50 yard radius of the magician becomes warped. All characters whose spells are cast from, enter, or pass through the warped space suffer a –8 penalty to their Spellcasting Tests. Since the magician is intimately familiar with this warping, his spells are unaffected. In the physical plane, this penalty manifests itself as spells wildly careening around, over, or below their intended targets, or just vanishing altogether. The penalty also applies to Dispel Magic attempts, as finding the pattern of the Warp Astral Space spell requires traveling through the warped area of astral space.

Eleventh Circle Spells

Block Magic

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty**: 16 / 25
Range: 40 yards **Duration**: Rank + 3 minutes
Effect: –10 penalty to magic-related Action Tests
Casting Difficulty: 10

The powerful Block Magic spell severely constricts the flow of astral energy into an area. While weaving the spell threads, the magician adopts a defensive posture, holding out or crossing his arms, or putting more weight on his back foot, then makes a Spellcasting (10) Test. If the test succeeds, any Action Test based on magical abilities made in a designated area within the spell's range with a radius of 10 yards—including Action Tests for talents, spells and magical items—suffers a –10 penalty. This penalty applies to Spellcasting and Effect Tests when casting spells, to talent steps, and to the step number of any magical effect granted by magical items, including the Damage step of magical weapons. The penalty also applies to all uses of magical abilities in the affected area by the magician casting the Block Magic spell. If the step number of a spell, talent or magical item is reduced below Step 1, then the ability or item ceases to function for the spell's duration.

Note that some talents (and possibly spells and items) do not generate a step number—their effect is based solely on their rank, such as the Karma Ritual, Durability and Spell Matrix talents. These talents are unaffected by the Block Magic spell. If the description of the talent, spell or item does not incorporate a step number, then the Block Magic spell does not affect it. The Block Magic spell also affects spirit, creature and Horror powers and spellcasting.

Twelfth Circle Spells

Alter Form

Threads: 8 (ritual; see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 16 / 26
Range: Touch (see text) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Alters the nature and pattern of the target
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The powerful Alter Form ritual spell changes the physical nature and True pattern of the target object, Name-giver, creature or entity. The spell is most often uses to repair or reshape old and tattered or worn items. For example, the Alter Form spell can be employed to reshape a rusty old sword into a newly-forged broadsword. When cast on non-magical items, this spell is generally innocuous, though casting it on weapons or armor that have been enhanced through use of the Forge Armor or Forge Blade talents means those improvements are lost. When used against items that have their own True patterns, however, the effects can be disastrous—the item's pattern is effectively erased, transforming it into a non-magical item as a result. All threads woven to the item are broken as a result.

When cast on living beings, the Alter Form spell irrevocably alters the target's True pattern. For Name-givers, this spell has the same effect as re-Naming; it erases the target's identity and, if the target is an adept, takes away all of his talents and abilities.

Each spell thread takes 1 hour to weave, and the magician may attempt to weave only a single thread each day. While the thread is being woven, the magician must remain within 10 yards of the target, or he loses all of his previously woven threads and must begin the spell anew. After weaving the spell threads, the magician speaks aloud a brief description of what he is altering the target into, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If casting the spell on a non-magical item, the magician must achieve an Average result; casting the spell on a magical item requires an Excellent result; casting the spell on a living being—Name-giver, creature or Horror—requires an Extraordinary result. If the test succeeds, the target is transformed into the magician's stated form.

If the test fails, the magician may attempt the ritual again on the same target, spending time reweaving the required threads, but adding +2 to the Casting Difficulty for each additional attempt he makes. Regardless of the number of failed attempts, the Alter Form spell can only be successfully cast on the same target once; they can never again be affected by this spell.

Thirteenth Circle Spells

Cleanse Astral Space

Threads: 5 (ritual; see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 20 / 28
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Willpower +12
Casting Difficulty: 10

The incredibly difficult and dangerous Cleanse Astral Space ritual spell cleanses astral space of the taint left by the passage and presence of Horrors. The magician must directly interact with the astral space in his vicinity and must cast the spell using raw magic—the Cleanse Astral Space spell cannot be cast from a spell matrix. Weaving each thread takes 1 hour, during which time the magician concentrates, carefully taking note of the fabric and nature of the region of astral space he is trying to cleanse. Each hour, the gamemaster makes a Horror Mark Test against the magician's base Spell Defense to determine if any Horrors have noticed the magician's efforts to date. The step number for this test is based on the type of astral space against which the magician is casting this spell (see **Casting Raw Magic** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 289). Rather than marking the magician, a successful Horror Mark Test instead alerts any nearby Horror to the magician's presence. The Horror (or Horrors) then most likely attempts to prevent the magician from completing the ritual.

After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting (10) Test. If the test succeeds, the gamemaster makes a Warping Test based on the type of astral space to be cleansed. The magician then makes an Effect Test against the Warping Test result. Each result level achieved reduces the astral pollution within a 1 mile radius by one level.

After determining the effects of the spell, the gamemaster makes one last Warping Test against the base Spell Defense of the magician for his use of raw magic. If the test succeeds, the magician takes damage as normal, but no additional Horror Mark Tests are made (see **Casting Raw Magic** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 289). The cleansing effect of this spell is permanent, unless some future atrocity or Horror activity in the region corrupts it again.

Fifteenth Circle Spells

City in a Bottle

Threads: 8 (ritual; see text) **Weaving Difficulty**: 18 / 33
Range: 25 miles **Duration**: Rank +1 days
Effect: Captures terrain and puts it in a bottle
Casting Difficulty: 12

The mighty City in a Bottle ritual spell is legendary—in fact, many magicians claim it does not exist—allegedly allowing the capture of a complete city and the surrounding terrain, and its placement into a bottle. Weaving each spell thread takes 1 week, and the magician can attempt to weave only one thread over a period of two lunar cycles (about 8 weeks). A specially prepared colored glass bottle must also be present throughout the ritual. After weaving the spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting (12) Test. If the test succeeds, an area of up to 100 square miles in size vanishes from the earth and is magically "stored" in the bottle. The previous site of the captured area becomes an empty plain.

For the people and creatures in the captured area, the first thing they notice is the sky, which becomes a whirling mass of colors, changing as the light outside the bottle strikes it. The bottle forms impenetrable walls around the captured terrain; any creatures, Name-givers or Horrors within the area at the time of casting become trapped in the bottle for the duration of the spell. The same walls also protect those inside from the predations of external entities. The bottle is completely invulnerable while the spell is in effect; nothing can penetrate it, although those outside can see in with the right visual implements. When the spell expires, the missing terrain (and its inhabitants) returns to its former location.

The magician can extend the duration of the spell to a year and a day by taking a number of permanent Damage Points equal to his Wound Threshold. This damage, and the Wound caused, cannot be healed until the spell expires or is dispelled. According to persistent rumors, entire cities may have weathered the Scourge by using a permanent version of this spell. They are said to exist in bottles kept in a powerful warded vault, awaiting a hero who will unlock the Key Knowledges necessary to restore them to the outside world.

COMBAT

Soon after we re-emerged into the world, we found our lives filled with conflict. It was then we realized that the days of battle were far from over.

• Me'gana, Swordmaster of Lowilla •

In the world of **Earthdawn**, your characters can expect to confront any number of evil or dangerous beings in the course of their adventures. Sometimes you'll be able to get what you need without combat. Sometimes you'll have to fight for what you want. This chapter explains the mechanics for handling those situations in which your characters must fight to survive and those times when they join battle for the sheer pleasure of matching skills against an opponent.

Combat in **Earthdawn** happens fast and loose, allowing characters to perform a wide variety of actions. Swinging swords, casting spells, and intimidating your enemies are all just part of the action.

COMBAT SUMMARY

Combat is conducted in a series of turns called **combat rounds**, or simply, **rounds**. Each combat round equals roughly 10 seconds of game time. Roughly, because the exact length of each round is usually not important to the story; it is simply a convenient unit of measure.

During each combat round, your character can do a number of things: move, perform one or more simple tasks, and use one talent or skill that requires an action. The **Actions** section describes what a character can and cannot do during a combat round.

To see whether your character can actually perform his desired actions or to determine how successfully he carried them out, players usually make one or more Action Tests (see **Action Tests** in the **Game Concepts** chapter, p. 18). After making an Initiative Test to determine the order in which actions are played, this typically also involves making an Attack Test which, if successful in turn, is followed by a Damage Test. These, and the other kinds of Action Tests that players must make during combat, are described in the **Actions** and **Resolving Attacks** sections of this chapter.

The following summary outlines in order the general sequence of events that make up a typical combat round. Each element is explained more fully later on in this chapter.

❶ Declare Actions

❷ Determine Initiative

❸ Resolve Actions

❹ Begin a New Round

Most of the following rules apply equally to player and gamemaster characters. Whenever a rule applies solely to a gamemaster character or creature it is noted. Note that references to the term *character* refer to any player or gamemaster characters or creatures participating in the combat.

DECLARE ACTIONS

All characters declare the general type of action they intend to perform this round, such as attacking, casting a spell, and so on. At this time, characters declare the use of any combat options (see **Combat Options**, p. 403).

*Combat has just been initiated in one of James' **Earthdawn** game sessions between the player characters and a group of cadaver men. The characters are about 30 yards away from the cadaver men, and James declares the undead "do not yet appear to be reacting to the characters' presence." James asks for player actions to be declared. Richard declares his ork Beastmaster will "run toward the cadaver men and attack them." Paul declares his windling Thief will "fly off to one side, then sneak around to the rear of the cadaver men, hoping to get a chance to backstab them." John declares his t'skrang Swordmaster will "draw his broadsword, run over to the nearest cadaver man and attack him." Andrew declares his troll Sky Raider will "roar loudly, then attack the meanest-looking cadaver man with his axe using the Aggressive Attack combat option." George declares his human Nethermancer will "stand back this round and wait to see what happens." Jonathan declares his elf Archer will "loose a fire arrow at the nearest target."*

DETERMINE INITIATIVE

Each round, all characters make an Initiative Test to determine the order in which their declared actions are carried out during the round. Talents, spells, armor, and shields can modify the Initiative step, as listed with their description. **A character's Initiative step cannot be reduced below Step 1.**

Players roll for their characters' Initiative; the gamemaster rolls for those characters and creatures he controls. The character with the highest Initiative Test result acts first, followed by the character with the next highest test result, and so on with each remaining character, continuing through a descending numerical order. All characters take their turn according to their Initiative Test result.

Initiative Tests are *not* subject to the Rule of One (see **Action Tests** in the **Game Concepts** chapter, p. 18). What the character rolls is what his Initiative is this round. If two or more characters roll the same Initiative Test result, their actions occur at the same time and are resolved in whatever order the gamemaster deems appropriate—comparing the characters' Dexterity values to break tied test results is one method; comparing Initiative steps is another. If a player character ties his Initiative Test result with a gamemaster character or creature, the player character always gets to take his actions first—**Earthdawn** is a game about heroes, after all!

Speeding Up Initiative

While players are normally responsible for just a single character, the gamemaster is often required to look after Initiative for greater numbers of gamemaster characters or creatures. To simplify and speed up the process for making Initiative Tests, it is recommended that the gamemaster make one Initiative Test for groups of similar characters under his control, rather than for each individual character or monster. For example, it makes more sense for the gamemaster to roll one Initiative Test for a group of six identical ork scorchers than keep track of individual Initiative Test results for each ork. On the other hand, if the group consists

Take the Initiative

Optional Rule: In large combats, which can easily take a lot of real time to resolve (thus slowing game play), the gamemaster may speed up the combat round by choosing not to make Initiative Tests for gamemaster-controlled creatures or characters. In this case, he simply uses the Initiative step as the Initiative Test result.

This rule generally works only where the creature or gamemaster character does not have a talent or ability that improves Initiative. It is strongly recommended that this optional rule only be used by the gamemaster.

of five identical ork scorchers accompanied by a captain with a different Initiative step, the gamemaster may choose to make one Initiative Test for the five ork scorchers and a separate Initiative Test for their captain.

Resolve Actions

At the start of the round, characters stated what actions they hoped to take, and what combat options they were intending to use. Now the characters declare, in descending order of Initiative, from the highest to the lowest test result, which talents, skills, or spells they intend to use and whether they plan to spend Karma Points on any actions.

> *Kelly, having declared his troll Sky Raider's intent to use the Aggressive Attack combat option against a cadaver man, now states that his character intends to "use his Shield Charge talent to bash the cadaver man to the ground, then kick him with his Swift Kick talent."*

After declaring specific intentions, characters resolve their actions by making the appropriate Action Tests and evaluating the results. The character also determines the effect of his actions at this time, including spell Effect Tests, weapon Damage Tests, and so on. If a character wants to change his action from what he declared at the beginning of the round, he can do so now, but adds +2 to the Difficulty Number of the new action (see **Changing Actions**, p. 398).

Characters may voluntarily reduce their Initiative Test result in order to perform their actions later in the round. Characters who want to delay their actions in this manner say so at this time.

Begin a New Round

After all characters have resolved their actions, the combat round ends. If some combatants wish to continue fighting, the next combat round begins immediately.

Actions

During each combat round, a character can do several things. He can move, perform one or more Simple actions, and use one other ability that requires a Standard action.

Movement

If movement is the only action a character takes during a combat round, the character can move a maximum number of yards equal to his Full Movement rate. The character is limited to performing one Simple action if he moves this distance. If the character wants to perform a Standard action plus one or more Simple actions during that combat round, he can move a maximum number of yards equal to his Combat Movement rate.

Unless the **Splitting Movement** combat option is used (see **Combat Options**, p. 403), a character's movement must take place all at once, either before or after his other action. A character can move and attack, or attack and move, but he cannot split up his movement during a round. For example, the character cannot move half his Combat Movement rate, attack an opponent, and then use the remainder of his Combat Movement rate trying to get away.

Depending on the environment (and the gamemaster's discretion), a character's Movement rates may be reduced. For example, characters fighting in knee-deep water may find their Movement rates reduced to half. See **Impaired Movement** in the **Situation Modifiers** section, p. 408, for more information.

Standard Actions

A character moving a distance no greater than his Combat Movement rate during a combat round can perform a single action that requires his full attention. This is a **Standard action**, and usually requires the character to make an Action Test to determine the outcome of the task being attempted.

Talent and Skill Tests

Many talents and most skills require that a character have a Standard action available to use them. As noted earlier, during a combat round, a character can use only a single talent or skill that requires a Standard action. This is because the talent or skill requires a major part of a character's focus to carry out that round. A talent, skill, or other ability with the notation "Action: Yes" in its description indicates it requires the character to use a Standard action.

Talents and skills that require an action always require an Action Test to determine whether the character successfully uses that ability (see **Using Talents** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 166, and **Using Skills** in the **Skills** chapter, p. 230). This includes most combat and interaction talents and skills, and any use of magic, including weaving threads and casting spells.

Sustained Actions

Not all tasks can be completed in a single round. Unless specified otherwise, the gamemaster should determine a reasonable

Initiative-based Movement

Optional Rule: Characters and creatures move fairly quickly in **Earthdawn**. Gamemasters who want to add a tactical element to their games can use the following guidelines to prevent characters from moving their full Movement rates on their Initiative. Instead, they move throughout the round.

The distance a character can move before an opposing character can react is based on the difference between the two character's Initiative Test results. The greater the difference, the further the first character can move before his opponent can react: for every point of difference, the character can move 10% of his relevant Movement rate. If the difference is greater than 9 points, the character is able to complete his movement.

> *Serafino, a human Swordmaster, faces a Theran Archer on the battlefield. The Archer is 20 yards away when the combat round begins. Both characters declare they will attack each other, Serafino using his trusty broadsword and the Archer his longbow. With a Combat Movement of 40 yards, Serafino's Initiative Test result needs to be at least 5 points higher than his opponent's if he wants to attack first. Both characters make an Initiative Test—Serafino's result is 12, and the Archer's result only 6. Sword drawn, Serafino is able to attack his opponent before he can react: the Initiative difference is 6 points (12 – 6 = 6), and Serafino is able to cross the distance with ease (60% of his Combat Movement equals 24 yards).*

length of time for the completion of such an action. If the character is under pressure to complete the action quickly, the gamemaster may allow the character to speed up the process by making an Action Test (often an Attribute Test) at the end of each round to determine if the task is successful. This usually prevents the character from taking any other actions during a given round.

Examples of actions that require more than one round to complete include:

- Finding a specific object in a backpack
- Carefully searching an area of wall or a door
- Removing or putting on a set of armor
- Drinking a potion or administering a salve
- Spiking a door shut

Kricklen wants to retrieve a healing potion from his backpack to give to a Wounded comrade. Unfortunately, his only healing potion is in his backpack, along with a considerable amount of other adventuring gear. The gamemaster judges it will take Kricklen 6 rounds to find the item. His comrade, however, needs it sooner. The gamemaster allows Kricklen to speed up the process by rummaging hurriedly through his backpack, and the t'skrang makes a Dexterity (6) Test each round to see if he finds the potion earlier.

SIMPLE ACTIONS

Apart from Movement and Standard actions, during the combat round a character can perform a variety of **Simple actions**, many of which do not require him to make an Action Test. Some talents and skills do not require a character to perform a Standard action to carry them out; these are also considered Simple actions. This includes talents or skills such as: Avoid Blow, Battle Shout, Cat's Paw, Eagle Eye, Flame Arrow, Riposte, and Wound Balance. Those talents or skills that can be used with a Simple action are indicated by an "Action: No" notation in their description in the **Talents** and **Skills** chapters.

Simple Action Limitations

Technically, there is no limit to the number of Simple actions a character could carry out during a combat round. However, the gamemaster should take into account what a character would reasonably be able to perform during a (roughly) 10 second time period, balanced against the fact that **Earthdawn** is a fantasy game, and therefore subject to "reality" being stretched from time to time to serve the goal of telling an exciting story.

By no means an exhaustive list, here are some examples of Simple actions that could reasonably be carried out during a single combat round:

- Speak a short sentence
- Draw or sheath a melee weapon
- Reload a missile weapon
- Unsling a shield or take off a backpack
- Put an item into, or take one out of, a backpack or belt pouch
- Quickly search an area of wall or a door
- Mount or dismount from a horse or other animal

Also, as a rule of thumb, only one defensive talent or skill can be used against a single attack. For example, it isn't possible to use the Avoid Blow and Riposte talents against the same attack.

RESOLVING ACTIONS

Starting with the highest Initiative Test result, all characters attempt to perform their declared actions as designated in the Declare Actions phase of the combat round, one at a time, until all characters' actions have been resolved.

The gamemaster calls out Initiative values, starting with the highest Initiative Test result. Each character then takes his turn performing actions. Characters will most often make an Attack Test when engaged in combat, but an action might also consist of casting a spell, running at the character's Full Movement rate, or using a non-combat talent while arrows and spells fly all around. The character makes the appropriate Action Test, announcing the result after rolling the appropriate Action dice, including any Karma dice or Bonus dice rolls.

Each character's actions are fully resolved before the next character acts, unless the description for the talent or skill being used specifically states otherwise.

Reserved Actions

A player may voluntarily lower his character's Initiative Test result in order to act later in the round. This is referred to as a making a **Reserved action**. To make a Reserved action, the player simply chooses a new, lower Initiative Test result and announces it. (The player may find it useful to set aside a die showing the character's new Initiative Test result or to write it down on a scrap of paper. This helps the player remember their new Initiative Test result and avoids confusion when the dice rolling starts.)

If a character chooses not to act at all in a given round, he may continue to reserve his action into the following round. Doing so replaces his action during the next round, but allows the character to act at any point in the round. The character does not make an Initiative Test. Instead, his Initiative Test result for the new round is +1 higher than the highest Initiative Test result rolled that round, even if this is higher than his previous result. Because the character's Initiative is determined without making a test, any bonuses or effects based on the character making an Initiative Test are ignored.

Reserving an action adds +2 to the Difficulty Number for any Action Tests the character makes. However, taking a Reserved action is often the only way that characters can attack opponents making Charging or Swooping attacks (see **Mounted Combat**, p. 413, and **Aerial Combat**, p. 415).

Action Cap

Optional Rule: A lot can happen in ten seconds. The gamemaster may, however, want to put a cap on the number of Simple actions a character can perform each round. While technically not governed by it, the gamemaster may use the optional Rule of Three (see the **Game Concepts** chapter, p. 18) to restrict characters to carrying out no more than three Simple actions each round, in addition to their Standard action.

The gamemaster should be aware that this limit might constrain character activities in the game too much, and should consider increasing the cap if this proves to be the case. Regardless, a character should not be able to perform more actions each round than their Dexterity step. This includes Standard and Movement actions. For example, a character with a Dexterity step of 6 could move his Combat Movement rate, perform a Standard action, and up to four more Simple actions (6 actions in total). A character with a Dexterity step of 1 could only move or perform a Standard action or just a single Simple action.

If an action limit is enforced, the number of actions that creatures, dragons, Horrors and spirits can perform should not be restricted to fewer than the number given in their description (see **Number of Actions** in the **Creature Combat** section, p. 416). Also, some talents, such as Avoid Blow, supersede this cap with their Rank use limitations.

In a battle against cadaver men, George and Marco declare that their characters, a human Nethermancer and an obsidiman Warrior, will stand back and see what happens—both of them choosing to reserve their actions until the next round. Marco had already made an Air Dance Test as his Initiative Test. The bonus attack granted by the Air Dance talent cannot be transferred into the next round. In the new round, the highest Initiative Test result is 23. Both Marco and George's Initiative are considered to be 24 (23+1). Because Marco has not made an Initiative Test (an Air Dance Test) this round, he does not gain a bonus attack this round. While Marco chooses to act first, George sees that his more aggressive companion is keeping the cadaver men well-occupied, so he further delays his action. During the round, a frenzied cadaver man breaks free of the melee, charging the Nethermancer. Since he has reserved his action, George's character is able to stop the wounded cadaver man short with a well-placed Spirit Dart. Both Marco and George add +2 to the Difficulty Number of their Attack Tests.

Changing Actions

A character may want to change his action, as designated in the Declare Actions phase of the combat round (see **Combat Summary**, p. 395), to react more effectively to the events happening around him. This is often the case with characters with low Initiative Test results—sometimes they will find that the actions of other characters acting before them completely alter their ability to execute their original plans that round. A character is allowed to attempt a different action than declared at the beginning of the combat round, but as a consequence he adds +2 to the Difficulty Number for the new action.

It is possible that a character may, as a reaction to the fluid circumstances of combat, need to change their declared option more than once during a combat round. Each time this occurs, add +2 to the Difficulty Number for the new action.

Technically, there is no limit to the number of times a character can "change his mind" during a round; in reality, most players will quickly realize that being indecisive and trying to react to everything that is going on during the round will quickly result in very high target Difficulty Numbers.

Changing Combat Options

Characters changing their mind about using a combat option may not choose a different combat option using this rule. The character can keep his declared combat option, using it on the new action if applicable, or decide not to use it.

If the combat option has a Strain cost, the character takes Strain damage regardless of whether he follows through with the combat option or not.

At the start of a combat round, Thom Hammerblade declares that he will attack his opponent, an ork raider, and decides to exercise the Aggressive Attack combat option. Then, just as he is about to act, Thom notices that one of his companions is about to be attacked from behind. Thom changes his action to an attack against his companion's backstabbing opponent. He chooses to retain the Aggressive Attack combat option for his attack. When Thom attacks, he adds a bonus to his Attack Test for his combat option as normal, but the gamemaster adds +2 to the Difficulty Number—equal to his opponent's Physical Defense—because Thom changed his action.

Resolving Attacks

Because the most common action that a character will take during a combat round is to attack an opponent, the procedure used to resolve attacks is summarized below, followed by a complete explanation of each step:

1. Make an Attack Test
2. Determine Success
3. Make a Damage Test
4. Adjust Damage for Armor
5. Check for Wounds
6. Make Knockdown Test
7. Check for Unconsciousness or Death

Make an Attack Test

Whenever a character attempts to attack a target, be it with a weapon or a spell, he makes an Action Test using the appropriate talent or skill. This type of Action Test is usually referred to as an **Attack Test**. For example, if a Swordmaster is attempting to hit a foe with his sword, he makes a Melee Weapons Test. If an Archer is firing an arrow at a foe, he makes a Missile Weapons Test. If a Wizard is casting a spell at a target, he makes a Spellcasting Test.

The type of attack determines the test's Difficulty Number. For physical attacks, such as those involving melee or missile weapons, the Difficulty Number is usually the target's Physical Defense. For attacks made with spells, the Difficulty Number is usually the target's Spell Defense. Some talents, skills and spells use the target's Social Defense or another Difficulty Number instead. The ability description usually gives the Difficulty Number for using it.

Unless a talent or ability specifically permits otherwise (see **Simple Actions**, p. 397), a character can only make one Attack Test per combat round. The character's main Attack Test always requires the character to take a Standard action (see **Actions**, p. 396).

The target Difficulty Number for an Attack Test may be modified by the distance to the opponent (for ranged combat attacks), environmental conditions (daylight, darkness, cover, and so on), and many other factors (see **Situation Modifiers**, p. 406). Several combat options also modify a character's Defense Rating (see **Combat Options**, p. 403).

Determine Success

The Attack Test result is compared against the target's Defense rating (Physical, Spell, or Social), as appropriate to the type of attack. If the test succeeds, the attack hits and the attacker makes a Damage Test (for weapons) or an Effect Test (for spells) to determine how effective the attack is. If the test fails, the attack misses and the attacker does not make a Damage Test; he completes any other actions he is allowed that round, then finishes his turn.

Armor-Defeating Hits

Some attacks are good enough to completely penetrate an opponent's armor or shield. Exceptionally well-placed attacks, lucky shots, or attacks that sufficiently focus a character's magic—these can all bypass an opponent's armor.

A character making a close or ranged combat Attack Test that achieves an Excellent result against his opponent's Physical Defense, inflicts an **Armor-Defeating Hit**. The character makes a Damage Test as normal, but applies the full unmodified result against his opponent, who loses the protection of his armor in this situation.

Farliv shoots an arrow at a swooping ice flyer, with an Attack Test result of 15. Compared against the ice fly-

Maximum Weapon Damage

Optional Rule: If you look closely at the damage rules, you will notice that those rules make it possible for a dagger-wielding windling with a maximum Strength value of 7 to kill a dragon with a single attack, given a sufficient number of Bonus die rolls. Technically, the open-ended dice-rolling system used in the **Earthdawn** game does allow for such a feat—this is a major feature of the game system, allowing characters to make truly heroic actions. However, the statistical odds against such an event occurring are astronomical.

Some gamemasters might consider the possibility of such an extraordinary event occurring unacceptable. Other gamemasters may believe that reasonable limits should exist to cap how much damage a character can inflict from a single attack. The Maximum Weapon Damage optional rule attempts to accommodate both styles of gamemastering, as follows:

- The single-attack damage potential of non-magical weapons is limited to inflicting a maximum number of Damage Points equal to the weapon's Damage step × 3.

For the purposes of this rule, the Damage step of a weapon equals the character's Strength step + the weapon's Damage step. Bonuses applied to the Damage Test, from talents or spells, for instance, do not change this limit—it simply means the upper damage limit for that weapon will be reached more often.

The Maximum Weapon Damage rule does not affect the damage potential of threaded or other magical weapons, including spells—by definition, those weapons have very few limits. (Note that this does not include non-magical weapons improved through use of the Forge Blade or Improve Blade talents—such weapons are not magical; the talent's magic simply enhances their natural characteristics.)

Kricklen, a t'skrang Swordmaster, attacks his foe with a non-magical broadsword. Kricklen has a Strength step of 5 and the broadsword has a Damage step of 5, giving the t'skrang a total Damage step of 10 for his attack. Kricklen can inflict a maximum of 30 Damage Points per attack while using his broadsword (10 × 3 = 30). Kevrien, a dwarf Wizard, assists Kricklen by casting the Combat Fury spell on him, which adds a +4 bonus to the Swordmaster's Damage Tests. However, he is still limited to inflicting a maximum of 30 Damage Points per attack with his broadsword.

Minimum Weapon Damage

Optional Rule: Some players react poorly to the fact that, on occasions when they have achieved an Armor-Defeating Hit against an opponent, their Damage Test result is so low as to take away the positive effect of gaining that advantage over their foe. The Minimum Weapon Damage optional rule hopefully goes some way towards mitigating against these feelings.

- The minimum Damage Test result from a single attack with a Good result on the Attack Test is always equal to the weapon's Damage step.

For the purposes of this rule, the Damage step of a weapon equals the character's Strength step + the weapon's Damage step. Bonuses applied to the Damage Test, from talents or spells, for instance, do not increase this limit.

Note that only a Good result is required to ensure this rule comes into effect; a character does not need to achieve an Armor-Defeating Hit to benefit from the Minimum Weapon Damage rule. This is intentional, providing the character with some benefit from a better-than-average attack even if his opponent is wearing armor or bearing a shield.

At the gamemaster's discretion, he may also allow this rule for damage inflicted by spells.

er's Physical Defense of 7, Farliv achieves an Excellent result—an Armor-Defeating Hit! The ice flyer loses the protection of its thick ice-encrusted feathers against the missile. Farliv makes a Damage Test and the gamemaster adds the result to the ice flyer's Current Damage total without a reduction for the creature's Physical Armor.

Combat spells intended to inflict damage on their target may also produce Armor-Defeating Hits. If a magician making a Spellcasting Test achieves an Excellent result against his opponent's Spell Defense, he inflicts an Armor-Defeating Hit against the appropriate type of armor protection noted in the spell description, whether Physical or Mystic.

Broomé, a windling Elementalist, casts his Earth Darts spell at an angry cave troll. His Spellcasting Test result of 23 achieves an Extraordinary result against the cave troll's low Spell Defense of 6. The damage inflicted by the earth darts is Armor-Defeating; the cave troll does not receive any benefit from his armor. And a Damage Test result of 17 gets the troll even more upset—he suffers a Wound as well! Too bad the Elementalist is out of reach of his axe ...

There is a way for characters to better defend against Armor-Defeating Hits. Armor can be purchased that requires an attacker to make an Attack Test with an Extraordinary result level to penetrate it. Such armor is, of course, as expensive as it is rare. There are also optional rules in this chapter that allow the use of shields to provide additional protection by increasing the Difficulty Number required to achieve an Armor-Defeating Hit (see **Shields and Armor-Defeating Hits**, p. 402).

Some creatures possess such effective armor that those characters attacking them require an Extraordinary result to defeat it. Other creatures have armor that cannot be defeated at all.

Make a Damage Test

After making a successful Attack Test, the character makes a Damage Test. The Action dice rolled for this test depend on the weapon used. Unless otherwise noted in its description, all weapons add their Damage step to the character's Strength step to determine the total Damage step of the attack.

A broadsword has a Damage step of 5, and therefore adds +5 steps to a character's Strength step for inflicting damage. Thom Hammerblade has a Strength step of 6. When he hits an opponent with his broadsword, he makes a Step 11 Damage Test (5 + 6 = 11) to determine how many Damage Points he inflicts on his opponent.

Some talents or abilities allow the character to add the result of a Karma die to the Damage Test result. Remember that Bonus dice also apply to all Action Tests the character makes, including Damage Tests.

When attacking an opponent with a spell, the spell will usually direct the magician to make an Effect Test to determine how many Damage Points he inflicts. The magician uses the Effect step given in the spell's description. The Effect step for spells is usually based on the magician's Willpower, not Strength, and may be modified by talents such as Willforce.

Regardless of whether the attack is made with a weapon or a spell, the Damage Test result determines the number of Damage Points inflicted on the target.

Adjust Damage for Armor

Armor is worn and shields carried to reduce the damage that the character receives. Armor and shields add a bonus to the character's Physical (and sometimes Mystic) Armor. Gener-

ally, Physical Armor protects against sources of physical damage, while Mystic Armor protects against astral or psychic damage. If there is any uncertainty, the gamemaster decides which Armor Rating is appropriate. Some types of attacks, from certain spells or creature powers, are never stopped by armor. This is noted in the description of the spell or power.

To adjust damage for armor, the character subtracts his Physical or Mystic Armor (as appropriate) from the result of the Damage Test made against him. The modified Damage Test result is the number of Damage Points added to the character's Current Damage total.

Note that some Attack Tests penetrate the character's armor. An Armor-Defeating Hit does exactly that—it completely defeats the armor's protection (see **Armor-Defeating Hits**, p. 398). As a result, the character does not subtract his Physical or Mystic Armor from the Damage Test result. Instead, the unmodified Damage Test result is the number of Damage Points added to his Current Damage total.

Check for Wounds

If a character suffers a number of Damage Points from a single attack equal to or greater than his Wound Threshold, he also takes a Wound. Wounds reflect major trauma and inhibit the character's ability to recover from injury (see **Effects of Injury**, p. 402). Wounds can also have a detrimental effect on the character's Action Tests (see **Wound Effects**, p. 403).

If the Damage Points that cause a Wound also render the character unconscious or dead, the player should still record the Wound. Some talents, spells and magic items have the ability to bring a character back from the brink of death. Any Wounds the character may be suffering from will inhibit this happening.

Special Effects of Damage

Players measure the damage inflicted on their **Earthdawn** characters using an abstract method in which a number of points represents the damage caused by an attack. Combined with the rules for receiving and inflicting Wounds, this system is sufficient to simulate the damage characters and creatures suffer in combat situations. However, the standard rules do not account for other effects of damage such as damage to specific body parts and bleeding.

The **Wounds That Bleed** and **Damage to a Limb** optional rules, p. 401, allow players and gamemasters to add this level of detail to their games.

Make a Knockdown Test

A character can be Knocked Down if he suffers a number of Damage Points equal to or greater than his Wound Threshold in a single attack, after armor has been accounted for. To determine whether the character resists being Knocked Down, the player makes a **Knockdown Test**, using his Strength step to determine the Action dice rolled.

The character's Knockdown Test is made against a Knockdown Difficulty equal to the number of Damage Points taken in excess of his Wound Threshold + 3. If the test succeeds, the character remains standing. If the test fails, the character is Knocked Down (see **Situation Modifiers**, p. 409).

Damage to Weapons and Armor

Optional Rule: Under the right circumstances, a character's weapons and armor can take damage in combat. Applying the effects of damage to characters' equipment adds additional complexity to the **Earthdawn** game.

To damage a character's shield, weapon, or armor, the attacker must make a Called Shot (see **Combat Options**, p. 404) against the item, and achieve an Excellent result on the Attack Test. Magical items are more resilient to damage than their mundane counterparts, suffering damage only from Attack Tests with an Extraordinary result. The opponent still incurs damage as normal from the attack; the Called Shot penalty reflects the difficulty of striking the item in an effective manner. (Note this is different from the Shattering a Shield combat option—see **Combat Options**, p. 406.) A character cannot declare a Called Shot against both his opponent's shield and his weapon or armor; only one or the other can be targeted by a single attack. Damage affects shields in the same way as armor; weapons receive damage in a different way.

Damaged weapons, armor, and shields can be repaired. See the **Goods and Services** chapter (p. 439 and p. 442) for more information on damage to items and how to fix it.

Armor and Shields

Each time armor takes damage, reduce its Physical and Mystic Armor by –1. If both Armor ratings are reduced to zero, the armor becomes useless. For example, padded cloth armor (Phys 2; Myst 0) can only sustain damage from two Called Shots with an Excellent result before it is ruined.

Severely damaged armor and shields can hinder the wearer's performance. A large dent in a breastplate changes the way it fits; a damaged elbow joint reduces the wearer's mobility. To reflect this, the gamemaster may choose to apply any of the following penalties to characters wearing damaged armor, or may create his own. Characters wearing damaged armor may:

- Suffer a –1 penalty to Initiative Tests.
- Suffer a –1 penalty to all Action Tests involving use of the armor or shield.
- Subtract –3 from their Dexterity value for the purposes of determining Movement rates.
- Temporarily lose one of the item's thread rank abilities (usually the highest ranked).

The gamemaster has the final say as to when and how damage to his armor or shield affects a character's skills, talents, and abilities.

Weapons

Each time a weapon takes damage, reduce its Damage step by –1. When a weapon's Damage step is reduced to zero, it is ruined. Some weapons, such as knives, blow-guns, and so on, can be destroyed in a single blow this way. If the gamemaster wishes, weapons may also suffer damage if the character fails his Attack Test because of the Rule of One (see **Action Tests** in the **Game Concepts** chapter, p. 18), the weapon's Damage step is reduced by –1, as described above.

Severely damaged weapons may not perform as well as they used to, and can affect the wielder's performance. A large notch taken out of a broadsword blade may unbalance the weapon; a dulled edge may mean the difference between victory and defeat. To reflect this, the gamemaster may choose to apply any of the following penalties to characters wielding damaged weapons, or may create his own. Characters using damaged weapons may:

- Suffer a –1 penalty to Initiative Tests.
- Suffer a –1 penalty to all Action Tests involving use of the weapon.
- Temporarily lose one of the weapon's thread rank abilities (usually the highest ranked).

The gamemaster has the final say as to when and how damage to his weapon affects a character's skills, talents, and abilities.

Wounds That Bleed

Optional Rule: When a character or creature suffers damage, it is assumed that the target has been cut or bruised, and so is also likely to be bleeding. Even though a target may not suffer a Wound during a fight, he may bleed from other injuries. The effect of bleeding is generally ignored in the **Earthdawn** game, mainly because most characters readily tend to their injuries with bandages, Recovery Tests, healing aids, and other first aid, immediately after a fight. However, if gamemasters wish to include the possibility that bleeding can cause additional damage in their game, we offer the following guidelines.

To determine if an attack causes a bleeding Wound, compare the Damage Test result, after any reductions for armor, against the target's Wound Threshold. On an Excellent result, the target begins to suffer additional blood loss, in addition to the standard Damage Points inflicted from the attack, plus any Wounds. The damage due to bleeding causes an additional effect.

The gamemaster can resolve the effects of bleeding in one of two ways. The character may take 2 Damage Points at the end of each combat round until he either falls unconscious or dies, or he applies bandages or healing aids to his injuries, thus stemming the blood loss. Alternatively, the gamemaster may choose to have the character suffer Step 2 damage at the end of each combat round, again until he either falls unconscious or dies, or receives healing. A booster potion or a healing potion ends the additional damage from bleeding, as will some talents, such as Fireblood. Once the character has his injuries properly tended to, the effects of any bleeding damage he may be suffering from ends.

Characters may suffer bleeding damage from multiple sources as a result of this optional rule. The results are cumulative, although any healing the character carries out (or has carried out on him) will stem blood loss from all bleeding effects.

Some creatures are never subject to this rule; most undead, Horror constructs made from bone, or spirits, for example, do not possess blood and are therefore unaffected by bleeding damage.

Damage to a Limb

Optional Rule: To determine if an attack damages a limb, compare the Damage Test result to the target's Wound Threshold. On an Excellent result, one of the target's limbs is damaged (the gamemaster chooses which limb). The target who suffers a damaged limb also takes the Damage Points inflicted by the attack, plus any Wounds. The damage to the character's limb is an additional effect. A damaged limb can be healed in the same manner as a Wound, that is, after a night's sleep, by using a healing potion, or by the questor Heal power.

The gamemaster determines how severely the limb is damaged, and the exact side effects, but we recommend that the typical effects given in the Damaged Limb Table be applied.

DAMAGED LIMB TABLE

Limb	Effect
Arm	The character suffers a –1 penalty to Action Tests requiring use of the damaged arm. The character's Carrying and Lifting Capacity is halved.
Leg	The character suffers a –1 penalty to Action Tests requiring use of the damaged leg. The character's Movement rates are halved.
Head	The character suffers a –1 penalty to Action Tests requiring sight. The character becomes dizzy from the blow and has trouble concentrating—any spells the character casts that require concentration automatically fail.

Corvis the Thief has a Wound Threshold of 9. His opponent whacks him with a wicked sword stroke for 17 Damage Points, after accounting for his leather armor. Because the number of Damage Points inflicted in this attack equals or exceeds his Wound Threshold, Corvis suffers a Wound and must make a successful Knockdown (11) Test—17 Damage Points + 3 = 20, minus his Wound Threshold of 9 = 11—to avoid being Knocked Down. Corvis doesn't have any talents like Wound Balance to help him, so he makes the Knockdown Test using his Strength step—the result is an unfortunate 9. The next thing Corvis knows, he is flat on his back and in a lot of pain.

Other causes of Knockdown, such as the Attacking to Knockdown combat option (see **Combat Options**, p. 403) or being dislodged from a mount (see **Mounted Combat**, p. 414), may also require a character to make a Knockdown Test.

The gamemaster makes Knockdown Tests for creatures or gamemaster characters, using the step number shown on the creature's or character's statistics block.

Check for Unconsciousness or Death

After a character takes damage from an attack, the player checks the character's Current Damage total to see if he is unconscious or dead.

Unconsciousness

A character who has taken Current Damage at least equal to his Unconsciousness Rating, but less than his Death Rating, immediately falls to the ground unconscious. Unconscious characters can take no actions other than Recovery Tests (see **Effects of Injury**, p. 402) and are considered Knocked Down (see **Situation Modifiers**, p. 409) for actions taken against them.

Unconscious characters can regain their senses by making Recovery Tests, restoring sufficient Damage Points to reduce their Current Damage total below their Unconsciousness Rating (see **Recovering from Damage**, p. 403).

Death

A character who has taken Current Damage equal to or greater than his Death Rating immediately falls to the ground. Unless the character has a talent such as Life Check (see the **Talents** chapter, p. 191), or is quickly tended by another character with a healing aid, such as a last chance salve (see **Healing Aids** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 450), the character cannot be revived, and he is dead.

In **Earthdawn**, character death is usually permanent. Some methods of resurrection do exist, but because these often require powerful and dangerous magic, attempts are rare. Characters who wish to pursue these magics should be warned that they are *very* expensive—and the cost is rarely just financial.

Using Shields

Many characters employ shields when engaged in combat, foregoing the use of both hands in order to give them additional protection. A character using a shield is restricted to using one-handed weapons only.

For more information on shields, see **Armor** and **Shields** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 439.

Shields and Armor-Defeating Hits

Optional Rule: In addition to increasing a character's Physical and Mystic Armor, a shield can also make it more difficult for the character's opponent to strike him with an Armor-Defeating Hit (see **Resolving Attacks**, p. 398).

Characters using this optional rule increase the Difficulty Number required for an Armor-Defeating Hit by a number of points equal to the shield's Physical or Mystic Armor, as appropriate to the type of attack. This bonus is only applied against attacks that the character is aware of—if the character cannot see or sense an attack directed at him, he cannot position the shield to provide him with an active defense.

While this rule will not necessarily stop the attack hitting the character, it at least allows for a probable reduction to the amount of damage inflicted by ensuring armor always provides its protective benefits.

Me'gana is using a footman's shield, which adds +3 to her Physical Armor. Me'gana's Physical Defense is 10—according to the Result Level Table, an attacker would need an Attack Test result of 19 or more (an Excellent result) to strike Me'gana with an Armor-Defeating Hit. However, while she is actively using her shield, this Difficulty Number is increased to 22. While it does not prevent her being struck, using a shield gives Me'gana an advantage when defending against Armor-Defeating Hits.

Armor Bonuses

Most shields add a bonus to a character's Physical or Mystic Armor when the shield is used in any form of combat. The character must be actively using the shield to gain the Armor bonus, not just carrying it on his arm or slung over his back. The character gains this bonus only for attacks made against him.

A character who has been Blindsided (see **Situation Modifiers**, p. 407) by an attacker loses the benefit of his shield against that opponent until he is able to turn to face him.

An attacker employing the Going Inside a Shield combat option (see **Combat Options**, p. 405) negates any bonuses that the defender receives to his Physical or Mystic Armor from using a shield.

Spell Defense Bonus

Some magical shields add a bonus to a character's Spell Defense. As with a shield's Physical or Mystic Armor bonus, the character must be actively using the shield to gain a Spell Defense bonus, not simply carrying it around or having it slung on his back.

An attacker employing the Going Inside a Shield combat option (see **Combat Options**, p. 405) does *not* negate the bonus that the defender receives to his Spell Defense from using the shield, although the character must retain use of the shield to keep the bonus.

Effects of Injury

All characters should expect to suffer harm at some point during their adventures in the **Earthdawn** game. While the rules for inflicting injury and being injured appeared earlier, this section provides detailed information on how characters return to full health after taking damage.

Recovering from Damage

A character makes a Recovery Test to reduce, or "heal," any damage he has taken. The Recovery Test result is typically subtracted from his Current Damage total. A character who has taken no damage does not need to make a Recovery Test. The Recovery step for most characters and creatures is based on their Toughness step.

Each character has a limited number of Recovery Tests available to him each day, determined by his Toughness value (see **Determine Characteristics** in the **Creating Characters** chapter, p. 47). Some talents and spells give the character additional Recovery Tests, which must be used within a short time (usually 24 hours). Unused Recovery Tests cannot be saved from one day to the next.

An injured character (with 1 or more Damage Points) *must* make one of his Recovery Tests upon waking from a full night's rest. Characters with only 1 Recovery Test available to them each day can recover damage only after a full night's rest. Characters with 1 Recovery Test available to them every 2 days can recover damage only after resting for two nights, making their Recovery Test on the morning of the second day. Characters with more than 1 Recovery Test available to them each day may spend any remaining Recovery Tests as they wish, but must meet the following conditions:

- At least 1 hour passes between Recovery Tests.
- The character can spend 1 minute without engaging in physical activity or taking damage. The Recovery Test can be made at the end of that minute.

Characters must also wait at least 1 hour after engaging in combat before they can make a Recovery Test. This time must be spent in a state of relative rest; the character cannot undergo any strenuous physical activity while resting.

Apart from certain talents, the use of healing aids, and the effects of some spells, the only exception to this rule regards unconscious characters (see **Regaining Consciousness**, p. 403).

Regaining Consciousness

If he has a Recovery Test available to him, an unconscious character may make a Recovery Test 1 minute after he falls unconscious. Whether he regains consciousness or not, the character must wait another hour before he can make another Recovery Test, unless another character intervenes with a healing aid or a spell.

Reviving Unconscious Characters

If another character attempts to revive an unconscious character, the unconscious character can make one his available Recovery Tests at that time, even if 1 minute has not passed since he lost consciousness.

If the character does not recover sufficient Damage Points to regain consciousness, he must wait another hour before he can make another Recovery Test, as normal, unless another character intervenes with a healing aid or a spell.

Recovering From Poison or Disease

Recovering from the effects of poison or disease is handled differently from normal damage. See the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 106 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information on how poisons and diseases work.

Wounds

Characters suffer no direct ill effects from the number of Damage Points they receive. Damage only affects a character's ability to function when it results in a **Wound**.

Wounds inhibit a character's recovery. When a Wounded character makes a Recovery Test, he subtracts the number of Wounds he has taken from the Recovery Test result. **Regardless of modifiers, the minimum number of Damage Points that a character recovers is 1.**

> *Kricklen, a t'skrang Swordmaster, has taken some heavy blows. He is currently suffering from 2 Wounds and 32 Damage Points. Kricklen makes a Recovery Test with a result of 10. Because of his 2 Wounds, the t'skrang only recovers 8 Damage Points (10 – 2 = 8).*

Healing Wounds

Wounds are difficult to heal. Only a Recovery Test used after a full night's rest can heal a Wound. A character naturally heals 1 Wound per day under the following conditions:

- The character is not suffering from any damage. Even 1 point of Current Damage, including Strain damage, prevents a Wound from healing.
- The character uses a Recovery Test.

Some curses or magical effects that prevent a character from making a morning Recovery Test will keep Wounds from healing. Wounds can also be healed by some healing aids, spells, or abilities like the questor Heal power.

Wound Effects

While not an optional rule, Wound effects are best used after the players and gamemaster become familiar with the basic rules of the **Earthdawn** game.

A character takes a single Wound without suffering any immediate side-effects. When a character takes a second Wound, and again for all subsequent Wounds, the character incurs a cumulative –1 penalty to his Action Tests. For example, if a character has 2 Wounds, he suffers a –1 penalty to his Action Tests; if he has 4 Wounds, he suffers a –3 penalty to his Action Tests; and so on.

This penalty applies to all Action Tests the character makes, except Recovery Tests (although the character still reduces his Recovery Test result by the number of Wounds he has taken).

Combat Options

The **Earthdawn** game provides characters with a number of options that allow them to exercise various combat tactics, such as fiercely attacking an opponent, or hanging back and acting more defensively. These options provide more flexibility to a character's fighting style: sometimes the character may want to simply slug it out with an opponent, but other times he may be wiser to modify his approach.

A player wanting to use a **combat option** must declare his intention to do so before he makes his Initiative Test for the round (see **Declare Actions** in the **Combat Summary**, p. 395). Unless specifically noted, a character can only choose one combat option each combat round. A character who is Knocked Down cannot use a combat option until he is standing (exception: see the optional **Jumping Up** combat option, p. 405).

Many combat options have disadvantages as well as advantages. A number of options are also limited to use in close or ranged combat only (see **Types of Combat**, p. 409). Because they can complicate things, it is recommended that the players and gamemaster become more familiar with the basic combat rules before using these different options.

The Combat Options Table summarizes the different combat options available and their effects.

Aggressive Attack

When using the **Aggressive Attack** combat option, the character assaults his opponent with a ferocious flurry of blows. Aggressive Attack gives the attacker a significant advantage when fighting, improving his ability to strike his opponent and inflict damage, but also allowing him to be struck more easily in return.

Each close combat Attack Test made by the character causes him 1 Strain Point of damage. The character always takes at least 1 Strain Point of damage, even if he doesn't make any Attack Tests during the round. While so inspired, the character gains a +3 bonus to his close combat Attack and Damage Tests.

However, because of the frenzied nature of his attack he is somewhat uncontrolled, meaning he pays less attention to attacks directed against him. The character subtracts –3 from his Physical and Spell Defense during the round in which he uses the Aggressive Attack combat option.

Aiming

A character can improve his chances of hitting an opponent in ranged combat by using the **Aiming** combat option. When Aiming, the character gives up his actions for the round—he cannot move or take even Simple actions while Aiming. In return, he gains a +2 bonus to his next ranged Attack Test.

If the character continues to aim for another consecutive round, the bonus increases to +3. Each round spent Aiming causes the character 1 Strain Point of damage. Regardless of how long he spends Aiming, a character can gain only a maximum +3 bonus.

A character cannot make a ranged attack during the same round that he uses the Aiming combat option. The bonus is applied to his Attack Test during the next round. Additionally, the character must make his ranged Attack Test against a target visible to him during the entire time he has been Aiming in order to gain the bonus.

This combat option cannot be used with talents that provide a similar bonus, such as Mystic Aim.

Attacking to Knockdown

Rather than attacking an opponent in close combat with the intent to cause harm, a character can instead attempt to knock him down. This is the **Attacking to Knockdown** combat option.

COMBAT OPTIONS TABLE

Combat Option*	Effect/Modifier
Aggressive Attack (1 per attack)	+3 bonus to Attack and Damage Tests; –3 penalty to Physical and Spell Defense
Aiming (1 per round)	+2 (1 round) or +3 (2 rounds) bonus to next ranged Attack Test (see text)
Attacking to Knockdown	Possibly knocks opponent down; inflicts no real damage to opponent
Attacking to Stun	Damage Test inflicts Stun damage; Wounded opponent is also Stunned
Called Shot (1)	–3 penalty to Attack Test; if successful, attack hits designated area
Defensive Stance	+3 to Physical and Spell Defense; –3 penalty to all Action Tests (except Knockdown Tests)
Giving Ground (1)	+1 to Physical Defense per yard given (up to maximum of Melee Weapons or Unarmed Combat rank); –2 penalty to Attack Tests
Going Inside a Shield	Negates opponent's shield bonuses; –2 penalty to Attack Test
Jumping Up (2)	Allows the character to stand up and perform a Standard action; no other movement allowed
Setting Against a Charge	Allows the character to unhorse a mounted opponent
Shattering a Shield (1)	Breaks opponent's shield
Splitting Movement (1)	Allows a move/action/move combination; –2 to Physical and Spell Defense
Tail Attack [t'skrang only]	Allows an additional attack (–2 to all Action Tests) *or* +1 to Physical Defense per –1 to all Action Tests (max. +2 bonus; see p. 50 for details)

* The number shown in parentheses ( ) after the combat option is the Strain cost for using that option.

The character makes his close combat Attack Test as normal. If the attack hits, he makes a Damage Test, the result of which (modified for armor) becomes the Knockdown Difficulty for his opponent's Knockdown Test. If the test succeeds, he remains standing, otherwise he is immediately Knocked Down (see **Situation Modifiers**, p. 409). Regardless of the outcome, the character's opponent takes no damage from an Attacking to Knockdown attempt.

In his fight with a rampaging thundra beast, Targ Boneslicer decides he wants to try to knock the beast down. Targ's attack succeeds and he makes a Damage Test, with a result of 18. The thundra beast has 7 points of Physical Armor. The gamemaster makes a Knockdown Test for the creature against a Difficulty Number of 11 (18 [Damage Test result] – 7 [beast's Physical Armor] = 11).

Attacking to Stun

A character may elect to make a potentially less-lethal attack against an opponent in close combat by declaring his intention to use the **Attacking to Stun** combat option. The attacker makes his close combat Attack Test as normal, but any damage inflicted to his opponent is recorded as Stun damage.

Although it is added to the character's Current Damage total as normal, Stun damage cannot kill him. If the amount of Stun damage received sends a character's Current Damage total equal to or greater than his Death Rating (or Unconsciousness Rating), the character falls to the ground unconscious and in a coma. The character comes out of the coma when his Current Damage falls below his Unconsciousness Rating. Creatures who have an Unconsciousness Rating of "Immune" are also immune to Stun damage.

Stun damage does not cause Wounds. If a character would normally take a Wound from the damage inflicted, he is Stunned instead (see **Situation Modifiers**, p. 409). The character compares the Stun damage taken against his Wound Threshold. The result determines how long he is Stunned. On an Average result he is Stunned for 1 round; on a Good result for 2 rounds; on an Excellent result for 3 rounds; on an Extraordinary result he is Stunned for 4 rounds.

A character can recover Stun damage more easily than he can normal damage, sometimes shaking it off by sheer will. The character adds his Willpower step as a bonus to the first Recovery Test he makes after taking Stun damage. This bonus applies only to that Recovery Test, and the Recovery Test result can *only* be used to recover Stun damage. Normally, a character may never recover both Stun damage and normal damage from the same Recovery Test. At the gamemaster's discretion, however, a character with 5 or fewer points of Stun damage can forego adding a Willpower bonus and heal both Stun and normal damage with a single Recovery Test.

Called Shot

A character can use the **Called Shot** combat option to make a precise attack against a target, attempting to strike a specific part of his body, hitting his weapon, striking a designated object, and so on. The player declares what object or part of his opponent his character is attempting to hit when he decides to use the Called Shot option. When making a Called Shot, a character suffers a –3 penalty to his Attack Test. At the gamemaster's discretion, especially difficult Called Shots may incur a bigger penalty. The concentration required by the character causes him 1 Strain Point of damage per Attack Test. If the test succeeds, the character strikes the designated object or the intended area on his opponent.

A Called Shot cannot normally be used to make Armor-Defeating Hits, but may be used to strike an opponent's head if he is not wearing a helmet (see **Armor and Shields** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 439); in this case, the character automatically bypasses any armor his opponent may be wearing, but not his opponent's shield, if he is using one. If attempting to hit a weapon, the character's opponent must make a successful Strength Test against the Damage step of the attack to hold on to his weapon. If an opponent is using a two-handed weapon, he gains a +3 bonus to his Strength Test. Other uses must be adjudicated by the gamemaster on a case by case basis (with a smaller or larger penalty, if required).

The Called Shot combat option can only be made with close or ranged combat attacks. Spell attacks are difficult enough to direct at an opponent without the further complication of attempting to strike a specific body area, so are rarely made with the Called Shot option. Some gamemasters may allow magicians to use this combat option in certain situations.

Defensive Stance

Sometimes it is more important that a character lives than whether he wins a fight. When he makes that decision, the character can adopt a defensive posture that reduces his chances of being hit. A character using the **Defensive Stance** combat option adds +3 to his Physical and Spell Defense for all attacks directed against him that round. The character only receives this bonus against attacks that he can see or sense, however. There is a downside to using the Defensive Stance combat option—the character suffers a –3 penalty to his Action Tests that round, except for Knockdown Tests. (At the gamemaster's discretion, this penalty may also be waived for defensive actions, like Avoid Blow Tests.)

The Defensive Stance option can be combined with an Attack to Stun or Attack to Knockdown during the same round.

Giving Ground

Skilled fighters willingly trade ground in order to gain a defensive advantage. Characters engaged in close combat can use the **Giving Ground** combat option. For every full yard of ground yielded, the character adds +1 to his Physical Defense that round. A character may yield a maximum number of yards equal to his Melee Weapons or Unarmed Combat rank, as appropriate. A character who has no ranks in Melee Weapons or Unarmed Combat cannot use this combat option; this includes using them with the Default Skill Use rules. No other talents or skills provide this benefit. Because the character is focused on withdrawing rather than attacking, he suffers a –2 penalty to his Attack Tests that round. This same degree of concentration causes the character 1 Strain Point of damage.

Before he makes his Initiative Test, the character Giving Ground declares how many yards he intends to yield. The character compares his Initiative Test result to the highest Initiative among his opponents. If the test succeeds, the player chooses the location to where his character moves when he acts. If the test fails, the character's opponent decides where the yielding character moves.

A character Giving Ground, moving voluntarily or not, will stop before stepping off a cliff or into a boiling river, or running into any other hazard or obstacle. The benefit he receives from Giving Ground may be reduced by the distance he can actually move. The Giving Ground option is best used in situations where the character has an unobstructed field of movement.

If the character Giving Ground wins Initiative, he makes his Attack Tests before he moves his intended distance that round. Regardless of the combat outcome, his entire movement that round is limited to his Giving Ground distance. If the character Giving Ground loses Initiative, he is first moved by his opponents, after which they may choose to move into combat with the character, or to perform another action (see **Changing Actions**, p. 398, however). If they choose to move into combat with the character Giving Ground, their move becomes their entire movement that round.

Kricklen is facing three rather unruly cave trolls. After quickly realizing that his witty quips are wasted on them, he decides that discretion is a better option, and uses the Giving Ground option to retreat away from the rocky ground he is fighting in to a more open area. He knows Melee Weapons at Rank 6, so Kricklen chooses to give up 6 yards of ground, potentially increasing his Physical Defense by +6. The cave trolls, feeling a little irritated by the t'skrang's attempts at troll humor, opt to employ an Aggressive Attack stance against the Swordmaster. All parties now make their Initiative Tests.

Unfortunately, this is where things don't go so well for Kricklen, as he makes his Initiative Test with a result of all ones on the dice—fortunately, Initiative Tests are not subject to the Rule of One, however with an Initiative Test result of 2, it looks like the trolls will be getting the upper hand, which they do with an Initiative Test result of 4. Because the cave trolls won Initiative, they get to choose where the Swordmaster is going to move. Their choice is simple: they move Kricklen 2 yards back, up against a large boulder close to the cave's entrance. This only adds +2 to the t'skrang's Physical Defense—the maximum distance he is able to move—and he still suffers a –2 penalty to his Attack Tests.

Because the trolls act before the t'skrang (who has been moved up against the rock), they have a choice as to whether they will close the distance and attack, or do something other than their declared action. However, being cave trolls their choice is simple—attack. Kricklen braces himself to take a lot of pain.

Going Inside a Shield

Shields typically provide additional protection to a character, increasing the bearer's Physical and Mystic Armor. A shield cannot be used to protect all areas of the character at once, however. A character may declare that he is going inside his opponent's shield, maneuvering to strike at a point where his opponent cannot defend with his shield. This is the **Going Inside a Shield** combat option.

The character declares his intent to bypass his opponent's shield during the Declare Actions phase of the combat round, subtracting the shield's Physical or Mystic Armor, as appropriate, from his Initiative Test result. If the character retains a higher Initiative Test result than his opponent, he has successfully maneuvered to a position where he has gotten inside the target's shield, and his opponent loses the protective benefit of the shield (including any bonuses if the **Shields and Armor-Defeating Hits** optional rule, p. 402, is used). If the character's modified Initiative Test result is equal to or lower than his opponent, the defender managed to bring the shield into position to block the attack before the character could complete his action. The character may still attack his opponent normally this round, but suffers a –2 penalty to his Attack Test for the failed attempt to get past his opponent's shield.

Use of the Going Inside a Shield combat option is personal, between the character and his opponent only. The loss of a shield bonus is only against the character using this combat option, and only for the round in which it is exercised.

Barak, a troll Warrior, faces an opponent with a body shield. Barak declares his intent to bypass the shield by using the Going Inside a Shield combat option. He makes his Initiative Test and achieves a result of 14, which is reduced by the body shield's Physical Armor of 5 to a result of 9. Barak's opponent rolls an Initiative Test result of 7. Barak feints left then, as his opponent brings

Jumping Up

Optional Rule: This combat option may only be used by characters who are Knocked Down (see **Situation Modifiers**, below). Instead of requiring the character's Standard action to stand up, the gamemaster may allow the character to get back onto his feet as a Simple action.

Using the Jumping Up combat option causes the character 2 Strain Points of damage and requires him to make a successful Dexterity (6) Test. The character suffers an Initiative Penalty to his Dexterity for armor he is wearing. However, he does not suffer the –3 penalty for being Knocked Down when making the Dexterity Test—this has already been accounted for in the Difficulty Number. All other penalties for being Knocked Down (lower Defense Rating, and so on) remain until he is standing. If the test fails, the character may still use his Standard action to stand up.

A character cannot perform any other movement in the round he jumps to his feet, but he can carry out other actions, including attacking nearby opponents.

Sant'Zabur, a t'skrang Warrior, was Knocked Down by a dwarf soldier during the previous combat round. He does not intend to flee—crawling away is too ignominious for a t'skrang!—and he does not intend to get taken out this easily. On his Initiative, the t'skrang takes 2 Strain Points of damage for using the Jumping Up combat option. He is wearing hardened leather armor so must make a successful Dexterity (6) Test to get up, but with a –1 penalty (for the armor's Initiative Penalty). Rolling a 7 on his Dexterity Test, Sant'Zabur nimbly leaps to his feet and attacks the astonished soldier.

Shattering a Shield

Optional Rule: A character facing a shielded opponent may attempt to soften up his defenses by smashing his shield. This is the **Shattering a Shield** combat option.

Only weapons of Size 3 or greater can shatter a shield. The character declares his intent to shatter his opponent's shield during the Declare Actions phase of the combat round (p. 395) and takes 1 Strain Point of damage. He makes a close combat Attack Test against his opponent, as normal. If the test succeeds, the attack hits the shield. If the character achieves an Armor-Defeating Hit with his Attack Test, he adds his weapon Size as a bonus to his Damage Test (see **Armor-Defeating Hits**, p. 398; also refer to the option for **Shields and Armor-Defeating Hits**, p. 402). The character makes a Damage Test against the shield's Shatter Threshold (see **Shields** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 441). If the test succeeds, the shield shivers and breaks—it is now useless to the bearer, and confers no further protective benefits. All of the attack's energy is directed into shattering the shield. Regardless of the Attack Test result, the bearer takes no damage from the attack.

Magical shields are considerably harder to destroy than their mundane counterparts. The character must achieve an Excellent result on his Damage Test against its Shatter Threshold to smash a magical shield.

Barak, a troll Warrior, continues to face off against an opponent bearing a body shield. Even after a successful attempt to bypass his opponent's shield, the protection it confers is proving to be a deciding factor in this fight. Barak decides to remove the obstacle and declares his intent to shatter his opponent's shield. He makes a successful Attack Test against his opponent, with an Average result. Now Barak makes a Damage Test against the shield's Shatter Threshold of 21, rolling a 24 for his Damage Test result—a success! Barak's sword comes down hard on his opponent's body shield, ripping through the metal rim, and splitting the shield in two. Casting the fragments aside, Barak's opponent takes a firm grip on his broadsword and prepares for a much harder contest.

The Aggressive Attack combat option can be used with the Shattering a Shield option, increasing the chance of smashing the target shield.

Splitting Movement

Optional Rule: The gamemaster decides whether or not to use this combat option, and should feel free to disallow this rule as too disruptive to the game. This option allows all characters, not just flying or mounted characters (see **Mounted Combat**, p. 414), to split their movement during a combat round. A character could use part of his Combat Movement to approach a target, make an attack, then use the rest of his Combat Movement to move away. Use of the Splitting Movement combat option must be declared at the beginning of the combat round and causes the character 1 Strain Point of damage. A character who uses this option suffers a –2 penalty to his Physical and Spell Defense that round.

his shield to face, steps to the right and attacks. His opponent loses the benefit of his shield against Barak's sword blow and for any other attacks Barak carries out against him that round.

Setting Against a Charge

Characters fighting from the ground are disadvantaged when dealing with mounted opponents. They may, however, use one combat option that can be very effective against mounted attacks. This option is called **Setting Against a Charge**, and is intended to use the momentum of the enemy's attack against him. A character who intends to use this combat option must be wielding a weapon at least the length of a spear (3 or more feet long—usually Size 3 or greater), and must win Initiative against his mounted opponent.

To set against a charge, the character must act on the same Initiative Test result as his mounted opponent (see **Splitting Movement**, p. 406). The mounted character makes his move as normal toward the character using the Setting Against a Charge option, who, at the last moment, braces his spear or lance against the ground. The character makes a melee Attack Test before his mounted opponent makes any return attacks. If the test succeeds, the character strikes his mounted opponent before the latter can react, inflicting damage as normal. On a Good result, the character Setting Against a Charge can also knock his opponent off his mount. The mounted character immediately makes a Knockdown Test against his attacker's Damage step. If the test succeeds, he remains mounted. If the test fails, he is dismounted and Knocked Down, taking Step 5 Falling damage. No armor protects against this damage. Characters with the Charge talent or skill can make a Charge Test in place of a Knockdown Test to avoid being Knocked Down.

Regardless of how strong the attacker is, the Damage step for using the Setting Against a Charge option is equal to the weapon's Damage step + the mount's Strength step. If a mounted opponent has traveled sufficient distance to make a successful Charging attack, the character Setting Against a Charge adds his opponent's mount's Strength step *again* to his Damage Test to reflect the additional momentum of the charge. If the mounted character takes a Wound from this Damage Test he makes a Knockdown Test as normal (see **Staying Mounted**, p. 414).

The attacker may himself be affected by the momentum of his opponent's charge, either having his weapon break, if using a lance or a long-spear, or having to drop his weapon (see **Staying Mounted**, p. 414). The attacker will not be Knocked Down by the momentum of his opponent's attack, however.

Gralk, an ork Cavalryman, is charging toward a troll raider. The troll has the advantage of a higher Initiative Test result over the ork. He is wielding a spear and decides to use the Setting Against a Charge combat option. The troll waits until the last second, then braces his spear into the ground and makes his Attack Test against the ork Cavalryman, hitting Gralk with a Good result and forcing the hapless ork to make a Knockdown Test to avoid being thrown off his mount. Gralk uses his Charge talent to help him make this successfully, and thus avoids a sudden dismount (and the Falling damage).

Now the troll makes a Damage Test for his spear attack using the weapon's Damage step of 4 plus the mount's Strength step of 7. However, because Gralk's mount had traveled sufficient distance to get a Charging attack bonus, he too benefits from the momentum of the attack and adds the mount's Strength step of 7 as a bonus to his Damage Test again. This damage is resolved normally, and if it results in the ork taking a Wound he will need to make a second Knockdown Test to avoid falling from his mount.

The Setting Against a Charge combat option can be used in combination with the Defensive Stance or Attack to Knockdown combat options.

Situation Modifiers

A character most often relies on his wits, skills, and talents to make his way successfully through his life and adventures. Yet even the best-prepared adventurer sometimes finds himself at the mercy of circumstances beyond his control. A number of these situations can occur during combat and affect a character's performance. Referred to as **Situation modifiers**, these conditions directly affect combatants' Action Tests and Defense Ratings. The effects of each type of situation are described below, with specific modifiers summarized in the Situation Modifiers Table.

Blindsided

When a character cannot see his attacker in order to react effectively to an attack, he is considered to be **Blindsided**. The character subtracts –2 from his Physical and Spell Defense against that attack. In certain situations the gamemaster may also apply this penalty to the character's Social Defense. Some examples of Blindsided attacks include attacks from the rear, attacks made against a blinded character, or attacks made from an ambush (although a character who is completely Surprised suffers that penalty instead; see **Surprised**, p. 409). The attacker must be able to see his target in order to take advantage of the character's Blindsided modifier.

Cover

Characters can increase the Difficulty Number of attacks made against them by taking advantage of nearby objects, such as trees or boulders, or even items of furniture, as protection. There are too many items that could be used as cover to be mentioned here, but generally **Cover modifiers** are applied against attacks made against the character for three degrees of protection, as follows:

Partial: Partial cover obscures approximately 50 percent of a character's body, leaving an attacker still able to see most of the character. A character behind Partial cover adds +2 to his Physical and Spell Defense.

Full: Full cover obscures 50–90 percent of a character's body. An attacker can still see enough of the character to make an Attack Test. A character behind Full cover adds +4 to his Physical and Spell Defense.

SITUATION MODIFIERS TABLE

Situation	Action Test Modifier	Defense Modifier**
Blindsided	—	–2
Cover	—	Partial: +2 Full: +4 Complete: NA
Darkness (Blindness; Dazzled)	Partial: –1 Full: –3 Complete: –5	—
Distance	Short: NA Medium: –2*** Long: –3***	—
Harried	–2	–2
Impaired Movement	Light: 25%* Medium: 50%* Hard: 75%*	—
Knocked Down	–3	–3
Stunned	Simple actions only; Harried (–2)	–2
Surprised	No Action Tests allowed	–3

* Movement rates are reduced by the percentages shown.
** Also applies to Social Defense, at the gamemaster's discretion.
*** Also applies to Damage Tests.

Cover Density

Optional Rule: The standard rules for Cover modifiers take into account the amount of cover, but not how dense or hard the type of cover is.

The Cover Density optional rule adds modifiers for the general hardness or density of the cover, as follows:

Soft: Soft cover, while able to obscure the character, provides little physical protection. This type of cover includes light brush, thin trees, thick curtains, and the like. A character behind Soft cover subtracts –1 from his Cover modifier.

Medium: Medium cover provides the character with a reasonable level of physical protection. This type of cover includes thick brush or hedge, normal-sized trees, over-turned tables, wooden fences, and the like. A character behind Medium cover does not make any changes to his Cover modifier.

Hard: Hard cover provides the highest level of physical protection. This type of cover includes extremely dense brush, large tree trunks, brick or stone fences, and the like. A character behind Hard cover adds +1 to his Cover modifier.

Complete: Complete cover is what it implies—obscuring more than 90 percent of a character's body. An attacker cannot see enough of the character to make an effective Attack Test, unless he is using a talent such as Bank Shot or True Shot to bypass the cover. A character behind Complete cover cannot be attacked. However, unless he moves to reveal more of his body, he cannot make any attacks either.

Cover modifiers are applicable against any attacks made against the protected character. Note that there are occasions where cover works to the mutual benefit of both attacker and defender.

Kricklen, a t'skrang Swordmaster, is being shot at by a Theran Archer. Unable to close the distance and engage his foe with his trusty broadsword, the wily t'skrang decides to move up to within striking distance next round, using the cover of a large tree to protect him. Accounting for the fact that he moved this round to get to cover, the gamemaster determines that Kricklen has Partial cover, and adds +2 to his Physical Defense against the Theran. The Archer takes a shot, but misses the t'skrang. Next round things don't work as planned for the Swordmaster, as the Theran gets a higher Initiative Test result. Instead of taking another shot at the t'skrang, the Archer does something unexpected—he moves to attack the Swordmaster while he is behind the tree, taking advantage of the cover as well. While the tree trunk would be sufficiently wide to allow for Full cover protection this round, because the Archer has moved and is trying to attack the t'skrang, the gamemaster judges that he too benefits only from Partial cover. Likewise, because the fight is going on around the tree, Kricklen retains his Partial cover bonus. Although the Archer is a lesser swordsman, things are now a little more interesting as both combatants benefit from a Cover modifier as they strike at each other and duck back behind the trunk of the tree.

Darkness

Characters will sometimes find themselves fighting in the dark without a source of light. If a character does not possess Low-Light Vision or Heat Sight, or another form of night vision or similar sense, then his actions will be impaired. **Darkness modifiers** are different, based on the amount of ambient light present, as follows:

Partial: Partial darkness is equivalent to a character being in a shuttered room on a cloudy day. There is some ambient light, but

without a light source the environment is quite dark, with a lot of shadow. A character in Partial darkness suffers a –1 penalty to his sight-based Action Tests.

Full: Full darkness is equivalent to a character being in a shuttered room at night, allowing some moonlight to filter in through the cracks. A kaer or cave with some form of luminescence would provide a similar environment; there is almost no ambient light, and there are a lot of deep shadows. A character in Full darkness suffers a –3 penalty to his sight-based Action Tests.

Complete: Complete darkness is exactly that—the complete absence of any light; an underground kaer or a cave system with no luminescence would meet this level of darkness. The entire environment is one big shadow. A character in Complete darkness suffers a –5 penalty to his sight-based Action Tests.

Characters with Low-Light Vision are not affected by Partial or Full darkness modifiers; characters with Heat Sight are not affected by Partial, Full, or Complete darkness modifiers. At the gamemaster's discretion, Darkness modifiers are ignored for Knockdown Tests if the character is in a reasonably open area with good footing.

Darkness modifiers are usually applied as the result of being in a naturally dark environment. The magical darkness created by some spells or creature powers may apply similar or greater Darkness modifiers. Likewise, magical darkness can affect characters with Low-Light Vision or Heat Sight differently from natural darkness. The spell or creature power description normally includes information relating to the application of any Darkness modifiers for that effect. At the gamemaster's discretion, Darkness may also affect a character's Movement rates (see **Impaired Movement**, below).

Blindness

A character who is blinded, whether from natural or magical causes, will be subject to a Darkness penalty. This penalty applies for the duration of the blindness. Blindness penalties tend to be equivalent to Full or Complete darkness; the former if the character still possesses some ability to see, albeit in a very hazy and indistinct manner.

Dazzled

The opposite of darkness, intense light will sometimes dazzle a character. Some spells or creature powers deliver this effect. The effect of strong light does not tend to have as major an effect as darkness on the character. Dazzled penalties tend to be equivalent to Partial or Full darkness; only rarely will a light blind a character to the level of Complete darkness.

Distance

When making a ranged combat attack, the character may incur a penalty to his Attack and Damage Tests due to the distances involved (see **Ranged Combat**, p. 412). The Situation modifiers for each of the different range bands are as follows:

Short: There are no Situation modifiers at **Short range**; the character makes his Attack and Damage Tests as normal.

Medium: When attacking a target at **Medium range**, the character suffers a –2 penalty to his Attack and Damage Tests.

Long range: When attacking a target at **Long range**, the character suffers a –3 penalty to his Attack and Damage Tests.

Farliv, an elven Archer, is doing his part for his companions' defense by firing his elven warbow at a band of ork scorchers emerging from the nearby forest. The gamemaster tells Farliv's player that the orks are currently about 100 yards away—Medium range for a warbow. Farliv has a Missile Weapons step of 12. When firing at the orks at this distance, he subtracts –2 from his Attack and Damage Tests for being at Medium range. This means he makes a Missile Weapons Test at Step 12, with a –2 penalty. Skillfully firing an arrow at a particularly ugly ork, Farliv easily hits his target. His warbow normally inflicts Step 11 damage. However, at Medium range, he suffers a –2 penalty to the Damage Test.

Harried

A character who is engaged in close combat by four or more opponents is considered **Harried**. Conditions other than combat, such as the effects of some talents or spells, may also cause the character to become Harried.

A Harried character suffers a –2 penalty to his Action Tests. Additionally, the character subtracts –2 from his Physical and Spell Defense (in certain situations the gamemaster may also apply this penalty to the character's Social Defense). This reflects the "distracted" state of the Harried character and his inability to properly defend himself.

A character is either Harried or not. If the character incurs a Harried penalty from multiple sources, he only suffers a single Harried penalty from one of those sources each round (see the **Overwhelmed** optional rule, below, however).

Kricklen is being attacked by five ork scorchers. Because of the number of opponents he is facing, The Swordmaster is Harried—at least until he dispatches a couple of them. While a nuisance, it doesn't prevent Kricklen from quickly removing one of the orks from the fight. Unfortunately, the remaining four orks are still enough to continue causing the t'skrang to incur a Harried penalty. One of the orks has an ability that he brings to the fight—he knows Battle Shout, which he directs against the Swordmaster. The gamemaster decides Kricklen is sufficiently distracted to subtract –2 from his Social Defense, as well as his other Defense Ratings.

Overwhelmed

Optional Rule: Multiple sources of distraction can stack to further disorient an already Harried character. This optional rule reflects the cumulative effect of such distractions on a character.

An already Harried character suffers a further –1 penalty to his Action Tests and subtracts an additional –1 from his Physical and Spell Defense (and possibly Social Defense) for each additional Harried effect he incurs.

Impaired Movement

At the gamemaster's discretion, terrain and obstacles can affect a character's movement. Normal movement in the **Earthdawn** game assumes the character is relatively unimpeded—if this isn't the case, the character's ability to move may be compromised, depending on the environment:

Light: Light brush, narrow alleyways, cramped rooms, Partial darkness, and similar environments reduce a character's Movement rates by 25 percent.

Medium: Thick brush or hedges, wooded areas, knee-deep water, overturned tables, crowded streets, Full darkness, and the like reduce a character's Movement rates by 50 percent. At the gamemaster's discretion, characters crossing obstacles require a successful Dexterity (5) Test to avoid tripping or having their movement halted.

Hard: Extremely dense underbrush, a packed marketplace, Complete darkness, waist-deep water, and similar environments reduce a character's Movement rates by 75 percent. At the gamemaster's discretion, characters crossing obstacles require a successful Dexterity (7) Test to avoid tripping or having their movement halted.

Knocked Down

A character who is **Knocked Down** can still act but his activity is severely impaired while he is prone. While he remains Knocked Down, the character suffers a –3 penalty to his Action Tests, and subtracts –3 from his Physical and Spell Defense (in certain situations the gamemaster may also apply this penalty to the character's Social Defense). These penalties remain in effect until the character stands up again. A character who is Knocked Down is also effectively Harried (p. 408), but only the greater Knocked Down penalty is applied; don't combine both penalties (being Knocked Down counts as a source of distraction if using the **Overwhelmed** optional rule, p. 408).

Standing is a simple matter, but uses the character's Standard action during the round in which he gets back on his feet (see **Standard Actions** in the **Actions** section, p. 396). A character cannot move in the round that he stands up from being Knocked Down. If he chooses to remain on the ground, a character may crawl at 20 percent of his Movement rate.

For a moment, things were looking up for Kricklen. He managed to dispatch another ork scorcher, and therefore lost his Harried penalty. Unfortunately, one of the orks gets in a solid blow against him, inflicting a Wound and forcing a Knockdown Test—a test that Kricklen subsequently fails. The Swordmaster is Knocked Down. Now he not only suffers a –3 penalty to his Action Tests—including his next Initiative Test—until he stands up, but his Physical and Spell Defense are also markedly reduced. Still, it could be worse. At least there are no other Swordmasters around to view his plight! Kricklen's player is certain that, if they were, the gamemaster would also apply a penalty to the t'skrang's Social Defense for the embarrassment.

As most combat options require freedom of movement, a character who is Knocked Down is unable to use any combat options until he is standing (see **Combat Options**, p. 403), with the exception of the optional **Jumping Up** combat option, p. 405.

Stunned

Some talents and spells can cause a character to become **Stunned**, as can a successful attack with the Attacking to Stun combat option (see **Combat Options**, p. 404). During the first round of being Stunned, the character is dazed and temporarily disoriented by the blow. He can only take defensive actions. Additionally, his Movement rates are halved. During the entire duration of being Stunned the character is also Harried, treating the Stunned effect as one source of distraction for this penalty (see **Harried** and **Overwhelmed**, p. 408).

Kricklen gets to his feet, just in time to get struck by a new opponent—an ork Sky Raider, who uses his Thunder Axe talent against the t'skrang. Striking the Swordmaster, the ork makes a successful Thunder Axe Test against him, leaving Kricklen Stunned. Kricklen is temporarily disoriented, and can only take defensive actions. Even worse, he incurs a Harried penalty for the duration of the Stunned effect. Head throbbing, the Swordmaster hopes his comrades will come to his aid… and soon!

Surprised

From time to time, characters and creatures appear in unexpected places. This may be an intentional tactic, as when a group plans an ambush, or an accidental encounter, as when a creature suddenly appears from behind a tree in the forest. In either case, those caught off guard by such a situation are **Surprised**.

Surprised characters cannot act against their ambushers during the combat round in which they are Surprised—this means they cannot move, nor can they take even Simple actions. They also subtract –3 from their Physical and Spell Defense during the same round (in certain situations the gamemaster may also apply this penalty to the character's Social Defense). A character who is Surprised is also effectively Blindsided (p. 407), but only the greater Surprised penalty is applied; don't use both penalties. The effect of surprise ends as soon as the combat round ends.

To determine whether a character is Surprised, he makes a Perception Test against a Difficulty Number based on the situation. This is usually equal to the lowest Dexterity step among the characters or creatures encountered, but is otherwise determined by the gamemaster. If the test succeeds, the character can act or react as normal. If the test fails, the character is Surprised.

Kricklen is in serious trouble. He is facing three ork scorchers, one whom has proved himself to be an ork Sky Raider, and has Stunned the Swordmaster. However, unknown to the orks, Kricklen's comrades have returned, sneaking up to within striking distance of the orks. The gamemaster makes a Perception Test for the orks to see if they notice the t'skrang's comrades approaching—none of them do. The orks are Surprised as the Swordmaster's fellow adventurers leap out from the nearby undergrowth. The surprise is total—even Kricklen, in his dazed and injured state, is Surprised.

Types of Combat

Though most types of combat use the same basic Attack and Damage Test procedure, some alter that by taking into account the situation, the environment, the type of weapon, the distance between opponents, and so on. There are three primary types of combat in **Earthdawn**: close, ranged, and spell combat. Within each combat type there may be one or more types of attack.

Most forms of combat fall into one of the following categories:

Close combat: Melee and unarmed attacks.

Ranged combat: Missile and thrown attacks.

Spell combat: Spell and magical power attacks.

The following sections describe each type of combat in more detail, including mounted, aerial, and creature combat.

Close Combat

Close combat is any type of physical combat that occurs within reach of the combatants. This is usually a 2 yard distance between opponents, but some longer weapons allow for an even greater reach. The Melee Weapons and Unarmed Combat skills and talents are those most commonly used in close combat.

The two types of close combat are:

Melee attacks: Made by hitting an opponent with a hand-held melee weapon, such as a broadsword or a battle-axe (see **Melee Weapon Descriptions** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 435). Melee attacks are most commonly made using the Melee Weapons skill or talent.

Unarmed attacks: Made by an attacker punching, biting, kicking or generally employing his limbs in an injurious fashion against his opponent. Unarmed attacks are most commonly made using the Unarmed Combat skill or talent.

Target Cover

Opponents who are protected or concealed by some form of cover, such as dense brush, a low wall, a large rock, or a tree, gain a Cover modifier, and are generally harder to hit in close combat. See **Cover**, p. 407, for more information.

Fleeing From Combat

Optional Rule: Characters engaged in close combat need to be faster than their enemies to break away from the fight unscathed. The Fleeing From Combat optional rule reflects the difficulty of doing this in the middle of battle. A character who wants to move to get away from a close combat fight he is involved in can only do so if his Initiative Test result is higher than that of his opponents.

Note that this rule does not prevent the character's opponents from following him, it simply makes it harder for him to get out of the fight in the first place.

Serafino, a human Swordmaster, is fighting two ork scorchers. The orks have managed to wound him with their battle-axes, so Serafino decides it is best to get away from them for the moment. Sadly, Serafino's Initiative Test result is only a 4, while the ork scorchers have Initiative Test results of 7 and 9—the Swordmaster won't be able to use his Combat Movement this round. In the next round, Serafino rolls a 14 on his Initiative Test while the orks get a 5 and a 2. Since his Initiative Test result is higher, Serafino can flee from this fight, which he does, taking the opportunity to hide behind his friend Caedrus, an obsidiman Warrior. Spitting curses at the departing Swordmaster, the ork scorchers decide to pursue him, but quickly change their minds when they realize they are going to have to deal with the obsidiman Warrior first!

Weapon Reach

Optional Rule: Some gamemasters and players may desire a little more "realism" in their **Earthdawn** combats by taking into account the relative reach of weapons in combat. The Weapon Reach optional rule provides a method of handling this.

A character engaged in close combat against an opponent wielding a weapon with a larger Size is generally at a disadvantage against that opponent. Even if his Initiative Test result is higher than his opponent's, he will still be hampered by his opponent maneuvering to keep him at weapon's length.

The character with the smaller-Size weapon suffers a –1 Reach penalty to close combat Attack Tests made against an opponent with a larger-Size weapon. Unarmed attacks (limbs, tails) are considered to be Size 1 weapons. The character with the larger-Size weapon gains no benefit—his opponent is no harder to hit, nor is his own ability to attack impaired.

In order to "seize" the advantage over a character with a larger-Size weapon, a character must get inside his reach. This is similar to the Going Inside a Shield combat option (see **Combat Options**, above), but is directed against the character's weapon, rather than his shield.

The character with the Reach penalty declares he is Going Inside a Weapon (Shield). All of the rules for employing the Going Inside a Shield combat option apply, except the character subtracts his opponent's weapon Size from his Initiative Test result to determine the outcome. If he fails to win Initiative, the –2 penalty for attempting the Going Inside a Shield combat option is added to his –1 Reach penalty, for a total –3 penalty to his Attack Tests against his opponent that round.

If the character is successful with his attempt to "seize" the advantage, the roles are reversed, and his opponent now incurs the –1 Reach penalty until he, in turn, can "regain" the advantage. This differs from the Going Inside a Shield option, which is only effective for one round, by lasting until advantage is won back or the fight is over. Such jockeying for advantage may occur several times during a fight.

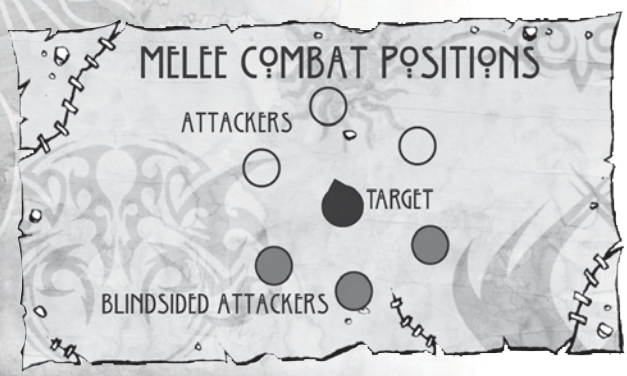
Characters fighting with equal-Size weapons gain no advantage over each other. A character fighting with two weapons determines his initial advantage based on the highest Size among the weapons he is wielding.

Maximum Number of Attackers

A maximum of six human-sized opponents can attack a character in close combat. Any time four or more attackers set upon a character at the same time, the character is considered Harried (see **Situation Modifiers**, p. 408). The character remains Harried until fewer than four attackers surround him. Note that some smaller creatures or pack animals can swarm an opponent, allowing more attacks against their opponent than normal (see **Pack or Swarm Attacks**, p. 417). Regardless of the number of combatants, the relative positions of the attackers appears on the Melee Combat Positions diagram, below.

Melee Attacks

Combatants attacking each other with swords, daggers, staves, clubs, or other melee weapons, while in close proximity to each other are said to be in **melee combat**. When making **melee attacks**, characters most commonly use their Melee Weapons skill or talent, although other skills and talents can be used in melee combat—this is normally noted in the ability's description as allowing a melee attack.



Most characters are only allowed a single melee attack each round, as a Standard action. However, some skills and talents, like Second Attack or Second Weapon, allow the character one or more additional melee attacks as a Simple action. Generally, a character must be within 2 yards of his opponent to make a melee attack. At the gamemaster's discretion, some longer weapons may allow the attacker a longer reach.

Melee Weapons

Statistics for many different melee weapons can be found in the **Melee Weapon Descriptions** section of the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 435. This includes the weapon's Damage step, weight, cost and general Availability. Any special rules relating to use of the weapon are detailed in the description for that weapon; some of these rules supplement or supersede those described in this chapter. Some melee weapons require the character to have a minimum Strength or Dexterity value in order to wield them effectively. A character who does not meet either of these requirements is considered Harried (see **Situation Modifiers**, p. 408) until he either drops or otherwise stops using the weapon, or improves his Attribute value (see **Improving Attribute Values** in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 420).

Unless otherwise noted in the weapon description, characters add their Strength step to the melee weapon's Damage step to determine the Damage step used for Damage Tests (see p. 399).

Entangling Weapons

Some weapons, such as whips, not only cause damage to those struck, but also wrap around the victim, preventing him from acting. These weapons are noted in their description as being **entangling weapons** (see the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 434). If the attacker achieves a Good or better result on his Attack Test with an entangling weapon, he Entangles his opponent. The entangled character is considered Harried for any actions other than attempts to break free of the entangling weapon (see **Situation Modifiers**, p. 408).

Unlike Grappling attacks (see below), the Entangling Difficulty of the entanglement is determined by the weapon and listed with the weapon's description. To free himself, the target must make a successful Strength or Dexterity Test against the weapon's Entangling Difficulty. If he was holding a one-handed bladed weapon when struck, he may add the weapon's Damage step as a bonus to his test (this will help to cut him free, ruining the entangling weapon in the process).

Improvised Melee Weapons

Sometimes a character will want to hit another character with an object not normally intended as a melee weapon, such as a chair, a tankard, a rock, or something else again. The gamemaster determines the statistics for this improvised weapon, including any Strength Minimum and the item's Damage step.

Because of the unbalanced nature of the weapon, the character suffers a –2 penalty to his Attack Tests when wielding the item. If the improvised weapon is ablaze (such as a lit torch, for example), a Pathetic Attack Test result extinguishes it.

UNARMED ATTACKS

Some characters disdain the use of weapons when fighting their battles, preferring instead to use their bare hands or feet (or tails, in the case of t'skrang). Fighting this way is called **unarmed combat**. When making **unarmed attacks**, characters most commonly use their Unarmed Combat skill or talent, although some other skills and talents can be used in unarmed combat—this is normally noted in the ability's description as allowing an unarmed attack. Most characters are only allowed a single unarmed attack each round, as a Standard action. Some skills or talents, like Claw Frenzy, may allow the character one or more additional unarmed attacks as a Simple action.

Most unarmed attacks are considered to be punches or kicks, using the character's unmodified Strength step as the Damage step for a successful Attack Test (see p. 399). Some characters may possess racial advantages, like the t'skrang Tail Attack (see the **Creating Characters** chapter, p. 50), or have the ability to use talents to improve the damage they inflict, such as the Claw Shape talent. In order to make an unarmed attack, a character must be within 2 yards of his opponent. Characters battling opponents in unarmed combat may forego their Standard action attack that round to use a special option: Grappling.

Grappling

A character can attempt to wrestle with an opponent in place of making his Standard action unarmed Attack Test (or Tests) that round. Unless the character possesses an ability that specifically allows the use of this option, when attempting a **Grappling attack** the character makes an Unarmed Combat Test against the target's Physical Defense. On a Good result, the character successfully grapples his opponent; both characters fall prone and are Knocked Down for any actions other than unarmed attacks against each other or attempts to break free (see **Situation Modifiers**, p. 409). The result of the character's Unarmed Combat Test becomes the Grappling Difficulty of that attack. Grappling attacks inflict no direct damage to the target, therefore the attacker does not make a Damage Test.

Grappling Out-sized Opponents

Optional Rule: Sometimes Grappling attacks will occur between obviously out-sized opponents. For example, a troll is attempting to grapple a windling. Because the physical size differences are considerable, the gamemaster may decide to compensate for the relative size of the combatants by employing the **Grappling Out-sized Opponents** optional rule.

There are many ways of managing this in the context of the game: comparing the relative sizes or Toughness values of the combatants, applying penalties based on Strength differences, and so on. The Grappling Out-sized Opponents rule tries to keep things simple, as follows:

- Once a successful Grappling attack has been made against an opponent, the smaller of the two combatants is considered Harried (see **Situation Modifiers**, p. 408).

The gamemaster may also consider using the optional Overwhelmed rule, giving very small combatants an additional penalty to compensate for extreme size difference.

Targ Boneslicer, a troll Sky Raider, has made a successful Grappling attack against Poorht, a windling Thief. Because of the relative difference in their sizes, the gamemaster decides to use the Grappling Out-sized Opponents optional rule and tells Poorht's player that the windling is now Harried, meaning he suffers a –2 penalty to his Unarmed Combat or Strength Test to break free of the troll's hold. Targ's player points out to the gamemaster that Targ is an 8 foot tall troll, considerably larger than the somewhat miniscule (by comparison) windling. Taking this into account, the gamemaster decides that the Overwhelmed optional rule should be invoked, and gives Poorht an additional Harried penalty for the extremes in stature. This means that Poorht now needs to make an Unarmed Combat or Strength Test with a –3 penalty in order to break free of the troll's grip. Just as well this is a friendly contest!

The target of a successful Grappling attack can try to break free of the attacker's hold. While Knocked Down, those involved in the Grappling attack incur no penalties to any Action Tests they make to maintain or break free of a hold with their grappled opponent. The grappled target may make an Unarmed Combat or Strength Test against the Grappling Difficulty of the attack. If the test succeeds, the target breaks free of the grappling character's hold. At the gamemaster's discretion, any other action performed by the grappled target must beat the Grappling Difficulty to be successful. For example, a grappled t'skrang may attempt a tail attack, but must beat the Grappling Difficulty to hit. A grappled magician may try to cast a spell that requires neither threads nor gestures, but must use the Grappling Difficulty for his Spellcasting Test.

Maintaining a Grapple Hold

Once a character makes a successful Grappling attack against an opponent, he can maintain the hold by declaring that he is doing so as his Standard action during consecutive rounds. The character may choose to let go of his grappled opponent at any time.

While grappling his opponent, the only other option the character may make is to establish a better hold on his opponent. The character may choose to make another Unarmed Combat Test against his opponent in order to establish a better hold; this is resolved as normal, however, if the character fails the new Grappling attack his hold has been broken and his opponent is free to act as normal. Both parties remain Knocked Down until they stand up, however.

Ranged Combat

Ranged combat is best described as being any type of physical combat that occurs beyond the reach of the combatants. Normally, this is reserved for weapons that project a missile, or are thrown, toward a target no closer than 2 yards distance away. The two types of ranged combat are:

Missile attacks: Made by firing a missile weapon, such as a bow or a sling (see **Missile Weapon Descriptions** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 435). Missile attacks are most commonly made using the Missile Weapons skill or talent.

Thrown attacks: Made by hurling a throwing weapon, such as a flight dagger or a throwing axe (see **Throwing Weapon Descriptions** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 437). Thrown attacks are most commonly made using the Throwing Weapons skill or talent.

Weapon Range

All ranged combat attacks are effective only up to a certain distance. The three range categories are: **Short**, **Medium**, and **Long**. Missile and thrown weapons cannot be used to attack a target beyond Long range. A character making a ranged combat attack will often incur a Distance penalty, based on whether his target is at Short, Medium or Long range (see **Distance** in the **Situation Modifiers** section, p. 408).

The range statistics for missile and throwing weapons appear in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 437. The minimum range for most missile or throwing weapons is 2 yards. If an attacker is within 2 yards of his opponent, he cannot attack him with a ranged combat attack.

Firing Into a Melee

Characters will sometimes want to make a ranged combat attack against an opponent engaged in close combat. This hazardous practice is known as **Firing Into a Melee**, and can result in the attacker inadvertently hitting an ally or a companion instead of the desired target. To resolve a missile attack fired into a melee, use the following procedure.

The number of characters or creatures standing between the attacker and his designated target is added to the target's Physical Defense. The attacker then makes his Missile or Throwing Weapons Test against this modified Physical Defense. If the test succeeds, the missile or thrown weapon hits the target, inflicting damage as normal. If the test fails, the attacker compares the Attack Test result to the Physical Defense of each character or creature standing between himself and the original target, starting with the closest character. If the test succeeds, that character is struck instead of the target. If the test fails, the attacker continues on to the next target in order, and so on until he strikes a character, or all possible intervening targets have been tested for a hit.

The number of intervening characters or creatures is not determined simply by drawing a straight line between the attacker and his target. Because of the fluid nature of combat, those characters freely able to move within 2 yards of the path between attacker and opponent are considered eligible targets to be struck. This accounts for intervening characters unexpectedly stepping into the line of fire during the time the attacker prepares and looses a missile or hurls his thrown weapon. The gamemaster determines how many characters or creatures are standing between the attacker and his target, taking the fluid nature of combat into account.

Farliv, an elven Archer, fires an arrow at what he hopes is an opponent in the roiling mass of bodies and weapons engaged in melee combat before him. The target he chooses has a Physical Defense of 8, but there are five other characters shifting back and forth in the way, increasing the Difficulty Number of the Attack Test by +5 to 13. Farliv makes a Missile Weapons Test, with a result of 9; he misses his target. The gamemaster compares the Attack Test result against the Physical Defense of each of the five intervening characters, starting with the one closest to Farliv. The closest character is an enemy gamemaster character with a Physical Defense of 10, so the arrow does not hit him. The next character is Farliv's companion Jerreck, with a Physical Defense of 8. Farliv's arrow strikes Jerreck, and now the Archer suddenly wishes he had the silver tongue of a Troubadour to explain the mistake to his friend.

Target Cover

Targets who are concealed or protected by some form of cover, such as dense brush, a low wall, a large rock, or a tree, gain a Cover modifier and are therefore harder to hit (see **Cover** in the **Situation Modifiers** section, p. 407).

Missile Attacks

A combatant attacking a target character from a distance with a bow, crossbow, sling, or other missile weapon is said to be in **missile combat**. When making **missile attacks**, characters most commonly use their Missile Weapons skill or talent, although some other skills and talents can be used—this is normally noted in the ability description as allowing a missile attack.

Most characters are only allowed a single missile attack each round, as a Standard action. However, some skills and talents, like Multi-Shot, allow the character one or more additional missile attacks as a Simple action. As noted under **Weapon Range**, above, to make a missile attack, a character must be no closer than 2 yards from his opponent. Also, the distance to the target may modify the character's Attack and Damage Tests (see **Distance** in the **Situation Modifiers** section, p. 408).

Missile Weapons

Statistics for different missile weapons can be found in the **Missile Weapon Descriptions** section of the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 437. This includes the weapon's Damage step, range categories, weight, cost and general Availability. Any special rules relating to use of the weapon are detailed in the description for that weapon. Some missile weapons require the character to have a minimum Strength or Dexterity value in order to wield them effectively. A character who does not meet either of these requirements is considered Harried (see **Situation Modifiers**, p. 408) until he drops or stops using the weapon, or improves his Attribute value (see **Improving Attribute Values** in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 420).

Unless otherwise noted in the weapon description, characters add their Strength step to the missile weapon's Damage step to determine the Damage step used for Damage Tests (see p. 399).

Thrown Attacks

A combatant hurling a weapon, such as a dagger, a throwing axe, or a spear, at a target character from a distance is said to be in **thrown combat**. When making **thrown attacks**, characters most commonly use their Throwing Weapons skill or talent, although some other skills and talents can be used—this is normally noted in the ability's description as allowing a thrown attack. Most characters are only allowed a single thrown attack each round, as a Standard action. However, some talent knacks, like Lightning Throw, allow the character to make additional thrown attacks. As noted under **Weapon Range**, above, to make a thrown attack, a character must be no closer than 2 yards away from his opponent. Also, the distance to the target may modify the character's Attack and Damage Tests (see **Distance** in the **Situation Modifiers** section, p. 408).

Throwing Weapons

Statistics for different throwing weapons can be found in the **Throwing Weapon Descriptions** section of the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 437. This includes the weapon's Damage step, range categories, weight, cost and general Availability. Any special rules relating to use of the weapon are detailed in the description for that weapon; some of these rules supplement or supersede those described in this chapter. Some throwing weapons require the character to have a minimum Strength or Dexterity value in order to wield them effectively. A character who does not meet either of these requirements is considered Harried (see **Situation Modifiers**, p. 408) until he drops or stops using the weapon, or improves his Attribute value (see **Improving Attribute Values** in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 420).

Unless otherwise noted in the weapon description, characters add their Strength step to the throwing weapon's Damage step to determine the Damage step used for Damage Tests (see p. 399).

Entangling Weapons

Some thrown weapons, like bolas and nets are entangling weapons. See **Melee Weapons**, p. 411, for details on Entangling attacks and how they work.

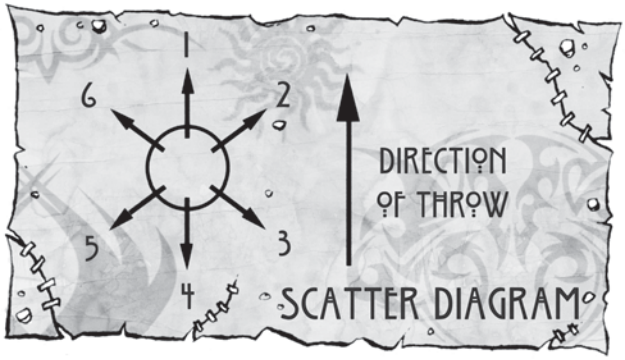
Throwing Objects

As in life, characters will sometimes want to hurl objects that are note designed to be thrown, such as rocks, flasks of oil, or even furniture, at an opponent. The Ranges for commonly thrown objects (i.e., rocks, oil flasks) are included on the Throwing Weapons Table (see **Throwing Weapon Descriptions** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 437). The gamemaster must determine the Damage step and Range of objects not shown on the Throwing Weapons Table. The character makes a Throwing Weapons Test with a –2 penalty, due to the unbalanced nature of the object being thrown. If a character is throwing the object at another character, he makes the Throwing Weapons Test against the target's Physical Defense rating. If throwing an object at a specific target area, the character makes a Throwing Weapons (7) Test. If the test succeeds, the character hits the target and makes a Damage Test, as normal. If the object misses the target, it (or its component parts) may scatter.

Determining Scatter

If a character throws an object at a target and misses, the gamemaster rolls a D6 (no Bonus die) and consults the Scatter Diagram to determine the direction in which the object actually travels. To determine exactly how far away from the target the object lands, the gamemaster subtracts the Throwing Weapons Test result from the Difficulty Number; the net difference becomes the Scatter step. The gamemaster makes a Scatter Test, the result of which is the distance in feet that the object scattered from the target.

Targ Boneslicer, a troll Sky Raider, heaves a large boulder at an enemy troll. Targ rolls a 6 on his Throwing Weapons Test against his opponent's Physical Defense of 10—he fails to hit his target. The gamemaster rolls a D6 to see in what direction the boulder actually went and gets a scatter direction of 6. He then makes a Step 4 Scatter Test (10 – 6 = 4) to determine the distance in which the boulder scatters from the target, with a result of 5. The boulder lands harmlessly some five feet beyond the target. Fragments of rock fly loose, but nothing that causes harm. Targ is really upset, however.



Spell Combat

Spell combat involves those spell attacks made against an opponent using spell magic, or a similar magical power, and usually requiring the magician to make a Spellcasting Test against his opponent's Spell Defense. Spells targeted against an opponent's Spell Defense also allow the possibility of achieving an Armor-Defeating Hit with the magician's Attack Test (his Spellcasting Test). Most combat spells are easily differentiated by the fact that they often involve making an Effect Test as a Damage Test, as noted in the spell description. This is not always the case, but is a good rule-of-thumb for the gamemaster to apply when determining what constitutes a combat spell.

See the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 282, for more information about casting spells and descriptions of the many different spells available to magicians in the **Earthdawn** game.

Casting Into a Melee

Characters will sometimes want to make a spell combat attack against an opponent engaged in close combat, who becomes more difficult to hit. The number of characters or creatures standing between the attacker and his designated target is added to the target's Spell Defense. The attacker makes his Spellcasting Test against the target's modified Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the spell hits the target and takes effect. Otherwise, it fails.

Broomé, the windling Elementalist, casts his Earth Darts spell at an opponent engaged in melee combat with his companions. The target he chooses has a Spell Defense of 9, but there are four other characters between Broomé and his target, increasing the Difficulty Number of the Attack Test by +4 to 13.

Mounted Combat

Mounted combat is common in the **Earthdawn** game. In addition to being the favored combat form of Cavalrymen adepts, large numbers of mounted ork scorchers also roam across the plains. Some characters may even use flying creatures as mounts, using them to swoop down into combat as if they were on the ground. This section provides guidelines for resolving mounted combat attacks.

Charging Attacks

The most common type of mounted combat is the **Charging attack**. Most characters use lances or spears to make Charging attacks, though other melee weapons are also employed. Charging attacks are close combat attacks, and use the normal rules for such, but with the following distinctions.

The rider goads his mount into a Charging attack towards his opponent. The mount must move at least its Combat Movement, and no more than its Full Movement, in distance for the rider to benefit from the momentum of the charge. The rider makes a close combat Attack Test against his opponent's Physical Defense, as normal. If the test succeeds, the rider hits his opponent and makes a Damage Test for the weapon used, adding a bonus equal to his mount's Strength step to the Damage Test. The character's mount does not make any attacks during the round it is charging.

Gralk, an ork Cavalryman, makes a Charging attack against an opponent. His mount has a Combat Movement rate of 60 yards, and the ork urges it to move that distance before reaching his opponent. Gralk makes a successful Attack Test, adding his trusty mount's Strength step to the Damage Test. Gralk has a Strength step of 6, he is using a lance with a Damage step of 6. These combine to give Gralk a total of Step 12 (6+6=12) for his Charging attack Damage Test, adding +7 to the test result (his mount's Strength step).

A character employing the Charge talent or skill (see the **Talents** chapter, p. 175) uses his Charge step in place of his Strength step for the Damage Test from a successful Charging attack.

Characters mounted on flying creatures can make close combat Charging attacks (see **Aerial Combat**, p. 415).

Mounted Unarmed Attacks

While most mounted attacks are melee attacks, characters can make unarmed attacks as normal, punching or kicking their opponent as they ride past. A mounted character can also make a Grappling attack, throwing himself from his mount onto his opponent. He makes his unarmed Attack Test as normal. If the test succeeds he tackles his opponent, dragging him to the ground (see **Unarmed Attacks**, p. 411).

Normally a Grappling attack inflicts no damage, but in this case both combatants are Knocked Down and take Step 5/D8 damage from the impetus of the fall. If the attack fails, only the attacking character is Knocked Down and takes damage. No armor protects against this damage.

Staying Mounted

While a successful Charging attack using a lance or spear offers the character many advantages, the attacker also risks being thrown from his mount. After making a Damage Test from a successful Charging attack, the character makes a Strength Test against his opponent's Toughness step. If the test succeeds, the character remains mounted. If the test fails, the character is thrown from his mount and falls to the ground, taking Step 5/D8 Falling damage and becomes Knocked Down. No armor protects against this damage. Characters with the Charge talent or skill can make a Charge Test in place of their Strength Test to avoid being dismounted.

A character making a Charging attack with a melee weapon other than a lance or spear is less likely to be knocked off his mount. Instead, the impact of the attack might force the character to drop his weapon. After making a Damage Test from a successful Charging attack, the character makes a Strength Test against his opponent's Toughness step. If the test succeeds, he manages to hold on to his weapon. If the test fails, the character drops his weapon. Characters with the Charge talent or skill can make a Charge Test in place of their Strength Test to avoid losing their weapon.

A mounted character risks falling from his mount when he is required to make a Knockdown Test, from taking a Wound or by other means. When a mounted character fails his Knockdown Test he falls to the ground, taking Step 5/D8 Falling damage, and is Knocked Down. No armor protects against this damage. Characters facing a mounted attacker often employ the Attacking to Knockdown combat option (see **Combat Options**, p. 403) to dismount their opponent. Characters with the Sure Mount talent or skill can make a Sure Mount Test in place of a Knockdown Test to avoid being Knocked Down.

If a mount fails a Knockdown Test, both mount and rider are Knocked Down, taking Step 5/D8 Falling damage. No armor protects against this damage. Characters with the Trick Riding talent or skill can make a Trick Riding Test against the Knockdown Difficulty to leap safely from their mount before it hits the ground, thus avoiding being Knocked Down and taking any damage.

Mounted Movement

When mounted, the rider's Initiative Test result is used for both his own and his mount's actions. If a mount is poorly trained, however, or if the character is not currently mounted, the mount rolls Initiative normally and the gamemaster determines its actions like any other creature.

Mounted combat offers characters another advantage as well as increased damage. Characters making mounted attacks may choose to split their movement, moving, then attacking, then moving again during the combat round.

When making a mounted attack, a character can choose to use the Splitting Movement combat option to use part of his Combat Movement to approach and attack an opponent, then the remainder to ride away. Although the Splitting Movement is normally an optional rule, it can *always* be used by mounted characters. There are disadvantages to split movement, however. Though it allows a character to attack and then flee, it also weakens his defenses. When a mounted character splits his movement to attack a target, both the rider and his mount subtract –2 from their Physical and Spell Defense. All attacks made against the rider or his mount that round are against these reduced Defense Ratings, in addition to any other penalties the character or mount might be suffering at the time.

When a mounted character splits his movement and attacks, opponents with a higher Initiative Test result can attack him or his mount if they reserve their action to the same Initiative as the mounted character (see **Splitting Movement**, p. 406).

Gralk, an ork Cavalryman, is charging a new opponent, a troll raider. Gralk decides to split his movement with his Charging attack, moving in, striking at the troll, then riding off again. Gralk has an Initiative Test result of 12; the troll has an Initiative Test result of 14. The troll reserves his action until the ork's Initiative Test result of

12. When Gralk gets near him, the troll can attack first and (he hopes) knock Gralk off his mount before he can deliver his attack.

Defending Against Mounted Attacks

Defending oneself against a mounted attack made using the Splitting Movement combat option is difficult. The character needs to at least equal his opponent's Initiative in order to retaliate against such attacks. While generally disadvantaged, characters wielding spears, lances, or other long melee weapons (such as polearms) can employ the Setting Against a Charge combat option, which is designed to use a mounted attacker's momentum against him (see **Combat Options**, p. 406).

Ranged and Spell Combat

Mounted characters casting spells or making ranged attacks are subject to the normal rules for **Ranged** or **Spell Combat**.

A mounted character cannot use the Splitting Movement combat option with these types of attacks.

Aerial Combat

Some creatures and characters, including windlings, are capable of flight. The rules governing combat between characters and flying creatures requires additional explanation, as flight introduces some additional considerations into the **Earthdawn** game.

Flying Movement

The Flying Movement rate of creatures appears with their statistics in the **Creatures** chapter on p. 266 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**. The Flying Movement rate of a windling is based on its Dexterity value (see **Determine Characteristics** in the **Creating Characters** chapter, p. 47).

Flying creatures are not limited in their ability to move. They can freely move vertically or horizontally as part of their normal movement.

Close Combat

Creatures and characters capable of flight can make close combat attacks against opponents while flying. When doing so, the attacker can either stay within close combat range (up to 2 yards) of his opponent, or make a Swooping attack against him (see **Swooping Attacks**, below). Many creatures attack from within close combat range because this allows them to use all their attack abilities and does not affect their defense. Many windling Warriors employ this tactic.

Swooping Attacks

Some flying creatures and characters prefer to make close combat Swooping attacks against their opponents. To make a **Swooping attack**, a creature or character must split his movement by using the Splitting Movement combat option. The swooping attacker flies into close combat using a portion of his Combat Movement, makes his attacks, and flies off using the remainder of his Combat Movement. As with mounted characters who split their movement (see **Mounted Movement**, p. 414), a creature or character who makes a Swooping attack subtracts –2 from his Physical and Spell Defense for the entire round (see **Splitting Movement**, p. 406).

Characters who wish to attack swooping creatures or characters must have a higher Initiative Result than their opponent that round, reserving their action until the same Initiative (see **Reserved Actions**, p. 397).

Charging Attacks

Characters mounted on a flying creature may also make Charging attacks, benefiting from a bonus to their Damage Tests if they move sufficient distance before engaging an opponent (see **Mounted Combat**, p. 413). Only the rider of a flying mount benefits from any Damage bonus, however.

Ranged and Spell Combat

Flying creatures able to cast spells or make ranged attacks are subject to the normal rules for **Ranged Combat** (p. 411) or **Spell Combat** (p. 413). This includes flying characters, such as windlings, using bows, blowpipes, daggers, or other missile or throwing weapons.

A flying character or creature cannot use the Splitting Movement combat option with these types of attacks.

Knockdown

Flying creatures and characters can be knocked out of the sky. A flying character or creature who fails a Knockdown Test is Knocked Down to the ground and may take Falling damage from the height fallen (see the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 107 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). Once the character or creature stands back up it can again take to the air.

The gamemaster may decide that a creature or character flying at a considerable height does not hit the ground after failing a Knockdown Test. Instead, they plummet towards the ground over several rounds, losing an appropriate level of height in the process. There are no simple rules to determine how fast a creature falls each round; variables include body weight, wind, wings that help slow the descent, and so on.

Flying creatures and characters that have been Knocked Down, but haven't yet hit the ground, can make a Dexterity (7) Test to "stand up". If the test succeeds, the creature or character stops falling; he cannot act in the round in which he "stands up", but does not fall any further. If the test fails, the creature or character's descent has not been arrested, and he continues to fall as normal.

A creature or character that is unconscious and falling makes a Recovery Test after 1 round of uncontrolled descent, as if he were being roused by another character (see **Effects of Injury**, p. 402). If the creature or character manages to regain consciousness, he can attempt to make a Dexterity (7) Test to "stand up" as noted earlier, otherwise he continues to fall until he hits the ground or is somehow rescued.

Creature Combat

Characters will encounter, and sometimes have to fight, many different creatures throughout the course of their adventures. See the **Creatures** (p. 266), **Dragons** (p. 378), **Spirits** (p. 358), and **Horrors** (p. 434) chapters of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information.

Initiative

Creatures make Initiative Tests as normal to determine when they act during the combat round. Unless noted in the creature's description, the gamemaster uses the Initiative step given with the creature's statistics.

Number of Actions

Some creatures can make more than one Standard action per round, which can be used as described in **Actions**, p. 396. The number of actions a creature can make each combat round is

shown under the "Number of Actions:" notation in the creature's statistics block.

However, creatures are limited to moving no further than their Combat Movement rate during a round in which they also take one or more other actions. Creatures may move their Full Movement rate, but doing so precludes other activities, except for a single Simple action (see **Movement**, p. 396).

There are also restrictions to the maximum number of attacks that can be made of a particular type. These limitations are described in **Creature Attacks**, below.

Karma Use

In the **Earthdawn** game, only the most powerful creatures possess Karma. Unless a creature's description specifically states otherwise, all creatures with Karma available to them may spend 1 Karma Point on any Action Test they make during the round, including Attack Tests, Damage Tests, Knockdown Tests, and so on. The Karma step noted in the creature's statistics block determines the Karma dice rolled with the creature's Action Test.

Creatures can spend only a single point of Karma on an Action Test, but they can spend it on each Action Test they make during the round. For example, a dragon with 2 claws and a bite attack can spend a Karma Point on each Attack and Damage Test it makes, if it so desires.

Creature Attacks

Creatures will generally attack their prey using the most effective means available to them. As noted earlier (see **Number of Actions**, above), many creatures can attack in more than one way. The statistics block for each creature lists the number of actions a creature can make per round; in many cases, a creature can make more than one type of attack in the same round. For example, a creature with 2 actions per round may attack twice with its claws, or once with a claw attack and once with a bite attack.

If the creature can make more than one type of attack, the step number for each type of attack is listed separately. Likewise, separate Damage steps are provided for each type of attack a creature can make.

The following text describes some of the different forms of attacks that creatures can use. Unless noted otherwise, each type of attack uses one of the creature's available actions in a given combat round.

Bite Attacks

Less often employed by creatures than Claw attacks, the **Bite attack** is often used in combination with another type of maneuver, such as Bite and Shake, Bite and Hold, and Grab and Bite. Each of these methods of attack is described below.

Regardless of how many attacks they can make, all creatures can only make one Bite attack, including combinations, per round.

Bite and Shake

With the **Bite and Shake** attack, the creature first bites the victim, then vigorously shakes its prey, causing additional damage in subsequent combat rounds. Most of the time, the creature bites its opponent's neck and then shakes it until the neck snaps.

A Bite and Shake attack requires the creature to make a successful Attack Test using the Called Shot combat option (see **Combat Options**, p. 404). If the test succeeds, the target is considered Grappled (see **Unarmed Attacks**, p. 411). Each round thereafter, the creature automatically makes a bite Damage Test, reflecting the additional damage caused to its prey from the shaking; it does not need to make another Attack Test. A creature that is shaking its opponent cannot make another Bite attack until the victim is released by the creature or breaks free.

Because the creature shakes its victim so violently, it is easier for him to break free of the creature's grip. When attempting to break free from the Grapple, the victim gains a +2 bonus to his Strength or Unarmed Combat Test. Unfortunately, the act of breaking free requires tearing away from the creature's teeth, which causes further damage to the victim. If the test succeeds, the creature makes a bite Damage Test against the victim as he pulls free. Physical Armor protects against this damage.

Bite and Hold

Similar to the Bite and Shake attack, a creature using a **Bite and Hold** attack bites the victim, usually latching on to a limb, and keeps its iron grip steady, causing additional damage to its prey in subsequent rounds. As with the Bite and Shake attack, a Bite and Hold attack requires the creature to make an Attack Test using the Called Shot combat option. If the test succeeds, the target is considered Grappled, and the creature makes an automatic bite Damage Test each round thereafter until the victim is released or breaks free. The creature uses its Strength step, rather than its Damage step, for the Damage Test. A victim attempting to break free does so at the normal Difficulty Number for the Strength or Unarmed Combat Test. As with the Bite and Shake attack, the prey takes damage if it manages to pull free from the creature's jaws.

At the gamemaster's discretion, a creature that achieves an Armor-Defeating Hit with its Bite and Hold Attack Test also causes its victim to incur a Harried penalty until freed (see **Situation Modifiers**, p. 407).

Grab and Bite

Larger non-humanoid creatures can make a **Grab and Bite** attack, using their body size and mass to restrict their victim. A Grab and Bite attack is resolved as described for **Grappling**, p. 411, except the creature makes a Strength Test to determine the Difficulty Number for breaking free.

Once a creature has successfully grappled its victim, it makes a Bite or one or more Claw attacks against its struggling prey. The

Severing Limbs

Optional Rule: Because of their immense size and strength, some creatures can actually tear or bite off an opponent's limb. Though a rare occurrence, **Severing Limbs** attacks do happen. Severing Limbs attacks can generally only be made by very large creatures, including dragons and some Horrors. Some gamemasters may allow this rule to be used by Name-giver characters, but should do so only if there is a considerable size difference (such as between a troll and a windling, for example). If the gamemaster chooses to allow this devastating type of attack, he should use the following guidelines.

Regardless of the number of attacks a creature may have, it may only make one attempt at a Severing Limbs attack per round. For the creature to be able to tear off an opponent's limb, the creature's Strength step must be greater than twice that of the victim. The creature makes a Bite or Claw attack using the Called Shot combat option against one of its victim's limbs (see **Situation Modifiers**, above). If the test succeeds, the creature makes a Damage Test as normal. In addition to the Damage Points inflicted, the creature compares the Damage Test result against the victim's Wound Threshold. On an Excellent result the target's limb is torn or bitten off.

In addition to the immense amount of normal damage done by the attack, the victim will also bleed severely. At the end of each round after the limb is torn off, the victim suffers Step 4 damage from blood loss. No armor protects against this damage. The bleeding continues until the victim dies or somehow staunches the bleeding, by taking a healing potion, or through use of the questor Heal power. Severed limbs can be replaced, but only through use of a spell like Reattach Limb (see the **Wizardry Spells** chapter, p. 391), or by attaching a prosthetic limb, or an implant, like a blood weapon charm (see the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 443).

victim takes damage only from the Bite or Claw attacks, not from the initial grab attack. The creature cannot make a Bite attack in the round that it makes a successful Grab and Bite attack, but once it has grappled its opponent, it is free to do so each round thereafter.

At the gamemaster's discretion, a creature that achieves an Armor-Defeating Hit with its Grab and Bite Attack Test also causes its victim to incur a Harried penalty until freed (see **Situation Modifiers**, p. 408). Large humanoid creatures, such as gorillas, use the standard rules for Grappling (see **Unarmed Attacks**, p. 411).

Charging Attacks

Some creatures, especially those with horns or antlers, attack by charging into and trampling or goring their victim. These **Charging attacks** are resolved according to the normal rules for making Charging attacks while mounted (see **Mounted Combat**, p. 413). If a horned or antlered creature makes a Charging attack, it runs at its target and makes an Attack Test, digging its horns deep into the target's flesh. If the test succeeds, the creature makes a Damage Test, which is resolved as normal, and a Strength Test, the result of which is the Knockdown Difficulty of the attack. Regardless of the Damage Test result, the creature's victim makes a Knockdown Test against the Charging attack's Knockdown Difficulty. If the test succeeds, the victim remains standing. If the test fails, the victim is immediately Knocked Down (see **Situation Modifiers**, p. 409). The creature has additional attacks available to it after the Charging attack, it makes these as normal.

Larger creatures, such as thundra beasts or dyres, can trample a target who has been Knocked Down. Unless noted in the creature's description, trampling attacks are resolved in the same manner as the creature's normal attacks.

Claw Attacks

As most creatures possess claws, the **Claw attack** is the form most commonly used. When making a Claw attack, most creatures use one or both of their fore limbs, slashing and raking their prey with their sharp talons or nails.

The number of Claw attacks the creature can make prefixes the Damage notation for the attack. For example, a notation showing "2 × Claws" indicates the creature may make up to 2 separate Claw attacks. A notation showing just "Claws" means the creature may use both or all of its claws to fight, but they count as a single Claw attack.

Diseases

Creatures sometimes carry diseases that can affect their victims. For example, a character attacked by a rabid dog has a good chance of contracting rabies. Animals such as rats and mice often carry different diseases. Other creatures may be exposed to disease through the twisted machinations of an evil magician. Certain creatures, such as the plague lizard and the harpy, are living disease carriers.

Whether or not a creature is carrying a disease, and the nature of the disease in question, is entirely at the whim of the gamemaster. Any disease that he can think up can exist in the world of **Earthdawn**, and therefore poses a potential threat to characters. In game terms, the effects of diseases are resolved using similar game mechanics as for poison (see the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 121 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information).

Magical Attacks

Many creatures possess some kind of magical ability, the effect of which is described in the creature entry. These **Magical attacks** vary from creature to creature, being diverse in nature and effect. Some creatures possess one or more powers, with an associated step number used to determine how effective they are. See the descriptions for **Dragon Powers** and **Horror Powers** in the **Dragons** and **Horrors** chapters of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information.

Pack or Swarm Attacks

Though most creatures attack in relatively small groups, some attack in packs of ten or more. A **Pack** or **Swarm attack** can easily overwhelm even the strongest opponent. Pack and Swarm attacks are made as normal, except that, depending on the creature's size, more than six of them may attack a single character at the same time (see **Close Combat**, p. 410). The standard rules for close combat assume that all attackers are approximately human-sized; because many creatures are much smaller than a human, more than six of them may attack a human-sized opponent at once.

Creatures the size of an average dog (1 to 2 feet high at the shoulder, and 3 to 4 feet in length), can attack two at a time from the same position (see the Melee Combat Positions Diagram, p. 410). This means that up to twelve dog-sized creatures can attack a single human-sized target. Creatures up to 1 foot long, such as rats, small snakes, and bats, can attack three at a time from the same position, allowing up to eighteen rat-sized creatures to attack a single human-sized target. Creatures more than 4 feet long are considered human-sized for purposes of combat, as are windlings (their wings require a reasonable amount of space above their body size).

In addition to receiving multiple attacks, a character surrounded by a pack or swarm of creatures is also Harried (see **Situation Modifiers**, p. 408) if a sufficient equivalent number of human-sized creatures are involved. Eight dog-sized or twelve rat-sized creatures are equivalent to four human-sized characters, and therefore enough to cause their victim to become Harried.

A character attacked by the equivalent of more than four human-sized creatures at a time is not only Harried, he is Overwhelmed, as per the optional rule (see **Situation Modifiers**, p. 408), and incurs an increased penalty to his Defense Ratings and Action Tests. For each additional human-sized equivalent number of creatures in the pack or swarm attacking the victim, he incurs a Harried source.

A character is being attacked by a swarm of twelve rats. Because there are the equivalent of four human-sized opponents, he is Harried, incurring a –2 penalty to his Action Tests, and reducing his Physical and Spell Defense by –2. If the swarm increases in size to eighteen rats, the character incurs two additional Harried sources (eighteen rats are equivalent to six human-sized opponents), further penalizing his Defense Ratings and Action Tests by another –2 each (–1 for each additional Harried source). If the character can kill sufficient rats to drop the swarm size down below twelve vermin, he loses all of these penalties. However, the number of rats continuing to pour out of the nearby sewers looks to prevent that happening anytime soon.

Poisonous Attacks

Some creatures overcome their prey through their use of a poisonous bite or stinger. When a creature makes a **Poisonous attack**, it may or may not inject poison into the victim. Unless specified in its description, the creature does not need to inflict a Wound on the target for its poison to take effect; just a single Damage Point is sufficient to introduce the venom.

To resolve the effects of the creature's poison, use the rules for Poison in the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 121 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**.

Pouncing Attacks

Many creatures attack their prey by pouncing on it, hoping to daze it long enough for them to kill it. When making a **Pouncing attack**, the creature leaps toward, and then knocks down, its prey. Some creatures can make long jumps of specified distances; if the description for a creature does not specify how long a jump that creature can make, use the following procedure when the creature attempts a Pouncing attack:

The jumping creature makes a Strength Test, the result of which is the distance in feet the creature can leap (note that some creatures possess the Great Leap skill, which they can use to make Pouncing attacks). If a creature attempts to jump over an obstacle (such as a chasm or pit), the creature makes the test against a Difficulty Number equal to the distance it is attempting to jump, in feet. Jumping movement is considered to be Combat Movement, allowing the creature to attack after it has jumped toward or onto its target.

Once the distance that a creature can jump has been determined, the creature makes an Attack Test as normal for its Pouncing attack. If the test succeeds, the creature makes a Strength Test, the result of which becomes the Knockdown Difficulty of the Pouncing attack. The creature's prey makes a Knockdown Test against the attack's Knockdown Difficulty. If the test succeeds, the victim remains standing. If the test fails, the victim is Knocked Down (see **Situation Modifiers**, p. 409).

A Pouncing attack uses one of the creature's actions. Any creature capable of more than one action per round can continue to attack its victim after pouncing on it, regardless of the outcome of the Pouncing attack. At the gamemaster's discretion, a creature that achieves a Pathetic result on its Pouncing Attack Test cannot make any further attacks that round.

Swooping Attacks

A flying creature will often swoop down to attack its target and then fly up and out of harm's way. Swooping attacks are resolved according to the rules for **Aerial Combat**, p. 415.

Creatures and Combat Options

When attacking their prey, creatures will often use many of the standard combat options available to characters, as described in the **Combat Options** section, p. 403.

Several options and the creatures most likely to use them are described below. Keep in mind that use of any combat options is intended to simulate a creature's natural instincts rather than indicate conscious decision-making or intelligence on the part of the creature.

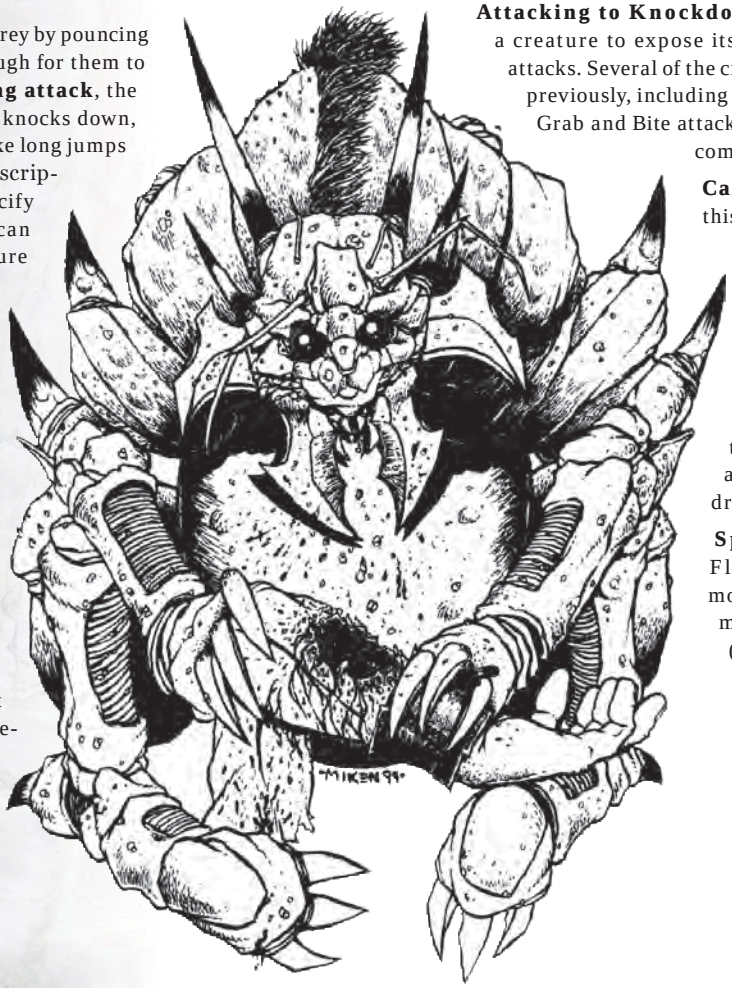
Aggressive Attack: Many creatures will use this combat option, especially those who are wounded, dying, or defending their young or territory.

Attacking to Knockdown: This option allows a creature to expose its prey to more effective attacks. Several of the creature attacks described previously, including Pouncing, Charging, and Grab and Bite attacks, include the use of this combat option.

Called Shot: Creatures use this combat option whenever they attempt to attack a specific place on a victim's body, such as limbs, head, or neck.

Defensive Stance: Most creatures use this combat option only if they are badly wounded and attempting to withdraw from battle.

Splitting Movement: Flying creatures commonly use this option when making Swooping attacks (see **Aerial Combat**, p. 415).



BUILDING YOUR LEGEND

How do you recognize a hero? Simple! When you've heard stories of his bravery, tales of his adventures, and songs of his courage, that's how you know someone is a hero.

• Geril, Troubadour •

Every adventure your character completes adds to his experience and abilities, allowing him to undertake ever more dangerous and potentially rewarding adventures. Throughout your character's life, his increasingly daring exploits build, and expand on, his reputation. Legends are born through such great deeds; increasing your character's Legendary Status gives your character an edge in each **Earthdawn** game you play.

This chapter describes how to build your character's legend in **Earthdawn**.

EARNING LEGEND POINTS

As a character survives encounters and accomplishes group or individual adventure goals, he gains in experience. As in real life, this experience generally makes him smarter and more capable, and eventually allows him to learn new abilities, all of which allow him to survive more dangerous encounters.

Character experience in **Earthdawn** is measured in Legend Points. The gamemaster awards Legend Points based on a character's accomplishments and other factors during an adventure (see the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 94 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). Accumulated Legend Points allow characters to improve their talents, skills, Attributes, and so on.

Characters earn Legend Points for performing the following specific types of actions.

Achieving Adventure Goals: For example, if the adventuring group's goal is to uncover treachery against the Throalic throne, characters in the group earn Legend Points as they expose the traitors to loyal authorities. A character also earns Legend Points for achieving goals set during a single game session, because most session goals are stepping stones toward achieving the adventure goal.

Defeating Opponents in Combat (or other conflict): In **Earthdawn**, defeating an opponent does not necessarily mean killing him. If an adventuring group removes an opponent as an obstacle to the adventure goal without resorting to violence, characters in the group should earn the same Legend Points as if they had defeated their opponent through combat.

Gathering Magical Treasure (or other legendary items appropriate for heroes): **Earthdawn** takes place during the Age of Legend, and the game system rewards those who act like heroes by giving them the means to become more heroic.

Individual Deeds: These can be clever ideas or deeds of valor. If a character takes or suggests an action on which the success of the adventure clearly turned, the character may receive Legend Points for that individual deed.

Roleplaying: Much as an actor takes on a role, a player may adopt the mannerisms, speaking habits, and attitudes of his character. Roleplaying a character well can earn your character Legend Points, but only if your roleplaying makes the game more enjoyable for others at the table, not just yourself. If a player's roleplaying makes it more difficult for the gamemaster to run the game, his character may not receive Legend Points for roleplaying.

PLAYER VS. CHARACTER EXPERIENCE

Players should not confuse "character experience" with "player experience." Player experience is not measured in game terms; it simply refers to what a player learns about the game by playing it.

For example, a player may learn how his character should behave in Throal to avoid getting into trouble, or may develop more effective combat tactics against specific monsters. However, his character may not be privy to this information, and during the game the player should avoid having his character take actions based on information the character would not actually know.

Lessons such as these may benefit a character by allowing him to survive longer or accomplish more, but this playing experience does not directly affect the Attributes, talents, skills, or characteristics the character uses in the **Earthdawn** game.

TALLYING LEGEND POINTS

Each time the gamemaster awards a character Legend Points (see **Earning Legend Points**) they are added to the character's Current and Total Legend Points tallies. Each time a character spends Legend Points, they are deducted from his Current Legend Points tally.

CURRENT LEGEND POINTS

As a character earns Legend Points, a running total is kept of how many points he has available to him to use for improvements. This total is the character's **Current Legend Points**. Conversely, each time a character spends Legend Points, his Current Legend Points are updated by subtracting the points spent from the total.

The updated total after each change in the character's Legend Point tally is recorded on his Character Record Sheet.

TOTAL LEGEND POINTS

In addition to keeping a running Current Legend Points total, which rises and falls as the character earns and spends Legend Points, a player should also keep a grand total of all the Legend Points his character has ever earned.

Each time a character earns (but not spends) Legend Points he adds to this cumulative total. This is the character's **Total Legend Points**, and is recorded separately on his Character Record Sheet. The character never reduces his Total Legend Points; they are mainly used to determine his Legendary Status—how notable his legend is as it develops, and how it affects others as a result (see **Legendary Status**, p. 430, for more information).

Thom Hammerblade, the dwarf Weaponsmith, has just returned home from his most recent successful adventure. He earned 1,200 Legend Points for this venture into the unknown. Before he embarked on his journey, Thom had a running total of 300 Current Legend Points and 2,000 Total Legend Points. By adding the 1,200 points he just earned to both totals, Thom now has 1,500 Current Legend Points and 3,200 Total Legend Points. If Thom spends 500 Legend Points to increase one of his talent ranks, his Current Legend Points would be reduced to 1,000, but his Total Legend Points would remain unaltered at 3,200.

Spending Legend Points

Characters may spend Legend Points to improve their Attribute values, talent and skill ranks, to refresh their Karma Points, to weave threads to magical items, and to improve other abilities, as explained below.

Improving Attribute Values

Characters may spend Legend Points to improve their Attribute values. The Legend Point cost for improving an Attribute value increases for each additional point that the Attribute is increased. For example, improving a character's Strength value by +1 costs 800 Legend Points. To improve the character's Strength value by another point (+2 in total) costs 1,300 Legend Points, and so on. Consult the Attribute Increase Table to determine the Legend Point cost of improving an Attribute value.

ATTRIBUTE INCREASE TABLE

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

While improving Attribute values may seem an expensive proposition, they are definitely worth considering. Improving an Attribute value potentially increases the Attribute step and also improves those characteristics, including talents and skills, associated with that Attribute. For example, increasing a character's Strength value by +1 increases the character's Carrying Capacity and may increase the character's Strength step, increasing the effectiveness of the character's Strength-based talents and skills.

While similar to improving talent or skill ranks, the following considerations and conditions must be taken into account:

- No Attribute value may be increased by more than +5.
- Only one Attribute may be improved at a time.
- The character must complete a number of days training equal to his current Attribute step, during which time he must be rested and in good health. A character currently suffering from any damage or Wounds will not benefit from training.

  Kricklen wants to increase his Dexterity value. His current Dexterity step is 7, so he embarks on 7 days of intensive training.

- Attribute training costs money. Each day of training costs a character an average fee equal to his current Attribute step × 10 silver pieces. At the gamemaster's discretion, this fee may double, or even triple, if the character wants private tuition.

  Kricklen's training will cost him 70 silver pieces per day, based on his current Dexterity step of 7. For 7 days of training, this comes to a total of 490 silver pieces. Kricklen knows it is worth the money, so pays out willingly.

- The character must have sufficient Current Legend Points to pay the cost of the Attribute value increase (see the Attribute Increase Table).

  Kricklen has completed his training. This is the second time he has improved his Dexterity value (a total of +2), so it will cost him 1,300 Legend Points. He alters his Current Legend Points tally and adds +1 to his Dexterity value. This also increases his Dexterity step to 8, so he modifies his ability steps as well.

- The character must exercise the Attribute for a number of weeks equal to his new Attribute step before he can improve another Attribute. This exercise time is otherwise not exclusive—the character may adventure, raise talent ranks, train for a new Circle, or perform other tasks.

  Having improved his Dexterity, Kricklen now wants to improve his Strength. Before he can do this, however, he must first exercise his Dexterity for 8 weeks (his new Dexterity step).

To avoid any confusion that might arise from changing an Attribute value, the character's original Attribute value should be noted on his Character Record Sheet, with the improved Attribute value recorded nearby, for example, in brackets beside the original value.

Circle-based Attribute Improvement

Optional Rule: Previous editions of the **Earthdawn** game based eligibility for Attribute increases around the character's Discipline Circle advances. We have retained this as an optional rule to provide compatibility with older published **Earthdawn** supplements, and also because this system requires less bookkeeping than training-based improvement—something that may appeal to some gamemasters and players.

The gamemaster should select only *one* of the following choices when using this optional rule:

- For each Circle that a character advances in his first Discipline, he may spend Legend Points to improve a single Attribute value by +1.
- For each Circle that a character advances in any of his Disciplines, he may spend Legend Points to improve a single Attribute value by +1.

A character may not improve any Attribute value by more than +5, regardless of how many Circles he advances. The character must improve one of his Attribute values before he attains a new Discipline Circle. Opportunities to increase Attribute values cannot be "saved up" from one Circle to the next.

Black Dog, an obsidiman Warrior, is currently Second Circle and his player chooses not to use the Legend Points Black Dog has earned so far to improve an Attribute. When Black Dog reaches Third Circle, the obsidiman may still only increase a single Attribute value by +1; he effectively loses the opportunity he had to improve an Attribute value while he was at Second Circle. He may not choose to increase an Attribute value by +2, nor may he increase two Attribute values by +1 each at Third Circle.

Improving Talent Ranks

Characters spend Legend Points to add ranks to existing talents, or to learn new talents (by purchasing at least Rank 1 in the new talent). Because talent ranks commonly add to an Attribute step to determine the step number used for making a Talent Test, a higher rank translates into a higher level of ability with that talent. See **Using Talents** in the **Talents** chapter, p. 166, for more information on talents and how they work.

To be eligible to improve a talent beyond Rank 1, a character must have successfully used that talent at least once at its current rank. This applies only to those talents that require the character to make a Talent Test in order to determine success. The gamemaster should apply his discretion as to when a character's use of a talent meets this criteria.

Other than this requirement, a character's talent rank can be increased by meeting all of the following conditions:

- The character has sufficient Current Legend Points to pay the full cost of the new talent rank.
- The character is rested and in good health. A character currently suffering from any damage or Wounds may not increase the rank of his existing talents, nor learn new ones.
- The character can meditate uninterrupted for 8 hours. This time is needed for the character to remember his earlier Discipline training, imagining how improving his talent rank would alter those lessons and exercises. Through meditation, he magically extends his initial training to incorporate his new experiences and consolidate and grow that knowledge and ability within himself.

The Talent Rank Cost Table shows the Legend Point cost to increase a character's talent ranks in his first Discipline (see **Learning New Disciplines**, p. 425, for information on Legend Point costs for characters with more than one Discipline).

The character pays the Legend Point cost for each rank increase, in consecutive order. For example, a character who intends to increase a talent from Rank 2 to Rank 4 must also pay the Legend Point cost for Rank 3.

To find the Legend Point cost of increasing a talent to the next rank, first consult the description of your character's Discipline to determine the Circle at which your character is first eligible to gain the talent. Then find the column on the Talent Rank Cost Table that includes the Circle of the talent for your Discipline. In the Talent Rank column, find the new rank you wish to purchase, then read across that Rank row until you reach the appropriate Circle column. The number where the Circle column and the Rank row intersect is the Legend Point cost for that talent rank.

Delthrien, an elven Archer, wants to improve her Mystic Aim talent from Rank 3 to Rank 4. She is eligible to do so, having successfully used the talent in a previous adventure. Because Mystic Aim is a First Circle talent for Archers, Delthrien's player reads down the Circle 1-4 column until she gets to the Rank 4 row. The Legend Point cost listed for a Circle 1–4 talent at Rank 4 is 500. Delthrien meditates for 8 hours and spends 500 Legend Points to gain the new talent rank. She subtracts the Legend Points from her Current Legend Point total, and changes the rank of her Mystic Aim talent from 3 to 4.

Caelarion, an elven Nethermancer, decides to improve his Spirit Hold talent from Rank 5 to Rank 6. Spirit Hold is a Fifth Circle talent for Nethermancers, and cross-referencing the new rank of 6 with the Circle 5–8 column shows that it costs 2,100 Legend Points to improve the talent to Rank 6. Caelarion's player notices that the Nethermancer has only 2,060 Current Legend Points, not quite enough to improve his talent rank from 5 to 6. Caelarion must earn a few more Legend Points before he can afford to improve his Spirit Hold talent.

TALENT RANK COST TABLE

Talent Rank	Circle 1–4	Circle 5–8	Circle 9–12	Circle 13–15
1	100	200	300	500
2	200	300	500	800
3	300	500	800	1,300
4	500	800	1,300	2,100
5	800	1,300	2,100	3,400
6	1,300	2,100	3,400	5,500
7	2,100	3,400	5,500	8,900
8	3,400	5,500	8,900	14,400
9	5,500	8,900	14,400	23,300
10	8,900	14,400	23,300	37,700
11	14,400	23,300	37,700	61,000
12	23,300	37,700	61,000	98,700
13	37,700	61,000	98,700	159,700
14	61,000	98,700	159,700	258,400
15	98,700	159,700	258,400	418,100

Kricklen, a t'skrang Swordmaster, wants to improve his Melee Weapons talent from Rank 7 to Rank 8. His player checks the Talent Rank Cost Table and calculates this will cost Kricklen 3,400 Legend Points. However, after his last fight, Kricklen took more than a little damage, including several Wounds. While he has sufficient Current Legend Points to cover the cost of improving the talent, he will not be able to meditate effectively until all of the Damage Points—and the Wounds—have been healed.

Maximum Talent Rank

Rank 15 is the highest rank that adepts can learn talents to. Some magical items, spells or rituals can temporarily or permanently increase this rank above Rank 15. Regardless of whether the increase is temporary or permanent, the character still improves his talent rank as if this rank bonus was not in effect.

Improving Skill Ranks

Characters can spend Legend Points to add ranks to existing skills, or to learn new skills (by purchasing at least Rank 1 in the new skill). Though similar to gaining talent ranks, improving skill ranks differs in the following ways:

- No character can improve a skill rank beyond Rank 10.
- Improving a skill rank requires the character to complete a number of weeks of training equal to the new rank. The character must be rested and in good health during this period. A

SKILL TRAINING TABLE

Skill Rank	Weeks of Training	Weeks of Practice	Legend Point Cost
1	1	2	200
2	2	3	300
3	3	5	500
4	4	8	800
5	5	13	1,300
6	6	21	2,100
7	7	34	3,400
8	8	55	5,500
9	9	89	8,900
10	10	—	14,400

Learning Talents from Higher Circles

Optional Rule: Characters can learn talents from Circles that are no more than one to five Circles higher than their current Discipline Circle. It is a difficult and costly process, however. For example, a Second Circle Swordmaster could purchase talents from the Third to Seventh Circles of the Swordmaster Discipline. Talents from the Eighth or higher Circles remain outside his ability to learn.

In order to learn a talent from a Circle higher than his current Circle, a character must first find a willing instructor who follows his Discipline of a Circle at least equal to the Circle of the talent being sought. For each talent being purchased, the character must train with the instructor for at least 80 hours within a four-week period. If the training is not complete within four weeks, the benefits of any training completed to that point are lost, and the character must begin his training for the higher-Circle talent all over again.

After completing his training, the character spends Legend Points to learn the talent at Rank 1. The cost for this talent rank equals the base cost of the talent multiplied by a number based on the relationship between the character's current Circle and the Circle of the talent being purchased, as given in the Talent Cost Multiplier Table. The base cost of the talent rank is the same as any talent from that Circle (see the Talent Rank Cost Table, above).

Using the Talent Cost Multiplier Table, find the character's current Discipline Circle in the left-hand column, and the Circle of the new talent along the top row. Cross-referencing these two numbers provides the multiplier for the base cost to determine the cost of purchasing the higher-Circle talent. Use the same multiplier when purchasing additional ranks for the higher-Circle talent. As a character advances to higher Discipline Circles, the multiplier for learning and improving the higher-Circle talent decreases.

Note that the normal conditions for being eligible to learn or improve talents still apply when dealing with higher-Circle talents (see **Improving Talent Ranks**, p. 421).

Onnaro, a Second Circle obsidiman Wizard, wants to learn the Hold Thread talent, normally a Seventh Circle talent for Wizards. The obsidiman researches the possibilities, then tracks down and convinces a higher-Circle Wizard to teach him, training intensively for 80 hours over a two week period. Now he must spend Legend Points to purchase Rank 1 for the Hold Thread talent. The base cost of Rank 1 in a Seventh Circle talent is 200 Legend Points. The Talent Cost Multiplier Table shows that a Second Circle character purchasing a Seventh Circle talent multiplies the Legend Point cost by 11. This means that Onnaro must spend 2,200 Legend Points to learn Hold Thread at Rank 1. If the Wizard later decided to improve his Hold Thread talent from Rank 1 to Rank 2, the cost would be an additional 4,200 Legend Points—the multiplier remains at 11 for Seventh Circle talents, until Onnaro improves his Discipline Circle.

Discipline Talents

Higher Circle Discipline talents learned by the character are not usable as such until the character advances to the Circle at which the talent would normally be available as a Discipline talent. The tuition and meditation required when advancing to the appropriate Circle is sufficient to "align" the talent as a Discipline talent. There is no additional Legend Point cost for this.

Versatility

Human adepts with the Versatility talent can also take advantage of this optional rule to learn higher Circle talents from Disciplines other than their own.

Taske, the Fifth Circle human Archer, wants to learn the Missile Twister talent, a Ninth Circle Warrior talent. To learn a talent from a Discipline other than his own, the character must first assign one of his Versatility ranks to this new talent. The Archer walks across town to a tavern known for its Warrior clientele and asks around until he meets a Ninth Circle Warrior willing to train him. After two weeks of exhaustive training and daily homilies on the basic superiority of those who follow the Warrior Discipline, the Archer may spend Legend Points to buy Rank 1 in the Missile Twister talent. The base cost of Rank 1 for a Ninth Circle talent is 300 Legend Points. The table above shows that a Fifth Circle character purchasing a Ninth Circle talent multiplies the base cost by 10. This means that the Archer must pay a whopping 3,000 Legend Points for Rank 1 in Missile Twister.

TALENT COST MULTIPLIER TABLE

Current Circle	— Talent Circle —													
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1	×7	×8	×9	×10	×11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2	—	×7	×8	×9	×10	×11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
3	—	—	×7	×8	×9	×10	×11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
4	—	—	—	×7	×8	×9	×10	×11	—	—	—	—	—	—
5	—	—	—	—	×7	×8	×9	×10	×11	—	—	—	—	—
6	—	—	—	—	—	×7	×8	×9	×10	×11	—	—	—	—
7	—	—	—	—	—	—	×7	×8	×9	×10	×11	—	—	—
8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	×7	×8	×9	×10	×11	—	—
9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	×7	×8	×9	×10	×11	—
10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	×7	×8	×9	×10	×11
11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	×7	×8	×9	×10
12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	×7	×8	×9
13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	×7	×8
14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	×7

Aligning Talents and Skills

Optional Rule: It is possible that some characters will learn the same ability as a skill and as a talent, as such knowing the same ability twice. Talents are powered by magic, but skills are not—seen from a game mechanics perspective, there is sometimes little to differentiate the two. For example, all Name-givers learn the Read and Write Language skill. Since all magicians learn the Read and Write Language talent, magician characters will have the same ability as both a skill *and* a talent.

Gamemasters and players who think this is a waste of Legend Points can use this optional rule. Whenever a character first gains a rank in a talent which is already listed as a skill on his Character Record Sheet, he can choose to "align" the new talent and incorporate the learned skill knowledge by paying the normal Legend Point cost for learning the talent at Rank 1. In return, he gains a talent rank which reflects the knowledge of the skill based on the Equivalent Skill Rank Table. The skill is then erased from the Character Record Sheet.

Serafino, a human Swordmaster, knows the Missile Weapons skill at Rank 4. Upon advancing into the Third Circle of his Discipline, he learns the Missile Weapons talent. He pays 100 Legend Points to gain the Missile Weapons talent, and chooses to align the talent with his existing skill knowledge. Referencing the Equivalent Skill Rank Table, he gains the Missile Weapons talent at Rank 5 in return for giving up the equivalent skill.

Caedrus, an obsidiman Warrior, is experienced in the Second Weapon skill, which he has increased to Rank 5. Upon reaching Ninth Circle, he learns the Second Weapon talent. Paying 300 Legend Points to learn the Second Weapon talent at Rank 1, he chooses to align the new talent with his current experience. The obsidiman gains the Second Weapon talent at Rank 3. Caedrus' player erases the skill from his Character Record Sheet.

EQUIVALENT SKILL RANK TABLE

	—New Talent Rank—			
Skill Rank	**Circle 1–4**	**Circle 5–8**	**Circle 9–12**	**Circle 13–15**
1	2	1	1	1
2	3	2	1	1
3	4	3	1	1
4	5	4	2	1
5	6	5	3	2
6	7	6	4	3
7	8	7	5	4
8	9	8	6	5
9	10	9	7	6
10	11	10	8	7

character suffering from any damage or Wounds will not benefit from this training. For example, improving a skill from Rank 3 to Rank 4 requires 4 weeks of training.

- The character has sufficient Current Legend Points to pay the full cost of the new skill rank (see the Skill Training Table).
- Training also costs money. An average week of training costs a character a fee equal to the new rank × 25 silver pieces. At the gamemaster's discretion, this fee may double, or even triple, if a character wants private instruction.
- Skills require the character to practice that skill at the current rank for a period of time before the character is eligible to train for a new rank in that skill. A character must practice the skill for a varying number of weeks, determined by the current skill rank. This practice time is not exclusive—the character may adventure, raise talent ranks, train for a new circle, or perform other tasks during this time. For example, before improving a skill from Rank 3 to Rank 4, the character must first have practised that skill for at least 5 weeks.

Learning Talent Knacks

Characters may spend Legend Points to learn new talent knacks. Unlike talents, talent knacks are not otherwise improved once learned. A talent knack is learned once, and can be used at any point thereafter.

See **Learning Talent Knacks** and **Using Talent Knacks** in the **Talent Knacks** chapter, p. 213, for more information about how a character gains talent knacks and how they work.

Learning New Spells

If the gamemaster is using the optional **Legend Point Cost for Spells** rule (see the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 284), magicians may spend Legend Points to learn spells from other magicians. The Legend Points are spent by the character after making a successful Spell Learning Test.

See **Learning Spells** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 283, for more information about how a magician learns new spells.

Purchasing Karma Points

All adept characters can use Karma, the raw magical energy that runs through the world of **Earthdawn** (see **Karma** in the **Game Concepts** chapter, p. 18). Characters use Karma Points to improve the probability of success for their actions. Once used, a character must replenish these lost points. This is done through use of the Karma Ritual talent (see the **Talents** chapter, p. 190), which allows the character to purchase Karma Points by spending Legend Points.

Once per day, a character can purchase additional Karma Points, up to a maximum equal to his Karma Ritual rank, by performing a Karma ritual appropriate to his Discipline. As the character performs the half-hour long ritual, he pays 10 Legend Points for each Karma Point he wants to purchase. Once he has completed the ritual, the character adds the new Karma Points to his Current Karma tally on his Character Record Sheet.

Poorht, a windling Thief, knows the Karma Ritual talent at Rank 3. When he begins his daily Karma ritual, he can choose to spend some of his Current Legend Points to gain up to 3 additional Karma Points. Each Karma Point costs the windling 10 Legend Points—a total of 30 Legend Points for 3 Karma Points. After Poorht completes his half-hour Karma ritual, he spends the required Legend Points, then adds +3 Karma Points to his Current Karma Points total.

Weaving Threads

Characters can also use Legend Points to weave magical threads. Characters who have put the necessary experience and effort, represented by the Legend Point cost, into weaving these threads can then attach them to the True patterns of people, places, or items.

For an in-depth explanation of how to use Legend Points to weave magical threads, see the **Thread Magic** chapter, p. 264.

Advancing Discipline Circles

There is only one way for a character to advance to the next higher Circle in a Discipline: he must reach a minimum level of achievement in his current ability with that Discipline, then seek out a tutor to teach him the next Circle's abilities.

Characters who improve a number of talents to a sufficiently high rank are eligible to advance to the next Circle of their Discipline. Such advancement allows characters to learn and improve new talents.

Onnaro, an obsidiman Wizard, reaches Second Circle. He can still spend Legend Points to increase his existing First Circle talents, but now can also spend Legend Points to learn and improve his new Second Circle talents: Durability (Wizard), Evidence Analysis, and another Spell Matrix.

Beginning at Fourth Circle, many Disciplines also improve one or more of the character's characteristics.

Kricklen, a t'skrang Swordmaster, advances to the Sixth Circle of his Discipline. As soon as he completes his training, the Swordmaster adds +1 to his Social Defense.

Conditions for Circle Advancement

In order to be eligible to advance to the next Circle of a Discipline, the character must first fulfill two conditions:

- The character must have learned a minimum number of talents at a minimum rank, one of which must be from the current Circle of the Discipline being advanced.
- The character must train with a higher-Circle member of his Discipline.

Minimum Talent Requirements

The character must have knowledge of a minimum number of talents, each of which must be at a certain rank, or higher. Additionally, at least one of these talents must come from the current Circle of the Discipline being advanced.

The Circle Advancement Table shows the specific number of talents and the talent rank requirements for advancing Circles.

CIRCLE ADVANCEMENT TABLE

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

Minimum Number of Talents: The character must know a certain number of talents of the Discipline being advanced. For example, a Third Circle Swordmaster must know at least 7 talents from the Swordmaster Discipline before becoming eligible to advance to Fourth Circle.

Minimum Talent Rank: The character must hold a certain rank in each of his minimum number of talents. For example, each of a Third Circle Swordmaster's 7 minimum talents must be at least Rank 4 for the character to be eligible to advance to Fourth Circle.

Single Talent from Circle Number: The character must have at least one talent from the current Circle of the Discipline being advanced at the minimum rank listed. For example, to be eligible to advance from Third to Fourth Circle, at least one of the character's minimum Rank 4 talents must be a Third Circle talent.

Training Requirements

In addition to meeting the minimum number and talent rank requirements for eligibility to advance to a new Circle, a character must also seek and complete training.

Characters can train for a higher Circle in two ways: paying for Standard Training from another member of the Discipline or taking the Training Pledge.

Standard Training

Once the character meets the minimum number and talent rank requirements, he may choose to pay a tutor to teach him the abilities of the next Circle in his chosen Discipline.

To advance to the next Circle, a character must train under the guidance of a higher-Circle member of the same Discipline.

Kricklen, a t'skrang Swordmaster trying to become Fourth Circle, must train with a Fourth or higher Circle Swordmaster.

The character must train for 40 hours within a three-week period. If the character does not complete 40 hours of training within that time, he loses the benefits of the training and must start all over again, incurring additional time and costs as a consequence. The average cost shown in the Circle Training Cost Table offers players a guideline for determining likely Circle advancement training costs. While many instructors are willing to negotiate their fees, others may charge double or even triple this fee for private tuition.

CIRCLE TRAINING COST TABLE

Instructor Circle	Average Cost (silver pieces)
2	200
3	300
4	500
5	800
6	1,000
7	1,500
8	2,000
9	2,500
10	3,500
11	5,000
12	7,500
13	10,000
14	15,000
15	20,000

For example, a character who performed a substantial favor for an instructor might have his fee reduced by 25 percent. On the other hand, an instructor who dislikes the trainee might raise his fee by 25 percent, or simply refuse to train the character.

The Training Pledge

A character may meet the qualifications to advance to the next Circle but lack the silver pieces needed to purchase training. For example, a character who finds himself ready to advance Circles while in the company of a qualified instructor may realize that he just cashed in his latest loot and sent the proceeds off to his mother. Unable to pay for training, such a character may decide to take the Training Pledge.

The Training Pledge is a blood magic oath (see **Blood Magic** in the **Workings of Magic** chapter, p. 260), that allows a character to request training from an instructor, paying him not with money, but with commitment.

The prospective trainee must ask to take the Training Pledge; the instructor may not encourage a character to take the oath. A character cannot ask to take the Training Pledge with an instructor who has shown him hostility, or toward whom he has been hostile. Because the Training Pledge also requires a commitment from the instructor, and because he receives no financial recompense for his time, an instructor can ask a trainee to revoke his request, but must honor the request for the Training Pledge if the trainee persists. The instructor can deny the request only if he has no access to an orichalcum coin; he cannot lie about whether he has a coin or not. If the master does not have an orichalcum coin, he may require the character to obtain one as part of the advancement process.

The character taking the Training Pledge may train with that instructor without renewing his Training Pledge or paying in silver, provided the instructor is of a sufficiently high Circle and the character meets the normal requirements for eligibility to advance to a new Discipline Circle.

The Training Pledge is a blood magic ritual that requires an enchanted orichalcum piece called the Pledge Coin. The instructor and student each let 7 drops of their blood fall on the coin, causing each of them 3 permanent Damage Points from the blood magic. The two characters meditate together for an hour until the blood dries. The instructor then meditates alone for another hour, until the magic in the coin absorbs the blood. At the end of this time, the instructor gives the Pledge Coin to the trainee as the trainee repeats the following oath:

> *"I shall see the wisdom of my Discipline as my instructor sees it. I shall practice the wisdom of my Discipline as my instructor practices it. I shall teach the wisdom of my Discipline as my instructor taught me."*

Having taken the pledge, the instructor and trainee then begin the standard training process. The Circle at which the trainee takes the pledge becomes his Pledge Circle; it is recommended that the player keep track of this Circle and the Discipline by noting it on his character's Character Record Sheet.

A character who trains for and advances to the next Circle of his Discipline by taking the Training Pledge must abide by the following three conditions:

- The character must never ask a trainee to take the Training Pledge from him once he has reached his next Circle. Such a request must always come from the trainee.
- The character must honor the Training Pledge whenever another member of his Discipline requests it. However, a character need not accept a Training Pledge from characters not of his Discipline. For example, a Weaponsmith need not accept a Training Pledge from an Archer who wishes to become a Weaponsmith.
- The character may only give up his Pledge Coin by passing it on to another trainee making a Training Pledge. If the character spends or loses the Pledge Coin, or someone steals it from him, he has one week to retrieve the coin before the blood enchantment invokes the penalty described below for breaking the conditions of the Training Pledge. If the coin loses its enchantment while in his possession, the character immediately suffers the penalty for oath breaking.

A character who breaks any of these conditions immediately loses all talent ranks gained in that Discipline of a Circle higher than his Pledge Circle. Taking a Training Pledge does not prevent a character from using other training methods to advance, but he is still reduced back to his Pledge Circle if he ever violates the Pledge. For example, if a Sixth Circle Swordmaster who took the Training Pledge at Third Circle is stripped of all his possessions by a vindictive river pirate (and thus loses his Pledge Coin), he must retrieve the coin within one week or lose all ranks in his Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Circle talents. He keeps any talent ranks gained in First, Second, or Third Circle talents, effectively reverting to a Third Circle Swordmaster, possessing only the talents, characteristics, and so on available to that Discipline and Circle.

To again advance to a higher Circle, he must start over again from Third Circle by purchasing training or taking the Training Pledge.

Ghost Masters

Characters may also use the unusual method of training for a higher Discipline Circle through a Ghost Master. Ghost Masters are deceased adepts who achieved a certain mastery of a Discipline before dying. In centuries past, Nethermancers learned to contact the spirits of Discipline masters who had passed on, and to bargain with these dead masters for instruction in their Discipline. Over time, the Ritual of the Ghost Master spread to other Disciplines, and now all Disciplines have access to their own Ghost Masters.

In order to train with a Ghost Master, a character must first learn the True Name of a Ghost Master whose Circle is higher than the character's current Circle. Most of these True Names remain secret, kept so by high-ranking members of each Discipline. Other Names remain locked away in kaers and citadels, awaiting discovery by lucky adventurers. Learning a Ghost Master's True Name often proves the most difficult part of training with one. Finding the True Name, or a person who knows it, may be an adventure in itself. Characters who know a Ghost Master's True Name rarely reveal such valuable information for free—and the payment they ask may not be in silver.

To train with a Ghost Master, a character must have an orichalcum coin free of any enchantments, and must learn the proper summoning ritual. The Ritual of the Ghost Master described in the **Talents** chapter, p. 198, is a modified nethermantic ritual. Each Discipline has its own variant of this ritual, taught to its members at the Fifth Circle.

Reaching the Next Circle

Once a character meets the talent and rank requirements and completes the necessary training, he advances to the next Circle of his Discipline. This move entitles him to use Legend Points to purchase any talents available at the new Circle.

On the Character Record Sheet, the player notes any improvements to his character's characteristics granted at the new Circle.

Learning New Disciplines

Characters can learn additional Disciplines above their first. This is referred to in the **Earthdawn** game as "multi-Disciplining."

Keep in mind, however, that becoming an adept in the world of **Earthdawn** is not easy or automatic. A character who decides to learn an additional Discipline must attempt to master the new training methods, which are often based on distinctly different philosophies, in addition to retaining those of his other Disciplines. As a character advances through the Circles of each of his Disciplines, however, his confidence grows and he gains insight as a result. The stronger a character's grasp of all of the Disciplines he knows, the easier it becomes to learn a new one. At the same time, advancing in a Discipline requires a character to more closely adhere to its philosophies and traditions, which makes it harder to adopt the new style of thinking a new Discipline requires. This creates an interesting paradox—as a character

advances, it becomes easier and more difficult to learn an additional Discipline.

To learn a new Discipline, a character must study that Discipline's First Circle talents with the assistance of another character of that same Discipline. The character's tutelage in the new Discipline can only be imparted to him from a Fifth or higher Circle adept of his desired Discipline. Regardless of his prowess in any other Disciplines he may know, the character is being "inducted" as a Novice into the new Discipline.

Finding a master willing to perform an initiation into the new Discipline is the first step, and can present some difficulties. Many masters are reluctant to initiate characters who are already adepts of another Discipline because such students tend to be more independent, self-assured, and harder to teach than green recruits. Also, masters are particularly reluctant to initiate characters who practice Disciplines they consider unsympathetic or opposed to their own. They may refuse to teach applicants they do not like, or may require them to embark on a risky venture to prove their worthiness. Individual masters will also have their own preferences and prejudices when it comes to other Disciplines.

The entire process of learning a new Discipline is at the discretion of the gamemaster. If the gamemaster does not want to allow a character to learn a particular combination of different Disciplines, he can make it very tough for a character to find a teacher.

If player characters want to initiate one another into their various Disciplines, the gamemaster can impose other kinds of limits. A character who embarks on training in a new Discipline must devote considerable time to the effort. Gamemasters can make it difficult for experienced characters, who have already accumulated obligations and enemies, to find the time to train. As a gamemaster character cannot initiate others until they themselves have reached Fifth Circle in a Discipline, all player characters capable of initiating others will most likely have burdens of this kind.

Another hurdle adepts may face when trying to learn a new Discipline is the fee charged by the master. The standard fee is 100 silver pieces for each Circle the student already knows (cumulative for those who already know more than one Discipline), charged for each talent the adept needs to learn. Some masters may charge more or less, based on their relationship with the student. Many masters will also ask for favors, deeds, or even blood oaths in addition to coin. Learning a second Discipline should not be a matter of simply coming up with the money; the gamemaster is encouraged to role-play the negotiation, and use favors and service to the master as adventure hooks.

NEW DISCIPLINE TALENT COST TABLE

Lowest Circle Attained	—Rank 1 Talent Legend Point Cost— Second Discipline	Third Discipline	Fourth+ Disciplines
1	1,300	2,100	3,400
2	800	1,300	2,100
3	500	800	1,300
4	300	500	800
5+	200	300	500

A character learning a new Discipline must learn all of the First Circle talents for that Discipline at Rank 1, but he need not relearn talents in the new Discipline that he already knows from his current Disciplines (see the optional rule for **Aligning Talents From New Disciplines**, p. 427). The character must have sufficient Current Legend Points available to him to learn all of these new talents simultaneously.

The Legend Point cost of purchasing a Rank 1 talent in a new Discipline is determined by the number of Disciplines that the character is already a member of. The character uses the lowest Circle among all of his Disciplines to find the Legend Point cost for a Rank 1 talent on the New Discipline Talent Cost Table.

For each new talent that he wishes to learn, the character must study with the tutor for 40 hours per week. A character learning two or more talents may spend considerable time training, but must study at least 80 hours per month to continue making progress. If a character fails to study his new Discipline for at least 80 hours a month, the training automatically fails and the character must start over.

Kricklen, a Second Circle t'skrang Swordmaster wants to learn to become an Archer. Kricklen already knows two of the Archer Discipline's First Circle talents: Avoid Blow and Karma Ritual. Kricklen needs to learn the four remaining First Circle Archer talents: Direction Arrow, Missile Weapons, Mystic Aim, and True Shot. First, he must find a Fifth or higher Circle Archer willing to train him, then he must spend 40 hours in training for each additional talent to be learned (a total of 160 hours of training). Because the Swordmaster must also study for a minimum of 80 hours per month, Kricklen will complete this training within a period of two months—a task that will likely take him away from his adventuring colleagues during this time. The New Discipline Talent Legend Point Table shows that Kricklen must spend 800 Legend Points per talent to learn this second Discipline—his lowest (actually, his only) Discipline Circle is 2, and he is now learning his second Discipline. After spending 3,200 Legend Points to learn the four new talents at Rank 1, and paying 800 silver pieces to his master (200 silver per talent he needs to learn), the t'skrang is now a First Circle Archer as well as a Second Circle Swordmaster!

Later in his adventuring career, Kricklen, now a Sixth Circle Swordmaster and Fourth Circle Archer, wants to expand his options by learning a third Discipline, and chooses to become an Illusionist. Again, after first finding a Fifth or higher Circle Illusionist willing to train him, Kricklen learns the six First Circle talents he does not already know: Illusionism (Thread Weaving), Read and Write Language, Read and Write Magic, Spellcasting, and two Spell Matrices. He already knows the Karma Ritual talent, so does not need to relearn it.

Initiation Tests

Optional Rule: To see if the character has successfully learned to think like a true practitioner of the new Discipline, the gamemaster may require a Perception-based Initiation Test at the end of the training period. The Difficulty Number for this test is equal to the highest Circle among the character's current Disciplines, multiplied by the number of Disciplines the character already knows. This level of difficulty reflects the fact that as a character becomes more settled into a particular way of thinking, he finds it that much harder to adopt a new one.

Kricklen, a Sixth Circle t'skrang Swordmaster and Fourth Circle Archer, is now learning to become an Illusionist. Because he already knows two Disciplines, the Difficulty Number for his Illusionist Initiation Test is 12 (6 × 2 = 12).

Some Disciplines, particularly the magician Disciplines, expect the character to possess high Perception values. The gamemaster may choose to have the character make the Initiation Test using any Attribute listed as important for the new Discipline (see the **Disciplines** chapter, p. 63).

The Initiation Test is made before the character spends any Legend Points. If the test is a failure, the training time and any fees paid are wasted, and the teacher may or may not be willing to give the character a second chance, at the gamemaster's discretion.

Six weeks and 6,000 silver pieces of training later (at 40 hours for each talent learned), Kricklen spends 3,000 Legend Points (500 Legend Points per talent, based on his lowest Discipline Circle and the fact that this is his third Discipline) to learn the six new talents at Rank 1. Kricklen joins the Illusionist Discipline as a First Circle magician.

Improving New Discipline Talents

The talents from the character's first Discipline are improved normally (see **Improving Talent Ranks**, p. 421).

The Legend Point cost for new talents from additional Disciplines is determined by the number of Disciplines that the character knows. The Equivalent Talent Circle Table shows the equivalent Circle range used to determine the Legend Point cost of talents from each of the character's additional Disciplines:

Kricklen, a Sixth Circle t'skrang Swordmaster, has also learned the Archer Discipline to the Fourth Circle, and most recently has taken on knowledge of the Illusionist Discipline at First Circle. When advancing talents from his first Swordmaster Discipline, Kricklen spends Legend Points as normal. Circle 1–4 talents from his second Archer Discipline are bought as if they were Circle 5–8 talents, with a corresponding shift for higher Circle talents again. When improving the new First Circle talents that he has gained from his third Illusionist Discipline, Kricklen pays Legend Points for those talents as if they were Circle 9–12 talents. Once he becomes a Fifth Circle Illusionist, all of the talents for that Discipline from that Circle onward are bought as if they were Circle 13–15 talents.

Talents the character can learn from multiple Disciplines are learned at the lowest Legend Point cost, provided the character qualifies to learn them under that Discipline.

Aligning Talents From New Disciplines

Optional Rule: This optional rule is used when the character is learning the First Circle talents of a new Discipline.

Even if a character already knows one or more talents from a previous Discipline, he must still take on board the nuances of the talents as taught by the new Discipline. This requires the character to merge knowledge of all forms a talent together to allow him to use it regardless of which Discipline taught it.

The character purchases Rank 1 in all of the First Circle talents in the new Disciplines, regardless of whether he knows them or not. For most Disciplines this means learning 6 or 7 First Circle talents simultaneously. The Legend Points spent on existing talents do not improve the talent rank; instead, they are used to "align" the character's use of that talent with all of his Disciplines. New talents are learned at Rank 1 and can be improved from that point on as normal.

In his unending quest for knowledge, Caelarion, a Fourth Circle elven Nethermancer, decides to learn the way of the Elementalist. These Disciplines match well; both have spell magic capabilities, and both have the same First Circle talents available to them. However, the gamemaster has decided that all characters learning a new Discipline are subject to the optional rules for Aligning Talents From New Disciplines. This means that Caelarion must learn all of the First Circle Elementalist talents, regardless of the fact that he already knows most of them from his first Discipline. While most of the talents are the same for both the Nethermancer and Elementalist Disciplines, the gamemaster explains that, while Caelarion is well-versed in the way of the Nethermancer, his Legend Point investment in the Elementalist's First Circle talents not only teaches him Elementalism, the Elementalist Thread Weaving talent required for learning Elementalism spells, but also realigns his existing talents (especially his Spellcasting and Spell Matrix talents) to fit with both Disciplines. The Nethermancer must find and actively train with a Fifth or higher Circle Elementalist for 280 hours, and pay training costs of 2,800 silver pieces. At the end of the training, he spends 2,100 Legend Points for all 7 talents. He records his new Elementalism talent at Rank 1, at which point he is now a First Circle Elementalist.

Aligning Discipline Talents From New Disciplines

Optional Rule: This optional rule is used when the character has an existing non-Discipline talent that is available as a Discipline talent at the current Circle in an new Discipline.

In order to "align" the talent with all of his Disciplines, and allow the character to spend Karma on this talent as a Discipline talent, the character must improve the talent by 1 rank at the Legend Point cost for the Discipline at which it becomes a Discipline talent (not the original Discipline).

Kricklen, a Second Circle t'skrang Swordmaster, has just learned the Archer Discipline at First Circle. This involves learning the Missile Weapons talent, which Kricklen gains as a Discipline talent in the process. As a Third Circle Swordmaster, Kricklen has no need to learn the Missile Weapons talent—his mastery of the Discipline talent supersedes this requirement. Later on, Kricklen picks up Illusionist as his third Discipline.

By this time, Kricklen has advanced considerably, and is now an Eighth Circle Swordmaster. He has learned the Anticipate Blow talent at Rank 4. This talent was first available to him as an Archer at Seventh Circle, where he learned a single rank, but at a higher Legend Point cost. On becoming an Eighth Circle Swordmaster, his Legend Point cost was based on that of his first Discipline—a cheaper proposition—and Kricklen added another 3 ranks to his ability.

Kricklen decides to add a fourth Discipline—Warrior—to his career. He quickly rises to the Second Circle in this new Discipline and notes that being a Second Circle Warrior allows him to gain Anticipate Blow as a Discipline talent. The t'skrang's player talks to the gamemaster, who confirms that he is using the optional rule for Aligning Discipline Talents From New Disciplines. In order for Kricklen to gain Anticipate Blow as a Discipline talent, he must improve the talent from Rank 4 to Rank 5 at the Legend Point cost for his Warrior Discipline. Checking the Equivalent Talent Circle Table, Kricklen sees that talents in his fourth Discipline are bought as if they were Circle 13–15 talents. A look at the Talent Rank Cost Table shows it will take 3,400 Legend Points to learn the Anticipate Blow talent as a Discipline talent at Rank 5. After that, however, the cost reverts back to that for Kricklen's first Discipline. A small price to pay for the benefit, Kricklen reduces his Current Legend Points by the required amount.

EQUIVALENT TALENT CIRCLE TABLE			
Equivalent Circle Range	—Discipline Circle Range— Second Discipline	Third Discipline	Fourth+ Disciplines
1–4	—	—	—
5–8	1–4	—	—
9–12	5–8	1–4	—
13–15	9–15	5–15	1–15

Kricklen can learn the Avoid Blow talent from his first Discipline—Swordmaster. Even though the Archer Discipline also teaches this talent at First Circle, the t'skrang uses the Legend Point cost for his Swordmaster Discipline—the Discipline with the lower talent cost—as the Legend Point cost for improving this talent. The Anticipate Blow talent is available to Archers at Seventh Circle, and Swordmasters at Eighth Circle. If Kricklen advances to Seventh Circle as an Archer before he advances to Eighth Circle as a Swordmaster, his cost to learn the Anticipate Blow talent will be based on his Archer Discipline, as he is not yet eligible to learn it as a Swordmaster. While Kricklen knows Thread Weaving from his Swordmaster Discipline, as well as from his Archer and Illusionist Disciplines, these are three different talents, and the Legend Point cost for each is determined by the order in which the t'skrang learned his Disciplines, as given in the Equivalent Talent Circle Table.

Durability

A character learning new Disciplines only benefits from the Durability talent of his first Discipline. For example, a Wizard who later becomes a Sky Raider can only increase his Death and Unconsciousness Ratings using his Wizard-based Durability talent. (However, see the optional **Realigning Durability** rule, below.)

New Discipline Talent Knacks

The Legend Point cost for learning a talent knack based on a Discipline talent for a new Discipline is the same as improving a talent to the minimum rank required to use the knack (see the **Talent Knacks** chapter, p. 213, for more details). This Legend Point cost is increased, determined by the number of Disciplines the character knows, as described in **Improving New Discipline Talents**, p. 427.

Caelarion, an elven Nethermancer / Elementalist / Warrior, is learning the Pin Down talent knack. This knack is based on the Unarmed Combat talent—available to Warriors at First Circle—and requires the elf to know it at a minimum of Rank 3 (which he does). Checking the Talent Cost Equivalent Table, accounting for Warrior being his third Discipline, the cost for Caelarion to learn a Circle 1–4 talent at Rank 3 is equivalent to learning a Circle 9–12 talent at Rank 3—800 Legend Points. This is what it will cost Caelarion to learn the talent knack.

Realigning Durability

Optional Rule: Some players and gamemasters don't like the limitations of using only the Durability talent from the character's first Discipline. This optional rule allows the character to shift the focus of his Durability talent to other new Disciplines. It is a variant of the **Aligning Discipline Talents From New Disciplines** optional rule.

Characters may "realign" their Durability talent with that for a new Discipline that the character has learned. The character must be at least Second Circle in the new Discipline, and therefore eligible to learn that Discipline's Durability talent. In order to gain the benefits of the new Discipline's Durability, the character must improve his Durability talent by 1 rank at the Legend Point cost for the new Discipline (not the original Discipline). This effectively gives the character the equivalent of one rank in the Durability talent for that Discipline; he has now "split" his Durability, and from this point on he improves his Durability talent for the new Discipline only, gaining bonuses from additional talent ranks based on those for the new Discipline. The player records the "split" on the character's Character Record Sheet, along with a note to indicate which Discipline his Durability is currently aligned with.

Treat the character's "effective" Durability rank for determining Legend Point costs for further improvements as being equal to the sum of all of his Durability ranks across all of his Disciplines.

The character is still limited to a maximum total Durability rank across all Disciplines of Rank 15.

Any bonuses to the character's Death or Unconsciousness Rating from earlier Durability ranks are kept at the previous levels. This may require some additional bookkeeping to keep track of, but avoids the potential for unbalancing the game through use of this optional rule.

Caelarion, an elven Fourth Circle Nethermancer and First Circle Elementalist, has just learned a third Discipline, Warrior, and has advanced it to Second Circle. He knows the Durability talent from his Nethermancer Discipline at Rank 6—adding +24/+18 points to his Death/Unconsciousness Ratings, respectively. At this point, Caelarion decides that, given his newfound interest in getting into close combat, he requires more of an ability to take damage. Checking with his gamemaster, he is told that he is allowed to use the Realigning Durability optional rule. He decides to align his Durability to the Warrior Discipline in order to take advantage of the better bonuses. Caelarion needs to increase his Durability talent from Rank 6 to Rank 7 to achieve this realignment, using the Legend Point costs for improving a Circle 1–4 talent from a third Discipline. Checking the appropriate tables, his player sees that this will cost Caelarion 5,500 Current Legend Points, a price he can afford. After spending the Legend Points his Durability is now at Rank 7 which, taking into account the split, is noted down on his Character Record Sheet as being "Durability: 7 (Nethermancer 6, Warrior 1)". Caelarion adds the +9/+7 point bonus to his Death/Unconsciousness Ratings for his new Warrior Durability rank, giving him a total of +33/+25 to his Death and Unconsciousness Ratings.

Once the character's Durability talent has been aligned to a new Discipline it can never be aligned back to the original Discipline. It can, however, be aligned to new Disciplines that the character may learn. In effect, once the Durability talent has been passed on to another Discipline it cannot be returned.

Now that Caelarion has aligned his Durability to his Warrior Discipline, any further improvements in that talent are made as a Warrior. Legend Point costs for these improvements are made at the same level as other Circle 1–4 talents for his third Discipline. He can never realign his Durability with his Nethermancer Discipline, although he could do so with his Elementalist Discipline. Given the lower bonuses involved, this is not a likely prospect, however.

Thread Weaving Knacks

Unless specifically noted in the talent knack's description, Thread Weaving knacks only need to be learned once, based on the lowest Legend Cost for the Thread Weaving talent available to the character.

Memsa is a Third Circle ork Thief who has recently been initiated as a First Circle Illusionist. After some adventuring, she advances to become a Second Circle Illusionist, but retains her Third Circle Thief status. She knows Illusionism (Thread Weaving) at Rank 5 as a Discipline talent from her Illusionist Discipline, but because she is not yet a Fourth Circle Thief, she has yet to learn Thief Weaving. Memsa thinks the Unraveling talent knack would be useful so she locates a teacher and prepares to learn it. For most multi-Discipline characters, Thread Weaving would be a Circle 1–4 talent. Because Memsa learned Illusionism from her second Illusionist Discipline, and she does not yet know it from her first Thief Discipline, it is costed as if it were a Circle 5–8 talent (see the Talent Cost Equivalent Table). Checking the Talent Rank Cost Table, the cost for Memsa to learn a Circle 5–8 talent to Rank 5 is 1,300 Legend Points. This is what it will cost the ork to learn the talent knack. If she waits until she advances to become a Fourth Circle Thief, then this cost drops to 800 Legend Points. Of course, this could take a while, and orks are not known for their patience.

Characteristics Bonuses

Characters who follow multiple Disciplines may not combine the effects of the characteristics bonuses of those Disciplines (see the **Disciplines** chapter, p. 64, for details on characteristics bonuses). If a character gains the same characteristics bonus from more than one Discipline, the character gains only the more advantageous of the bonuses, not both.

For example, the Swordmaster Discipline adds +1 to the character's Spell Defense at Eighth Circle. The Nethermancer Discipline adds +1 to the character's Spell Defense at Fifth Circle, and another +1 to the character's Spell Defense (for a total of +2) at Twelfth Circle. An Eighth Circle Swordmaster who advances to Fifth Circle as a Nethermancer does not add +1 to his Spell Defense, as it is not more advantageous than the bonus he already has. When he advances to Twelfth Circle as a Nethermancer, he does gain the additional +1 bonus, as this brings his total bonus to +2, the more advantageous total.

Personal Visions

Optional Rule: Each time a character acquires a new Discipline the player should create a personal vision for that Discipline. These multiple personal visions may or may not be consistent with one another. Many adepts who practice more than one Discipline have developed the ability to switch back and forth between very different points of view so that they can juggle the different mental demands of their various Disciplines.

Somok is a Weaponsmith as well as a Sky Raider. When making weapons, he thinks like a Weaponsmith; when engaging in aerial piracy, he thinks like a Sky Raider. When doing neither, he chooses the most appropriate viewpoint for the situation.

Of course, having both multiple Disciplines and personal visions exposes the character to the possibility of suffering more talent crises if the gamemaster is using the optional Talent Crises rule (see the **Disciplines** chapter, p. 62).

Deeds of Atonement

Optional Rule: This rule only applies if gamemaster and players are using the optional Talent Crises rule (see the **Disciplines** chapter, p. 62).

When characters with multiple Disciplines violate one of their personal visions, the penalty only applies to the talents of the Discipline pertaining to that vision, and to talents learned as part of an unaffected Discipline that also count toward advancement in the violated Discipline.

Multi-Discipline Karma Rituals

Optional Rule: A character acquiring an additional Discipline must purchase all the First Circle talents that differ from his current Discipline, but need not relearn talents for the new Discipline that he already knows. In theory, this rule applies to the Karma Ritual talent. In fact, however, Karma rituals for each Discipline are quite different, as they serve to focus the magic of a particular Discipline.

Because the use of Karma for Discipline talents is based on that Discipline's worldview, characters should not be able to use Karma gained from one Discipline's Karma ritual with talents of another Discipline. To reflect these limits, gamemasters may choose to require characters to purchase the Karma Ritual talent for each new Discipline the characters acquire. The cost for Rank 1 in the new Karma Ritual talent is determined as normal.

A character who follows more than one Discipline must perform Karma rituals for each of his Disciplines separately. Ideally, the player should keep separate Karma Point totals for each Discipline, but the gamemaster may allow a character to maintain a single Karma Point total to avoid extraneous bookkeeping.

Karma

Characters who follow multiple Disciplines may spend only 1 Karma Point on Attribute-only Tests, even if all of their Disciplines allow it. For example, both Swordmasters and Archers may spend a Karma Point on Dexterity-only Tests when they reach Fourth Circle. A Fourth Circle Archer who is also a Fourth Circle Swordmaster can still spend only 1 Karma Point on Dexterity-only Tests. Characters with Discipline talents from multiple Disciplines they know are also subject to this rule. Unless the talent description specifically says otherwise, they may only spend 1 Karma Point on a Talent Test, regardless of the number of Disciplines for which the talent is a Discipline talent.

Human Versatility

The human Versatility racial ability enables human adepts to learn talents from outside their Disciplines, but it does not make it easier for human characters to learn additional Disciplines. When a human character learns a new Discipline for which he already knows one or more talents through use of his Versatility, he must relearn those talents and purchase Rank 1 in each of them—he is considered to not know these talents for the purpose of learning a new Discipline. The Legend Point cost is determined as normal, based on his current Disciplines.

Over time, the character will repurchase all talent ranks up to the current rank that he has acquired through Versatility. Once he has done so, he may learn an additional talent via Versatility; effectively that Versatility "slot" is freed up for re-use. Until that point, the character essentially knows the same talent at two different ranks, and players should differentiate between these on their Character Record Sheet. A character who knows the same talent at two different ranks may use either the Versatility or the Discipline talent.

Legendary Status

As characters earn Legend Points in **Earthdawn**, their heroic reputation spreads. People hear tales of their exploits and sing songs of their adventures, and remember the characters' Names. Each character's heroic deeds begin to build his Legend, allowing the characters to attain ever-higher levels of Legendary Status.

A character's Legendary Status is based on the Total Legend Points he has gained, and reflects the general public awareness of that character. Tales of a character's adventures spread across the land until his Legendary Status rises so high that people recognize his name in virtually every city. Similarly, the increasing Legendary Status of an adventuring group gives the group a reputation for prowess, and cities and towns in need of heroes may ask or hire them to undertake ever more daring missions and adventures.

As a character's Total Legend Points increases, he attains higher levels of Legendary Status. The Legendary Status Table shows the minimum Total Legend Points required for each Legendary Status Level.

LEGENDARY STATUS TABLE

Legendary Status	Minimum Total Legend Points
Level 1	10,000
Level 2	40,000
Level 3	160,000
Level 4	640,000
Level 5	2,560,000

Status Levels

Each Legendary Status Level marks a substantial increase in the character's fame (or infamy). The following guidelines suggest ways for gamemasters to use different levels of Legendary Status.

Level 1

Characters with Legendary Status at Level 1 enjoy a reputation only in the most heavily-populated areas. Most prominent people in cities regard Level 1 characters as heroic, but the general population remains oblivious to their daring exploits.

Level 2

Characters with Legendary Status at Level 2 are well known in most major population centers and by some people in smaller cities. Though many merchants and businessmen know of the character, the populace at large has not yet heard his name. When using social talents or skills against a character who knows of him, a Level 2 character gains a +1 bonus to his Interaction Tests.

Level 3

Characters with Legendary Status at Level 3 enjoy widespread fame in all of the major cities, as well as many of the smaller cities and towns. Even in some of the small villages that dot the countryside, a few people tell tales of these characters' exploits. Characters with Legendary Status 3 can use that status to their advantage. They often receive reduced prices on goods and services just for asking, and may be able to request important favors more easily than lesser characters. When using social talents or skills against a character who knows of him, a Level 3 character gains a +2 bonus to his Interaction Tests.

Level 4

Nearly everyone has at least heard the name of a character with a Legendary Status at Level 4. The rulers of kingdoms often court characters of Legendary Status 4 in the hope of convincing them to perform dangerous tasks for them. Many Level 4 characters maintain castles or strongholds in or near their favorite cities. When traveling, they often receive offers of free lodging or other services from individuals eager to boast that the famous character stayed at his inn, ate at his table, bought boots from him, and so on. When using social talents or skills against a character who knows of him, a Level 4 character gains a +3 bonus to his Interaction Tests.

Level 5

Characters with Legendary Status at Level 5 are the living legends of **Earthdawn**. Virtually everyone knows of these characters and their heroic deeds, and more people claim to have known, seen or adventured with these characters than is possible by any race's standards. Some examples of Level 5 characters are Nioku, the famed troll Archer, and Naaman Y'ross, a hero who fought the Horrors before the Scourge (and who some believe still lives). When using social talents or skills against a character who knows of him, a Level 5 character gains a +4 bonus to his Interaction Tests.

The Price of Fame

Though a high Legendary Status Level affords a character both minor and major benefits, fame often carries a price. People often expect heroic characters to act for the common good despite the personal risks. Consciously or unconsciously, they believe that heroes should put their own interests and needs aside and work to help them, no matter what the cost. Most villages and small towns will recognize a character with Legendary Status 3 or better and ask him for help in time of trouble. Communities of this size may even seek out a hero to solve their problems. Though heroes often do act this way (most of them also believe in the classic definition of a hero), sometimes a character needs to act for himself. The conflict between personal interests and the interests of others can pose a dilemma for a character who has achieved Legendary Status.

Thom Hammerblade has achieved Legendary Status of Level 3. He is traveling home to the Throal Mountains after a long, dangerous adventure. He suffered serious injuries fighting a Horror and an army of its minions, and hopes to rest for a few days in a village along the way. The day after he arrives in the village, one of the citizens is found dead, apparently killed during the night by a fearsome beast. Thom really needs to recuperate, but the village citizens assume that, despite his weariness and wounds, a hero of Thom's status will immediately come to their aid. Wounded and battle-weary, Thom is facing one disadvantage of his heroic status, and now must make a tough decision.

Adventuring Groups

The world of **Earthdawn** encourages groups of player characters to work together to solve problems. The player characters in your gaming group may come together through an outside force at first, formed into a group and forced to work together for a specific purpose. Once that purpose is accomplished, they may decide to continue to travel together for other reasons. At this point, the characters have become an adventuring group.

Traveling with an adventuring group offers many advantages over solo exploring. The most obvious is survival. By working together, the characters will have a better chance of living longer, healthier lives. Forming adventuring groups also gives the characters access to a powerful and unique magic; by forming and Naming an adventuring group, the characters in the group can use thread magic to improve their abilities, become more powerful, and take on more dangerous challenges (see the **Thread Magic** chapter, p. 270, for more information on Naming adventuring groups).

As adventuring groups travel the land, tales of their exploits precede and follow them, told both by the members of the group and by those who see and hear of the group's deeds. As the characters seek out new adventures, stories of the group spread throughout the land, and given time, the members of the group will take their place among the legends of **Earthdawn**. But the legends of adventuring groups do not simply filter into the people's collective unconscious. The characters in the group must build their legend by seeking adventure and keeping a record of their travels, battles, victories, defeats, discoveries, and so on.

The people look to heroes for inspiration, protection, and, most importantly, for the hope that their world shall endure. Fortunately for those characters who seek to become heroes of the people, **Earthdawn** offers adventure opportunities galore. From battling the remaining Horrors left on this world, to fighting against the Theran Empire, to exploring the land; countless adventures await those courageous enough to face danger in search of glory.

Characters can add to the legends created by their adventures by keeping a journal of their group's exploits. This journal is called a Group Adventuring Log.

Adventuring Logs

Group adventuring logs serve several purposes. A journal provides a record of the history of the group, both personnel and events. It also records any discoveries made by the group, and as such can serve as a source of stories and legends. An adventure log might provide a rudimentary sketch of an unmapped region, confirm or disprove popularly held beliefs about a people or place, or record the fate of a missing person.

While this type of information may be invaluable to interested parties, adventuring logs serve an even more important function for the ordinary citizen. The stories in an adventuring group's journal are tales of heroism and tragedy, the types of stories that people need to hear. By sharing their adventures with other people, adventuring groups bring hope to a re-emerging world and so are hailed as heroes. Aside from these loftier reasons to record their tales of heroism, an adventuring log can also make the characters money and earn them Legend Points.

A sample Adventuring Log can be found on p. 508. Groups are encouraged to create their own.

The Great Library of Throal

The Great Library of Throal is tasked with recording the history of Barsaive, including the tales of its heroes. One of the most efficient ways it does this is by collecting the stories of adventuring groups. Once a year, the Kingdom of Throal invites all adventuring groups to bring their journals to the Library and share their stories with Throalic historians. The Kingdom of Throal pays well for these stories, because adventurers' tales contain the history and describe the present of Barsaive. How much a group receives for the stories in their log depends on the Legendary Status of the adventuring group. Fledgling adventurers earn a modest sum, while great heroes of legend can earn a king's ransom.

The Players' Role

Though the adventuring log is something the characters create, the players must actually write it. Two considerations should encourage players to physically record their adventures. First, if the players don't keep a written journal of their groups' adventures, their characters cannot earn any money from the Library of Throal and will not earn the available Legend Points. Even if the characters state at the end of every session, "We're keeping a journal," if the players themselves don't write it out, it doesn't count. If you want to garner the rewards, you've got to earn it.

The second consideration helps both the players and the gamemaster. Because the adventuring log provides a record of all the group's adventures, the players will not have to ask the gamemaster to repeat the events of a specific encounter, adventure, or campaign. The journal also gives the gamemaster a quick reference guide to events in the game, and what information the characters would or would not possess. Finally, the adventure log makes it easier for players to roleplay their characters more consistently and generally makes the game run more smoothly.

The players can record their adventures any way they choose A sample Group Adventuring Log can be found in the **Appendices** chapter, p. 507, that players can photocopy to create the group's adventuring log, but this journal can take any form. The players may decide to purchase a blank or lined journal, use a three-ring binder and notepaper, or even create a computer database.

Players should take turns recording the group's adventures so that no one gets the job every session. The Group Adventuring Log provides a template for the type of information that should be included in the journal: the names of the members of the group, the name of the group, a sketch of the group's symbol, and an outline of the events of an adventure. The players can decide how much detail to include in their account. The bottom of the log provides a space to record pertinent game information, including the Legend Point Awards for each player.

Log Payment

Each time your adventuring group shares its journal with the Great Library of Throal, it earns 10 percent of its Average Legend Point Total in silver pieces. A group's Average Legend Point Total is determined by adding together the characters' Total Legend Points and dividing the result by the number of characters in the group For example, a group with five characters, and a total of 50,000 Legend Points would have an Average Legend Point Total of 10,000, and would earn each member 1,000 silver pieces by presenting their journals to the Great Library of Throal.

Log Legend Points

Adventuring groups who share tales of their exploits with the historians and scholars of Throal also earn a Legend Point bonus. Each time a group shares its adventure log with the Great Library of Throal, each member of the group earns a number of Legend Points equal to half of the amount of silver pieces received for the log. In the previous example, each character in the group would receive 500 Legend Points.

Add these points to the characters' Current and Total Legend Points. These bonus Legend Points can be used to increase abilities, purchase Karma Points, and so on.

Group Legendary Status

Much like individual characters, adventuring groups can earn Legendary Status. The Group Legendary Status of an adventuring group is also determined by its Average Legend Point Total (see **Log Payment**, above).

Thom Hammerblade and his companions comprise six members with 1,200,000 collective Total Legend Points. That total divided by 6 characters equals 200,000 Legend Points. The group Thom's Adventurers has an Average Legend Point Total of 200,000 points, placing the group firmly at a Legendary Status of Level 3.

Legendary groups receive the same benefits as legendary characters, but also suffer the same drawbacks from being famous.

Goods and Services

Of course I can help you, sir. Step right up and take a look at these wondrous treasures.

• Garrn Devia, Dwarf Merchant of Bartertown •

Characters need the right equipment to adventure successfully. As a character survives and prospers, his adventures likely will become more demanding and he will need better equipment. In addition to gear such as weapons, armor, and clothing, characters will need to obtain money, food, lodging, and transport for nearly every adventure.

This chapter provides descriptions of the most common goods and services available to characters, their prices, any restrictions on their use, and directions for purchasing them.

Purchasing Goods

After players have initially equipped their characters they must purchase any additional goods or services from merchants or other characters. To determine whether a merchant has the desired item and is willing to sell it, the gamemaster first assigns it an **Availability Rating**.

The different Availability Ratings for goods and services are: Everyday, Average, Unusual, Rare, and Very Rare. Most of the items listed in this chapter are of **Everyday** or **Average** availability, though many magical goods, such as potions and blood charms, are considered **Unusual** or **Rare**. Only very special items are of **Very Rare** availability; this includes the most powerful potions and threaded items. The standard Availability Ratings for specific goods and services are given in the various item tables. The gamemaster should modify these as required to suit his campaign.

The Availability Rating of an item can raise or lower the minimum result level required for seeing if the item is available for purchase, as shown on the Availability Difficulty Table. To determine whether a merchant has an item on hand, or whether a service is available, the merchant makes a Trading Test against the item's Purchase Difficulty, usually determined by the size of the community from which the goods are being purchased (see **Trading** in the **Skills** chapter, p. 249). If the test achieves the required result level for an item of that Availability Rating, then the goods are available; the service can be found or the merchant has the item on hand and will sell it to the character.

AVAILABILITY DIFFICULTY TABLE

Availability Rating	Result Level
Everyday	Poor
Average	Average
Unusual	Good
Rare	Excellent
Very Rare	Extraordinary

If the item is available for sale, both the merchant and the customer may use their Haggle talent or skill to settle on a final sale price (see the **Talents** and **Skills** chapters, p. 187 and p. 241).

Caelarion, currently staying in one of the underground cities of Throal, is preparing for an adventure and wants to purchase a booster potion. He visits Senric, a local merchant, and asks if he has a potion for sale. A booster potion is an Unusual item, meaning the merchant requires a Good result on his Trading Test to have a potion in stock. The Purchase Difficulty is 5, meaning the potion will only be available if he rolls a 9 or higher—a Good result—on his Trading Test.

Taking Extra Time

Sometimes a merchant will not have an item available when a character wants to buy it, but can procure it if given sufficient time. If a character is willing to wait a day or more for an item, the Purchase Difficulty for the Trading Test can be lowered. Subtract –1 from the base Purchase Difficulty for each additional day the character is prepared to wait, to a minimum Purchase Difficulty of 2. The minimum result level required, determined by the item's Availability Rating, does not change.

Caelarion is not planning to leave Throal for a few days and is willing to wait for Senric to obtain a booster potion. This increases the chance of Senric being able to obtain a potion for Caelarion. Caelarion gives the merchant two days, thus subtracting –2 from the Purchase Difficulty, reducing it from 5 to 3. Senric has a much better chance of obtaining the potion for Caelarion, now only requiring a 6 on his Trading Test. Note that the merchant still requires a Good result; it is just the Purchase Difficulty that changes.

When trying to obtain items of Rare or Very Rare availability, the Purchase Difficulty can be reduced by no more than –3, regardless of how long a character is willing to wait. This limit reflects the absolute scarcity of some items.

Quality of Goods

Sometimes characters will want to purchase higher-quality goods than the usual fare; these goods are regarded as being of a **better** or the **best** quality available. This normally means more ornate decoration, better presentation, or a more reliable service. For example, a better broadsword may have more intricate decoration around the hilt. A better scribe can be depended on for meeting a time frame for transcription work.

Most cities have items of a higher than normal quality available, but they are usually more expensive. For better quality items, increase the cost by +50 to +100 percent of the normal price. For items of the best quality, the cost should be three or more times the normal price.

> *Me'gana wants to buy a decorative broadsword that will impress opponents when she draws it and flourishes it around. She visits a weapons shop and finds two broadswords to her liking. The first sword costs 38 silver pieces, and is of a "better" quality than a standard broadsword. The second sword is the "best" the shop has to offer and costs 75 silver pieces. Me'gana chooses the better quality weapon and pays 38 silver pieces.*

These guidelines also apply to services rendered. For example, if a character wants to hire the best scribe in the city, the scribe might charge three or more times the standard fee.

At the gamemaster's discretion, better quality items grant a +1 bonus to any Interaction Tests the character makes where use of the item would be appropriate to the situation. Best quality items work in the same way and in the same circumstances, but grant a +2 bonus. Where an Interaction Test is not appropriate—when securing a service, for instance—the gamemaster may consider shortening the time required for the task to reach completion or even reduce the Difficulty Number of the task.

Currency

Though people still barter in some remote areas of the province, the vast majority of Barsaivians use the hexagonal coins of Throal or (less commonly) the round coins of Thera to conduct trade. The practical dwarfs of Throal have matched the weights of their coins to Theran legal tender, giving both currencies the same value.

Though the moneychanger's guild complains bitterly that the equal value of the two currencies deprives them of a fair profit, moneychangers still do a steady business converting old coins reclaimed from kaers or other lost treasure stores. Moneychangers usually pay 75 percent of the value of old coins. For example, if a character exchanges 1,000 old Landan silver pieces, he will receive 750 Throalic silver pieces in exchange. The rate applied to Theran coin often nets less, usually about 60 percent of its original value.

Legends of cursed coins and false gold and silver make most merchants cautious about taking coins not minted by Thera or Throal.

Better and Best Items

Optional Rule: Some players and gamemaster may prefer more flexibility with regards to higher quality items in their game. The Better and Best Items Table gives the price modifiers for each item category, along with a description of any bonuses the character gains while using or wearing the item. These bonuses do not stack, even if the character is wielding or wearing several items that give the same bonus; use the highest bonus given for any Action Tests the character makes while using the items.

The Availability of items of a **better** quality is unchanged; only the cost increases. The Availability of items of the **best** quality is increased by one level, to a maximum of Very Rare.

Interaction Test bonuses are only applicable when the item is used in an manner appropriate to the situation, and always at the gamemaster's discretion. Only the highest bonus is used, regardless of the number of items the character is wearing or using.

BETTER AND BEST ITEMS TABLE

Item	Cost	Bonus
Armor:		
Better	×3	+1 bonus to Interaction Tests while wearing the armor
Best	×5	+2 bonus to Interaction Tests while wearing the armor; increase the Difficulty Number needed to inflict an Armor-Defeating Hit by +1
Clothing:		
Better	× 1.5	+1 bonus to Interaction Tests while wearing the clothes
Best	× 3	+2 bonus to Interaction Tests while wearing the clothes
Tools:		
Better	× 2	+1 bonus to corresponding Talent or Skill Test
Best	× 4	+2 bonus to corresponding Talent or Skill Test
Weapons:		
Better	× 3	+1 bonus to Interaction Tests while wielding the weapon
Best	× 5	+2 bonus to Interaction Tests while wielding the weapon; +1 Damage step

Interaction Tests: The gamemaster determines whether the bonus applies to the character's Interaction Test. Only the highest bonus is used, regardless of the number of items worn or wielded.

Currency Denominations

Throal and Thera both use an easy-to-follow decimal currency system, with each consecutive denomination worth ten times that of the previous denomination. Thus, ten copper pieces equal one silver piece, ten silver pieces equal one gold piece, and so on.

The currency of the peasant and working classes and the most basic monetary denomination, copper coins are used in marketplaces across Barsaive. Throal's hexagonal copper pieces bear a stylized hammer and pick on both sides and weigh one-third of an ounce each (48 coins to the pound). Thera does not mint copper pieces.

Merchants, adventurers, and travelers have made silver pieces the most common coin in Barsaive. Common laborers are often paid in silver, most goods and services are priced in silver and almost all trade contracts are executed in terms of silver pieces. Theran silver pieces show the profile of a Theran guardsman, and Throalic silver pieces bear a likeness of Tav Korelsed, one

of Throal's founders. Each silver piece weighs one-quarter of an ounce (64 coins to the pound).

Gold pieces are the coins of wealthy merchants, well-heeled travelers, and the Throal and Theran governments. Barsaivians rarely use gold in trade, reserving it for transactions involving sums in excess of 1,000 silver pieces. Many kaers and citadels still contain gold, which was a more common currency before the Scourge. Theran gold pieces carry the profile of Kearos Navarim, Elder of Thera, and one of the founders of the Theran Empire. Throalic gold pieces show the Merchant King Braza overlooking the Throal Mountains. Each gold piece weighs one-fifth of an ounce (80 coins to the pound).

Gems

In some cities in Barsaive, including the cities of Throal, the inhabitants occasionally use gems to limit the volume of currency in large transactions. Rubies, emeralds, and sapphires comprise the most common gem currencies, though on rare occasions amethysts and diamonds are used. Gems can be virtually any size, quality and value, the latter generally expressed in silver (or sometimes gold) pieces. The most common gem values are denominations of 50, 100, 200, 500, and 1,000 silver pieces, though some people use gems of lesser or even greater value.

Characters can usually exchange gemstones at 75 percent of their value, but may get a slightly higher rate of approximately 80 percent for gems of exceptional quality. This exchange rate allows the buyer to make a profit when reselling the gems.

Elemental Coins

In addition to Barsaive's common metal coins, the province's currencies include the so-called elemental coins. Elemental coins contain bits of True elements—earth, water, air, fire—or orichalcum, the combination of these elements. These pieces are usually reserved for special occasions such as finalizing long-term trade agreements, swearing blood oaths, and sealing peace treaties. A single earth or water piece is worth 100 silver pieces, and ten earth or water pieces equal one air or fire piece. Ten air or fire pieces, in turn, equal a single orichalcum piece. All elemental coins weigh one tenth of an ounce (160 coins to the pound).

Air pieces resemble finely crafted crystal and each contains a portion of elemental air. Sharply striking an air piece causes it to ring and then levitate a few inches; as it descends, the ringing tone fades. Throal recently began producing air pieces with a likeness of a Sky Raider airship to commemorate the crystal raiders' aid during Thera's siege of Throal. **Earth pieces** consist of soil mixed with clods of elemental earth. These plain brown pieces gleam under bright light. **Fire pieces** resemble disks of slowly swirling flame, an effect of the elemental fire they contain. Though cool to the touch, fire pieces produce sparks of flame hot enough to light a lantern or a stove when struck. The plain, round **water piece** contains elemental water. Throalic water pieces contain freshwater, and Theran water pieces contain saltwater.

Orichalcum pieces comprise all four elements, combined through time-consuming alchemical and Elementalist procedures that remain closely guarded secrets. Gold in color, orichalcum seems to capture and amplify light. Orichalcum pieces remain rare, even among princes and kings. The handful of individuals lucky enough to possess them prefer to use orichalcum pieces for magic, rather than trade. Legends tell of ancient civilizations that once used orichalcum as currency, but most scholars question whether these legends have any factual basis.

Weapons

There are a wide variety of different weapons available. Generally, they are grouped into three categories—melee, missile and throwing—corresponding to the different talent and skill categories needed to properly wield them.

WEAPON SIZE RESTRICTION TABLE

Race	One-Handed Weapon Size	Two-Handed Weapon Size
Dwarf*	3	6
Elf	3	6
Human	3	6
Obsidiman**	4	6
Ork	3	6
Troll**	4	6
T'skrang***	3	6
Windling	1	2

* Dwarfs may only use up to Size 4 missile weapons as their short stature makes firing larger weapons awkward.
** The large hands of obsidimen and trolls prevent them from using knives, daggers, and other Size 1 weapons effectively.
*** T'skrang tail weapons have a maximum Size of 2.

Weapon Size Restrictions

Because the different Name-giver races vary so much in stature, some races are unable to wield large weapons one-handed. An elf, for example, would be incapable of wielding a battle-axe (Size 4) with a single hand. He would, however, be able to wield the weapon by using two hands. The Weapon Size Restriction Table lists the weapon-wielding capabilities of each race. The first value gives the maximum Size weapon that members of a particular race can wield with one hand; the second value gives the maximum Size of a weapon they can wield with two hands. Weapon Sizes are shown in the Melee, Missile and Thrown Weapons Tables, below.

See the **Combat** chapter, p. 398, for more information on weapons and how they are used in combat.

Strength Minimum

Most weapons require a minimum Strength value to wield them without penalty in combat. Characters who don't meet this requirement can still use the weapon, but are penalized for doing so. A character who does not meet the minimum Strength value requirement for using a weapon is considered Harried (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408) until he drops or otherwise stops using the weapon, or improves his Strength value (see **Improving Attribute Values** in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 420).

A broadsword has a Strength Minimum of 9 to wield. The Wizard Lanthras, with a Strength value of 7, picks up a broadsword and tries to use it in combat. Because he does not have sufficient Strength to wield the broadsword, he is unbalanced by the effort of swinging it and is therefore considered Harried.

Dexterity Minimum

Some weapons have a minimum Dexterity value—this is noted on the appropriate Weapons Table. As for a weapon's Strength Minimum, above, characters who don't meet this requirement can still use the weapon, but are penalized for doing so. A character who does not meet the minimum Dexterity value requirement for using a weapon is considered Harried (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408) until he drops or otherwise stops using the weapon, or improves his Dexterity value (see **Improving Attribute Values** in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 420).

Lanthras decides to pursue the challenge of using a missile weapon. He has seen his adventuring colleague Shan'tral, an elven Archer, using her warbow and asks if he can try it out. Shan'tral smiles and passes the bow

over. Lanthras nocks an arrow and aims at a nearby tree. His Strength value of 7 is lower than that required to properly wield the bow (Strength Minimum of 13). To make things worse, the elven warbow also has a Dexterity Minimum of 15. Lanthras has a Dexterity value of 11—nowhere near the Dexterity required. Because of his lack of Strength, the Wizard is considered Harried while using the bow. However, the gamemaster is using the Overwhelmed rule in his game (see the ***Combat*** *chapter, p. 408), so Lanthras incurs a further –1 penalty for his low Dexterity, for a total –3 penalty.*

Lanthras possesses no Missile Weapons ability, so he relies on his Dexterity step of 5. Modified by the –3 Harried penalty for his lack of Strength and Dexterity, Lanthras shakily pulls the bow back as far as he can, then looses the arrow. With both a penalty and the Good result required for Default Skill Use, it is no surprise that the tree remains safe. Shan'tral hides a grin behind her hand.

T'skrang Tail Weapons

Some t'skrang lash small weapons to the end of their tails. Attacks like these are still considered unarmed attacks; the weapon simply acts as an extension of the t'skrang's tail. This tactic can only be used with Size 1 or 2 weapons. The Damage step for tail weapon attacks is equal to the weapon's Size plus the character's Strength step. For example, a dagger (Size 1) lashed to the tail of a t'skrang with a Strength step of 5 would have a Damage step of 6 (1 + 5 = 6). Weapons lashed to a t'skrang tail cannot be used with talents or skills such as Riposte or Disarm.

Windling Weapons

Because of their small size, windlings must often use weapons that are not designed for their small hands. Most weaponsmiths will adapt a standard weapon for use by windlings, a service that typically costs 10 percent of the base weapon price. In some cities, weaponsmiths craft weapons specifically for windlings. These weapons are of the proper size, balance, and shape for windlings, and use the game statistics of the equivalent weapon listed on the Windling Weapon Equivalent Table.

WINDLING WEAPON EQUIVALENT TABLE

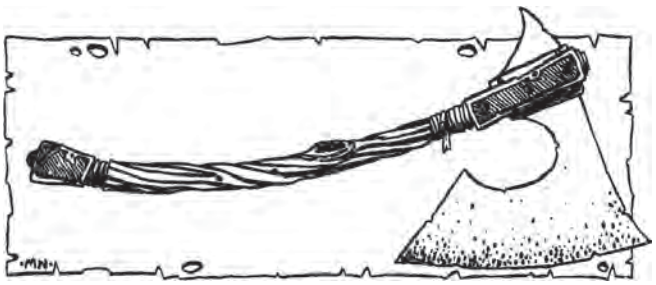
Windling Blade	Standard Equivalent
Knife *or* Dagger	Knife
Short Sword *or* Broadsword	Dagger
Two-Handed Sword	Dwarf Sword

Melee Weapon Descriptions

Battle-Axe: The traditional weapon of dwarf armies, the battle-axe has a 2 to 4 foot long haft with a single bell-shaped blade.

Broadsword: A broadsword has a blade about 3 feet long. Typically used as a one-handed weapon, a Weaponsmith can modify the hilt of any broadsword to make it a two-handed weapon. The blade can be curved or straight, with single or double edges.

Cave Axe: Cave trolls use large stone weapons called cave axes, little more than crude stone axes bolstered with elemental magic.



Demand for these weapons is low, hence their under-valued cost. Cave trolls take offense at anyone other than fellow cave trolls using these axes and will react accordingly. Worsen the Attitude toward the wielder (and his obvious companions) for Interaction Tests by one degree.

Club: Any short piece of hard wood or stone, usually thinner at the handle end and thicker at the business end, qualifies as a club. In some cases clubs are merely rough-hewn tree limbs. Most, however, are a bit more finished and feature leather-wrapped handles. Obsidimen, trolls, and some dwarfs prefer clubs carved out of rock. Wooden and stone clubs inflict the same amount of damage.

Dagger: A dagger is a small, sharp-bladed weapon with a maximum length of 12 inches. A dagger with a blade longer than this is considered to be a sword.

Dwarf Sword: A dwarf sword has a curved, single-edged blade about 2 feet long that is wider than the blade of a typical short sword. Dwarf merchants prefer this weapon above most others.

Flail: A flail consists of a wooden, leather-covered handle between 2 and 4 feet long, with a hinge or a chain connected to one end. The other end of the chain connects to either a spiked metal ball, a metal-spiked wooden rod, or a plain metal rod.

Hand-Axe: Small and easy to use, this basic chopping instrument consists of a 1 to 2 foot long handle with a single, flat, square- or bell-shaped blade at one end.

Knife: A knife is a small, sharp-bladed cutting tool with a blade of up to 6 inches in length.

Lance: A specialized spear designed for fighting on horseback, the lance consists of an 8 to 12 foot long wooden shaft, fitted with a metal or hardwood handle. A brace at the end of the handle attaches the lance to the user's armor or saddle; a character not wearing armor or seated on a saddle lacks the support required to use a lance properly, and is considered Harried while doing so, regardless of his Strength or size (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408). If the character is mounted, he effectively wields the lance as if it were a Size 3 weapon, usually freeing up one hand to carry a shield for protection. A lance can be used on foot, but due to the nature of its design and the length of the weapon, it is considered to be a long-spear, and is therefore reduced to being a Damage step 5 weapon.

Long-Spear: A 5 to 8 foot long spear, the long-spear is wielded with two hands. A long-spear can be used in a similar manner to a lance while mounted; they tend to be more fragile than lances, and, like other spears, shatter on impact with a Damage Test result of 15 or more from a successful Attack Test. If the character is mounted, he effectively wields the long-spear as if it were a Size 3 weapon, usually freeing one hand to carry a shield for protection.

Mace: A mace is a club reinforced with a shaped-metal head.

Pole Arm: This catch-all term applies to any weapon with a haft more than 4 feet long. Theran slave traders use a simple, deadly 5-foot long pole arm with a sharp metal tip on the end. Guards at the Elven Court wield longer pole arms tipped with various blades, hooks and points. All types of pole arms do the same amount of damage, and require two hands to wield. The price for pole arms varies according to the blade configuration; the more elaborate the blade, the greater the cost.

Pole-Axe: The pole-axe is one of the deadliest weapons available. The haft, usually at least 6 feet long, holds a large single or double bell-shaped or rectangular blade. This huge, heavy weapon requires two hands to use.

Quarterstaff: Any weapon shaped like a pole and made from hardened wood qualifies as a quarterstaff. Anywhere from 1 to 2 yards long, most quarterstaffs are usually plainly finished. However, characters with an appropriate Artisan skill sometimes decorate them with elaborate carvings and even gems and precious metals. A quarterstaff makes an excellent defensive weapon; any character using the Giving Ground or Defensive

MELEE WEAPONS TABLE

Weapon	Damage Step	STR Min.	Size	Cost	Weight	Availability
Battle-Axe	6	13	4	35	6	Average
Broadsword	5	10	3	25	4	Average
Cave Axe	7	16	5	50	10	Rare
Club	3	7	2	2	3	Average
Dagger	2	4	1	8 cp	1	Average
Dwarf Sword	3	6	2	6	2	Average
Flail	5	10**	3	35	5	Average
Hand-Axe	4	8	2	15	3	Average
Knife	1	3	1	3 cp	10 oz.	Everyday
Lance	6	16	6	150	10	Unusual
Long-Spear	5	13	5	15	7	Average
Mace	4	9	3	20	5	Average
Pole Arm	7	15–17	5–6	100–175	8–10	Average
Pole-Axe	8	18	6	150	10	Unusual
Quarterstaff	2	9**	5	5	4	Average
Sap	1	3**	1	3	2	Average
Short Sword	4	8	2	16	3	Average
Spear	4	9	3	9	3	Average
Spiked Mace	6	13	4	40	7	Average
Trispear	5	11	4	25	4	Average
Troll Sword	6	13	4	50	6	Average
Two-Handed Sword	7	15	5	125	7	Unusual
Warhammer	7	15	5	95	8	Unusual
Whip	3*	7**	3	10	2	Average

* May be used to entangle an opponent up to 3 yards away.
** A minimum Dexterity value of 7 is required to use a flail, quarterstaff, sap or whip.

Stance combat options (see **Combat Options** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 404) while wielding a quarterstaff adds an extra +1 to his Physical Defense.

Sap: A sap is a leather pouch filled with stones or metal pellets. A character can improvise a sap by filling a leather glove with pebbles. A sap is designed to help a character knock out his opponent. If the character using the sap is employing the Attacking to Stun combat option (see **Combat Options** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 404), he gains a +1 bonus to his Damage Test. If the character makes a successful Called Shot with a sap while Attacking to Stun, striking his opponent on an exposed area, such as the back of the neck or the temple, he gains a +2 bonus to his Damage Test.

Short Sword: A short sword is a bladed weapon, 2 to 3 feet in length. Usually wielded one-handed, some short swords feature hilts designed to allow windlings to wield them with two hands. The blade can be curved or straight, with single or double edges.

Spear: Often used as a throwing weapon, the spear may also serve as a short 3 to 5 foot long pole arm in melee combat. Sometimes referred to as a short-spear, spears are often used in conjunction with a shield. A spear can also be used in a similar manner to a lance while mounted. Spears are not as good as lances for mounted attacks, and tend to shatter. Should a spear be so employed, any Damage Test result of 15 or more from a successful Attack Test will result in the spear shattering on impact. The effect of the Damage Test is determined as normal, but the spear is rendered useless afterwards.

Spiked Mace: The spiked mace is a large club, like a mace, but with a spiked metal head.

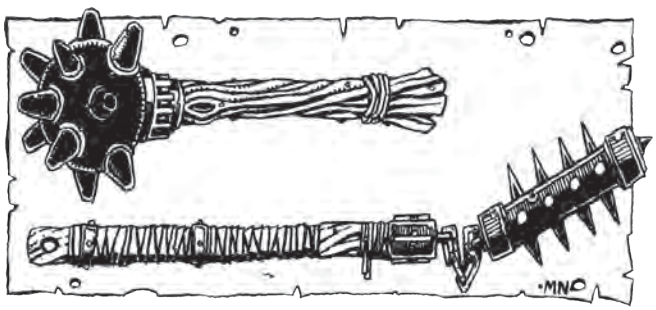
Trispear: This specialized weapon evolved from a pole arm. Trispears range from 4 to 6 feet long, the longer version used almost exclusively by t'skrang fishermen. Unlike a conventional pole arm, the trispear ends in three points instead of the typical single point. The configuration of the points varies; sometimes they form triangles, others are flat. The length and thickness of the points also vary. As with other pole arms, the trispear normally requires two hands to wield.

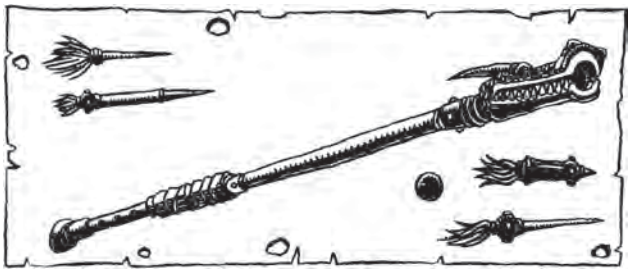
Troll Sword: Created specifically for trolls, the troll sword has a blade more than 4 feet long and is balanced for one-handed use by those with exceptional strength. Obsidimen occasionally carry troll swords, and other races sometimes adapt the hilt design to make the sword a two-handed weapon. The blade can be curved or straight, with single or double edges.

Two-Handed Sword: The largest bladed weapon available, a two-handed sword is just over 4 feet long and balanced specifically for two-handed use. The double-edged blade can be curved, but is most often straight.

Warhammer: The warhammer has an oblong, metal head with a long spike protruding from it. Any character using this weapon should keep in mind that changing the direction of the swing once he has begun is nearly impossible.

Whip: *This is an entangling weapon.* A whip is a bundle of braided leather strips, thick at the handle end and tapering at the tip. The whip handle is usually made of wood or bone. Theran slave traders favor this weapon. Whips allow a wielder to entangle an





opponent within 3 yards, as well as damaging him. The Difficulty Number to break free of the entanglement is 9 (see **Entangling Weapons** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 411).

Missile Weapon Descriptions

Blowgun: A blowgun is a hollow tube of wood or metal, 1 to 3 feet long, used to fire 2 inch long needles. The needles are usually made of metal, though wood, stone, and precious gem needles also exist. The needles sometimes include fletching, and can be tipped with poison.

Elven Warbow: The elven warbow is similar to a longbow, but is made with three different woods. The differing tensile strength of each type of wood gives the warbow more power than a conventional longbow. Warbow arrows are 2 to 4 feet long, fletched with feathers, and thicker and heavier than conventional longbow arrows.

Light Crossbow: This weapon consists of a bow mounted horizontally on a shaft of wood or metal. A hook-and-trigger device built into the shaft holds the bowstring taut and releases it. The shaft is 12 inches long, making the weapon small enough to conceal in a heavy cloak or coat. The arrow, called a bolt, is shorter and thicker than a regular arrow. Usually made from wood with a stone or metal tip, bolts range from 6 to 8 inches in length and have feather fletching.

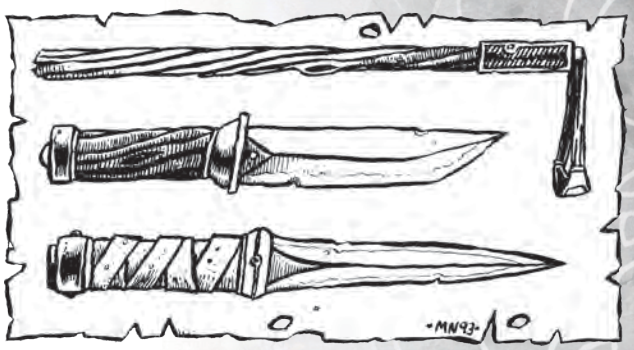
Longbow: A variation of the shortbow, the longbow ranges from 4 to 8 feet long. Longbow arrows are similar to shortbow arrows, but are 2 to 4 feet long.

Medium Crossbow: The medium crossbow is a larger version of the light crossbow, with a 2 foot long shaft and 12 inch long bolts.

Quiver: A typical quiver holds 40 arrows or 30 bolts. Most quivers are hard leather cylinders or rectangles strapped over the bowman's back like a backpack. Individuals from the taller Namegiver races often prefer to hook their quivers to their belts. Some quivers come equipped with a cover to discourage others from stealing arrows.

Shortbow: The term shortbow applies to all bows less than 4 feet long. A single piece of flexible wood forms the bow, which is fitted with a bowstring that is connected to each end and pulled taught. Shortbow arrows are 2 feet long, made of wood and fletched with feathers. Both stone and metal arrowheads are used, but the finest shots almost exclusively use metal-tipped arrows.

Sling: This describes any weapon that flings small objects at speeds and distances greater than the unaided arm can manage. Most slings consist of a strap of leather connected to a pouch that holds the projectile. Rocks are most commonly used as ammunition, though a sling can throw any small object. Some merchants sell metal balls to use with a sling, but most customers simply find them a waste of good silver.



Troll Sling: The troll sling is a large sling attached to the end of a staff. Trolls and obsidimen can use a troll sling one-handed; all other races must use it with two hands.

Windling Bow: This specialized bow was created especially for windlings, who lack the stature to use standard bows. A windling bow is 18 inches long and fires 9 to 12 inch long arrows.

Throwing Weapon Descriptions

Bola: *This is an entangling weapon.* A bola is a leather strap

MISSILE WEAPONS TABLE

Weapon	Damage Step	STR Min.	Size	Short Range	Medium Range	Long Range	Cost	Weight	Availability
Blowgun	1	3	1	2–4	5–8	12–16	2	10 oz.	Unusual
Box of 10 Needles	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	8 oz.	Unusual
Elven Warbow	5	12*	5	2–80	81–160	161–320	200	4	Rare**
20 Warbow Arrows	—	—	—	—	—	—	25	4	Rare**
Light Crossbow	4	9	3	2–50	51–100	101–200	50	5	Average
15 Light Bolts	—	—	—	—	—	—	15	3	Average
Longbow	4	11*	5	2–60	61–120	121–240	60	4	Average
20 Longbow Arrows	—	—	—	—	—	—	10	3	Average
Medium Crossbow	5	12	4	2–70	71–140	141–280	100	7	Unusual
15 Medium Bolts	—	—	—	—	—	—	20	4	Unusual
Quiver	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2	Average
Shortbow	3	8	3	2–30	31–60	61–120	15	3	Average
20 Shortbow Arrows	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	2	Average
Sling	2	5	2	2–20	21–40	41–80	3	1	Average
Troll Sling	4	10	4	2–30	31–60	61–120	15	4	Average
Windling Bow	3	5	2	2–12	13–24	25–48	25	14 oz.	Average
20 Windling Bow Arrows	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	8 oz.	Average

* A minimum Dexterity value of 15 is required to use an elven warbow. A minimum Dexterity value of 13 is required to use a longbow.

** Better the Availability rating by one level for elves attempting to purchase this weapon.

THROWING WEAPONS TABLE

Weapon	Damage Step	STR Min.	Size	Short Range	Medium Range	Long Range	Cost	Weight	Availability
Bola	3	6***	2	2–12	13–20	21–24	10	2	Average
Burning Oil Flask	5*	4	3	2–6	7–10	11–12	6	1	Average
Dagger	2	4	1	2–9	10–15	16–18	8 cp	1	Average
Dart	1	4	1	2–18	19–30	31–36	3 cp	8 oz.	Average
Flight Dagger	2	4	1	2–21	22–35	36–42	25	12 oz.	Unusual
Hawk Hatchet	4	8	3	2–24	25–40	41–48	75	2	Unusual
Knife	1	3	1	2–6	7–10	11–12	3 cp	10 oz.	Everyday
Net	—	4–8***	3-6	2–6	7–10	11–12	15	5	Average
Sadoor Net	—	3–6***	2-5	2–6	7–10	11–12	30	2	Rare**
Spear	4	9	3	2–18	19–30	31–36	9	3	Average
Throwing Axe	3	7	3	2–12	13–20	21–24	25	2	Average
Throwing Dagger	2	4	1	2–15	16–25	26–30	2	12 oz.	Average
Windling Net	—	3***	2	2–6	7–10	11–12	15	12 oz.	Average
Windling Spear	2	4	1	2–9	10–15	16–18	25	8 oz.	Unusual**

* Roll a fixed Step 5 damage—do not add this Damage step to the wielder's Strength step.
** Better the Availability rating by one level for windlings attempting to purchase this weapon.
*** A minimum Dexterity value of 9 is required to use a bola or net.

fitted with two metal or stone weights on either end. Some bolas have multiple straps, each tipped with weights and tied together in the center. The straps range from 1 to 3 feet in length. The weights can be of any shape, and many artisans carve them to look like animals. A bola can both entangle and damage a target; after inflicting damage to the target, the bola may also entangle it (see **Entangling Weapons** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 411). The Difficulty Number to break free of the entanglement is 9.

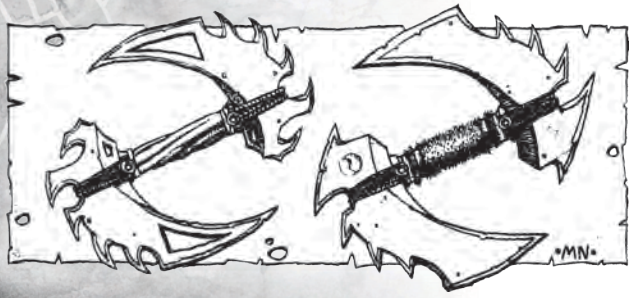
Burning Oil Flask: Oil can be fashioned into a homemade bomb and used as a throwing weapon. To make such a weapon, a character must pour oil into a flask, stuff the flask's open end with cloth, set the cloth afire and throw the flask at the target. The container will shatter on striking the target or the ground nearby, spreading flames all around unless the attacker rolls a Pathetic result on his Attack Test. (See **Throwing Objects** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 412, for specific Physical Defense and Scatter rules when using oil as a throwing weapon.) Unless stamped out, the oil will burn for 3 combat rounds, during which time anyone spattered by it takes Step 5 damage.

Dagger: Technically a melee weapon, a dagger can also function as a throwing weapon.

Dart: Darts are any small, balanced throwing weapons less than 6 inches long. Some are simply pointed metal rods, others are elaborate constructions of wood, stone, and precious gems tipped with needle-sharp metal that can be dipped in poison. Many darts also have feathered fletching.

Flight Dagger: The blade of the flight dagger is alloyed with a tiny amount of True air, which gives the dagger lift and greater range than a throwing dagger.

Hawk Hatchet: The hawk hatchet is a Z-shaped weapon. Blades shaped like hawk's wings form the top and bottom of the "Z" and a wooden handle forms the diagonal. The wielder throws the hatchet with an overhand snap to send it whirling toward its target, its "wings" providing lift for the flight.



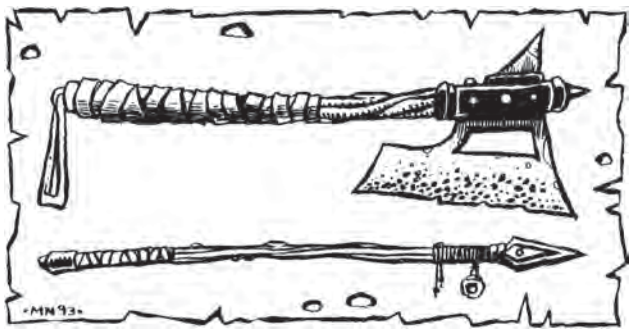
Knife: A knife can also be used as a throwing weapon.

Net: *This is an entangling weapon.* Nets are used to entangle an opponent, and can be as simple as a large piece of cloth or as complex as a series of ropes tied together in elaborate patterns. A net can be square or circular, and its size depends on what your character wants to capture. A net designed to catch windlings can fit in a pocket, while the nets used by Theran slave traders can hold up to ten human-sized Name-givers. A standard net can capture creatures larger than a windling in size. The Difficulty Number to break free of the entanglement is 12 (see **Entangling Weapons** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 411).

Sadoor Net: *This is an entangling weapon.* Typically used by windlings, the sadoor net makes it more difficult for ensnared creatures to break out. Sadoor nets cannot be used to ensnare creatures larger than a human, t'skrang or ork (this means trolls and obsidimen cannot be captured in one of these nets). Sadoor nets are sometimes soaked in a paralytic contact poison, such as *keesra*, to ensure the "compliance" of the ensnared creature. The Difficulty Number to break free of the entanglement is 14 (see **Entangling Weapons** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 411).

Spear: Often used as a throwing weapon, most spears are 3 to 5 feet long and tipped with a stone or metal head. A spear can be thrown with one hand.

Throwing Axe: A throwing axe is the same size as a hand-axe, but is specifically designed for throwing. It has either a single or double blade, which is usually smaller than the blade of a hand-axe.



Throwing Dagger: The throwing dagger is a flatter, thinner version of a conventional dagger, specially balanced for throwing.

Windling Net: Like a normal net, but designed to capture creatures windling-size and smaller.

Windling Spear: The windling spear is a windling-sized version

of its larger counterpart. This 2 foot long spear is balanced to enable a windling to throw it even while flying. Windling spears are usually tipped with metal, because stone spearheads often throw off the delicate balance of these weapons.

Repairing Damaged Weapons

Damaged weapons can be repaired. Repairs require one week for each Damage step lost by the weapon. Repair costs are approximately 10 percent of the price for a new weapon of the same type per step repaired (see **Services**, p. 453). Repairs can also be performed by anyone using the Craft Weapon skill or by a Weaponsmith. A ruined item cannot be repaired.

Damaged Thread Weapons

Magical weapons reduced below Damage step 1 cannot be repaired. As long as the item's Damage step remains above zero, it does not need to be repaired; in effect, the item repairs itself. Though the physical form of the item may be dented or marked, possibly altering its True pattern, the magic of the item restores its Damage step at the rate of +1 per week, until it reaches its original value.

Armor and Shields

Characters use armor and shields to protect themselves from injury while engaged in combat.

Armor Restrictions

Because the Name-giver races have different physiques, the cost and weight of armor varies for each race. Trolls, obsidimen, t'skrang (only if the armor is supposed to protect the tail), and windlings add a 10 percent fitting fee to the armor prices listed in the Armor Table. Multiply the standard weight of armor by 1.25 to determine the weight of armor tailored for trolls and obsidimen. Multiply the standard weight by .2 to determine the weight of armor tailored for windlings.

Living Armor

Obsidimen only wear "living" armor—bark, fernweave, blood pebbles, crystal, and similar armors. This is noted in the armor's description (see **Armor Descriptions**, below).

Note that some shields are also described as being living armor in their description. The restriction for obsidimen wearing only living armor does not apply to shields. The notation is included here to differentiate these shields from normal shields for the purpose of creating them (see **Living Armor** in the **Enchanting** chapter, p. 277).

Shield Restrictions

Shields provide a character with an extra layer of protection, at the expense of restricting the character to wielding only one-handed weapons (see **Weapon Size Restrictions**, p. 434).

Characters of dwarf size and larger often use shields. Obsidimen and trolls use shields modified to fit their larger arms. Windlings, because of their size, rarely burden themselves with shields. Trolls and obsidimen add a 10 percent fitting fee to the shield prices listed in the Shield Table. Multiply the standard weight of the shield by 1.25 to determine the weight of shields sized for trolls and obsidimen. Multiply the standard weight by .2 to determine the weight of shields sized for windlings.

Although a rare sight, some t'skrang attach a small shield to their tail for additional protection. Only shields with an Initiative Penalty of 0 can be attached to a tail in this manner, and the tail can not be used to make attacks with a shield attached.

Initiative Penalties

Some armor and shields are particularly encumbering and reduce the wearer's Initiative. The item's Initiative Penalty is subtracted from the wearer's base Initiative step. Initiative penalties are cumulative. A character wearing armor and using a shield incurs a penalty to his Initiative Tests equal to the combined Initiative Penalty for his armor and shield.

A character cannot wear a set of armor or carry a shield if doing so would reduce his base Initiative step below 1.

Caelarion wears crystal ringlet armor and carries a footman's shield; the armor carries an Initiative Penalty of 2 and the buckler has an Initiative Penalty of 1. Adding these together, Caelarion suffers a –3 penalty to his Initiative Tests while wearing this armor combination.

Initiative penalties for armor and shields are listed in the Armor and Shield Tables, below.

Helmets

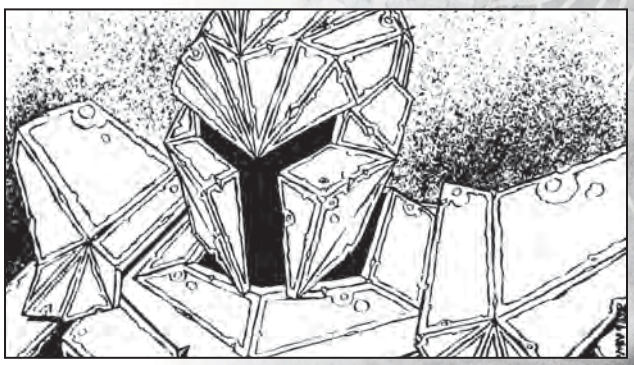
Some types of armor are noted as not having a helmet, leaving the character's head (or another part of their body) exposed. At the gamemaster's discretion, an opponent may use the Called Shot combat option to attack the exposed area (see the **Combat** chapter, p. 404). If the attack hits, the character takes damage as if from an Armor-Defeating Hit.

Armor Descriptions

Bark: *This is living armor.* Bark armor was originally created by the Namdroth (a secretive society of orks), and is woven from the bark of the *hursthen* tree, a short, stubby tree with shaggy, easily-stripped bark. Only recently have orks recognized its uses. Like fernweave, the armor is living, and provides its Mystic Armor bonus only when watered once every three days. However, bark armor loses moisture more easily than fernweave and once completely dried out it cannot be revived.

Blood Pebbles: *This is living armor.* Blood pebbles are a form of living elemental armor. Hundreds of small elemental stones are embedded in the character's skin, drawing power from the magic in his blood. The character wearing this type of armor takes 4 permanent Damage Points that cannot be healed while the armor is worn. Implanting or removing blood pebbles requires one day of work by a trained Weaponsmith. This armor does not come with a helmet.

Chain Mail: Made from interlocking metal rings, chain mail is flexible but slow to bend, which impedes the character's movement. Chain mail protects the character's entire body, except the legs below the knees. It comes with a chain hood to cover the head, which acts as a helmet.



ARMOR TABLE

Armor	Physical Armor	Mystic Armor	Initiative Penalty	EDN	Cost	Weight	Availability
Bark	3	3	2	14	100	20	Unusual
Blood Pebble	5	3	1	20	300	NA	Rare
Chain Mail	7	0	3	—	180	40	Average
Crystal Plate	7	7	5	22	12,000	90	Rare
Crystal Ringlet	4	4	2	16	500	45	Rare
Espagra-Scale Cloak	3	1	0/1*	—	200	10	Rare
Fernweave	2	3	0	13	125	15	Unusual
Hardened Leather	5	0	1	—	40	20	Average
Hide Armor	5	1	1	—	50	25	Average
Leather	3	0	0	—	10	15	Average
Living Crystal	6	3	2	22	1,100	NA	Rare
Living Hair Barding	4	4	1	16[E]	350	NA	Rare
Obsidiman Skin	3	1	0	—	100	20	Rare
Padded Cloth	2	0	0	—	2	5	Average
Padded Leather	4	0	0	—	20	20	Average
Plate Mail	9	0	4	—	3,000	60	Unusual
Ring Mail	6	0	2	—	110	30	Average
Wyvern-Skin	8	1	3	17[W]	2,000	50	Rare

EDN: The armor's Enchanting Difficulty Number (see the **Enchanting** chapter, p. 275). If the item requires True elements to be woven into it separately, the type of element is noted in superscript (A = True air; E = True earth; F = True fire; W = True water; Wd = True wood). See **Weaving True Elements Into Patterns** in the **Enchanting** chapter, p. 274.

* The second Initiative Penalty is used when the cloak is worn over other types of armor (see text).

Crystal Plate: *This is living armor.* This form of plate mail is made from living crystal rather than metal. To provide sustenance for the living crystal, the armor is enchanted. The enchantments must be renewed each year at a cost of 2,400 silver pieces. Without the enchantment the armor loses its Mystic Armor bonus and the living crystal becomes dormant. Renewing the enchantment automatically renews the living crystal, even on centuries-old armor. Crystal plate is extremely heavy, and joints sometimes grind against one another, causing an annoying noise while moving. A full suit of crystal plate includes a helmet.

Crystal Ringlet: *This is living armor.* Made from carved, interlocking rings of living crystal, this armor protects the character's entire body except for the legs below the knee. A full set of crystal ringlet armor includes a helmet. To provide sustenance for the living crystal, the armor is enchanted. The enchantments must be renewed each year at a cost of 100 silver pieces. Without the enchantment the armor loses its Mystic Armor bonus and the living crystal becomes dormant.

Espagra-Scale Cloak: Espagra-scale cloaks, fashionable among dwarfs, are made from the hide of the espagra—a brightly-colored, scaled, flying reptile—and provide similar protection to leather armor. Espagra-scale cloaks are perfectly suited to those social occasions when an individual desires some physical protection, yet does not wish to look awkward by wearing a suit of full armor. The cloak is fastened around the neck and does not include a hood which could be used as a helmet. When worn over other armor the Physical and Mystic Armor bonuses stack, but the wearer incurs an additional –1 Initiative Penalty. This penalty cannot be removed by talent knacks such as Smooth Armor; it reflects the encumbering effect of wearing multiple sets of armor.

Fernweave: *This is living armor.* Woven from deep-forest vines and herbs, fernweave is living armor that must be watered once every three days. If the armor is not watered, the magical properties of the herbs disappear, along with the Mystic Armor bonus this armor provides. Dormant fernweave armor will revive if watered, even after a considerable lapse of time (centuries in some cases). Watering fernweave consumes one day's water ration. Fernweave armor does not come with a helmet.

Hardened Leather: Hardened leather armor has been boiled to be made harder than normal leather. This armor protects the character's entire body except for the forearms and legs below the knee. Hardened leather armor does not come with a helmet.

Hide: This armor is commonly made by sewing tanned animal hides to a normal suit of leather armor. Hide armor retains the shape of the animal the hide came from, including its paws and head, the latter which is often worn as a helmet. The paws cannot be used as weapons. Animal hides commonly used to make hide armor include: bear, jaguar, lion, and gorilla skins.

Leather: This armor is made from one to three layers of soft leather. The thinner parts of the armor provide freedom of movement for joints and limbs. Leather armor protects the character's entire body except for the forearms, and legs below the knee. Leather armor does not come with a helmet.

Living Crystal: *This is living armor.* Living crystal armor is made up of small columns of crystal that are embedded inside the character's body. The magic in the character's blood causes the crystals to grow until the armor covers the character's skin. Implanting the crystal inflicts 5 permanent Damage Points to the character, that cannot be healed while the armor is worn. Because the crystal is alive, the character can feel through the armor and move within it as if it was his skin. Portions of the armor, particularly the crystal columns, retain their hardness. Living crystal armor protects the character's entire body except for the head; attempting to grow crystal on the head causes fatal brain damage. Implanting or removing living crystal armor requires 3 days of

work by a trained Weaponsmith.

Living Hair Barding: *This is living armor.* This type of armor is normally used by mounts, but occasionally worn by Name-givers. Made of thundra hair woven together with small bits of True earth to create an armored material similar to rhinoceros horn, it is woven into the mount's own hair by a trained Cavalryman or Beastmaster. For each of the next four days, it inflicts 1 permanent Damage Point per day (4 permanent Damage Points in total), until it fully takes root in the animal's or Name-giver's bloodstream. It provides no protection until completely embedded. Living hair does not cover the wearer's head, feet or hands. Removing living hair barding takes four days, after which time the character can heal the permanent damage.

Obsidiman Skin: This armor is made from the skin of a slain obsidiman. The negative reaction it elicits in most Name-givers usually outweighs its protective value. Obsidimen will attack anyone wearing this armor on sight. Dwarfs and trolls consider the wearing of obsidiman skin armor an ugly and distasteful practice, and react to the character with loathing; worsen the Attitude toward the character (and his obvious companions) for Interaction Tests by two degrees. This armor does not come with a helmet.

Padded Cloth: Padded cloth armor comprises two layers of quilted raw cotton. It protects the character's entire body except for the forearms and legs below the knee. Padded cloth armor does not come with a helmet.

Padded Leather: Padded leather armor combines padded cloth with a covering of leather armor. It protects the character's entire body except for the forearms and legs below the knee. Padded leather does not come with a helmet.

Plate Mail: Plate mail is composed of fitted and jointed pieces of steel plate, with chain mail to protect vulnerable gaps. Though the armor moves smoothly for such a massive and ungainly-looking construct, the heaviness of the plate metal makes quick reaction almost impossible. Plate mail protects the character's entire body. A full suit of plate mail includes a helmet.

Ring Mail: Ring mail is leather armor reinforced with metal rings to deflect blows. It protects the character's entire body except for the legs below the knee. A full set of ring mail includes a helmet.

Wyvern-Skin: Made from the hide of a wyvern, this armor retains most of the creature's natural resiliency and is fortified with True water to preserve that resiliency. This armor covers the torso, arms, and legs, and comes with a helmet. Wyverns will attack anyone wearing this armor on sight. Dragons consider the wearing of wyvern-skin armor distasteful and will react accordingly; worsen the Attitude toward the character (and his obvious companions) for Interaction Tests by one degree. True water is a key ingredient when enchanting this type of armor, to ensure its flexibility.

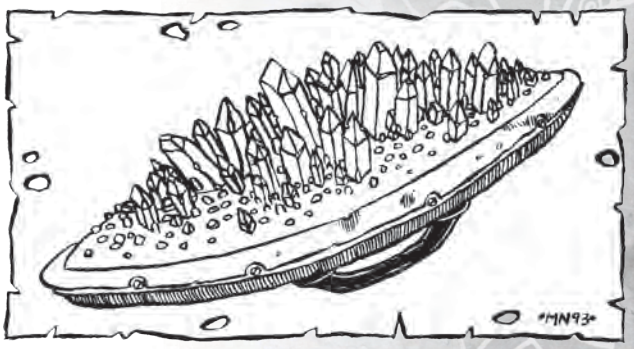
Shield Descriptions

Bark: *This is living armor.* As with bark armor, bark shields were originally created by the Namdroth, woven from *hursthen* tree bark. Like fernweave, the armor is living, and provides its Mystic Armor bonus only when watered once every three days. However, bark loses moisture more easily than fernweave and once dried out it cannot be revived.

Body: A wooden frame completely sheathed with metal, these tall shields protect the character from the neck to the shins.

Buckler: This small shield straps to the character's forearm. The character may fire a bow while wearing a buckler, but cannot use a melee or throwing weapon with the shielded hand.

Crystal Buckler: *This is living armor.* A crystal buckler is a small shield made from living crystal usually strapped to the character's forearm. The enchantments that sustain the crystal must be renewed annually at a cost of 10 silver pieces. Without the enchantment, the shield loses its Mystic Armor bonus and the living crystal becomes dormant. Renewing the enchantment automatically revives the living crystal, even on a centuries-old shield. Crystal bucklers are usually wielded by crystal raiders, although this type of shield is found in all parts of Barsaive. The crystal buckler is the shield of choice for those crystal raiders that prefer greater mobility over protection.



Crystal Raider: *This is living armor.* A crystal raider shield is made from living crystal embedded in a wood or metal frame. The enchantments that sustain the crystal must be renewed annually at a cost of 30 silver pieces. Without the enchantment, the shield loses its Mystic Armor bonus and the living crystal becomes dormant. Renewing the enchantment automatically revives the living crystal, even on a centuries-old shield.

Ferndask: *This is living armor.* A ferndask is a buckler made from vines and herbs, similar to fernweave armor. The fern-

SHIELD TABLE

Shield	Physical Armor	Mystic Armor	Initiative Penalty	Shatter Threshold	EDN	Cost	Weight	Availability
Bark	2	1	1	14	11	15	5	Unusual
Body	5	0	2	21	—	50	15	Unusual
Buckler	1	0	0	17	—	5	3	Average
Crystal Buckler	1	1	0	17	10	50	5	Rare
Crystal Raider	3	3	2	18	14	150	15	Rare
Ferndask	1	2	1	16	11	22	5	Unusual
Footman's	3	0	1	19	—	15	10	Average
Rider's	3	0	1	19	—	20	8	Average

EDN: The shield's Enchanting Difficulty Number (see the **Enchanting** chapter, p. 275)

dask is living and must be watered once every three days or its magical properties will disappear along with the shield's Mystic Armor bonus. The magical herbs of a ferndask become dormant when unwatered but can be revived. Watering the ferndask consumes half a day's water ration. A ferndask shield is denser and heavier than fernweave armor, and correspondingly heavier than a conventional buckler. Because of the shield's size, a bow can be employed while using a ferndask in the same way as a buckler.

Footman's: A footman's shield is made of wood and rimmed and reinforced with metal. Properly used, a footman's shield protects most of the character's upper body and can also be used to block some low blows.

Rider's: A rider's shield resembles a footman's shield, but is specifically designed to protect a mounted rider. Cavalrymen almost exclusively use this kind of shield. Although it protects the rider, it does not protect his mount.

Repairing Damaged Armor

Damaged armor and shields can be repaired. Repairs require one week for each point of Armor rating lost by the armor or shield. Repair costs are approximately 10 percent of the price for a new item of the same type for each point repaired (see **Services**, p. 453). Repairs can also be performed by anyone using the Craft Armor skill or by a Weaponsmith. A ruined item cannot be repaired.

Damaged Thread Armor

Magical armor and shields with both Physical and Mystic Armor ratings reduced below 1 cannot be repaired. As long as one of the item's Physical or Mystic Armor ratings remains above zero, it does not need to be repaired; in effect, the item repairs itself. Though the physical form of the item may be dented or marked, possibly altering its True pattern, the magic of the item restores its Physical and Mystic Armor at the rate of +1 per week, until they reach their original values.

Creating Piecemeal Armor

If such a thing is available and they choose to do so, adventurers wear complete suits of armor. If obtaining a complete set of armor becomes difficult, as is often the case for Barsaive's trolls, a character may make do by combining bits and pieces of different types of armor into a whole suit. Suits constructed in such a way are commonly referred to as piecemeal armor. The following rules govern the creation, properties, and use of piecemeal armor. Though only trolls usually wear such gear, characters of any race may use piecemeal armor with the gamemaster's approval.

Note that individual pieces of living crystal, living hair, obsidiman skin, espagra– or wyvern-scale, and blood pebble armor cannot be combined with other types of armor; the nature of such armor makes it impossible to use effectively in pieces.

When combining different types of armor into a piecemeal suit, players must account for the armor's size, Physical and Mystic Armor, Initiative Penalty, and the cost of purchasing armor pieces. Rules for each of these factors appear below.

Armor Points and Armor Size

Each piece of armor that can make up a piecemeal suit must be designated as large, medium, or small. These three sizes represent the portion of the wearer's body that the piece of armor covers. Large pieces, such as a breastplate or full leggings, cover at least half of the body. Medium pieces cover less than half of the body. Small pieces, such as shoulder guards, forearm guards, and helms, cover less than one fifth of the body.

Each piece of armor used to create a piecemeal suit is worth a certain number of Armor Points. These points serve only to limit the possible combinations of armor in a piecemeal suit, and have no relationship to the armor's Physical or Mystic Armor ratings.

PIECEMEAL ARMOR RATING TABLE

Armor	Small	Medium	Large
Bark	1/0	1/1	1/1
Chain Mail	2/0	3/0	3/0
Crystal Plate	2/1	2/1	3/2
Crystal Ringlet	1/1	1/1	2/1
Fernweave	1/0	1/1	1/1
Hardened Leather	1/0	1/0	2/0
Hide	1/0	1/0	2/1
Leather	1/0	1/0	1/0
Padded Cloth	1/0	1/0	1/0
Padded Leather	1/0	1/0	2/0
Plate Mail	3/0	4/0	4/0
Ring Mail	2/0	2/0	3/0

Each large piece of armor is worth 3 Armor Points, each medium piece of armor is worth 2 Armor Points, and each small piece of armor is worth 1 Armor Point. The total Armor Points of a piecemeal suit of armor must not exceed 5; within that limitation, a character can combine different types and sizes of armor in any way he wishes. For example, a character can combine 1 large piece of armor with 1 medium piece of armor or 2 small pieces of armor.

Players need not use all 5 Armor Points when creating piecemeal armor. In fact, piecing together less than the full complement of armor can allow a character to avoid the most severe Initiative penalties for combining different armors. A single set of piecemeal armor may never contain more than two pieces of the same type of armor. Note that 2 small pieces of a type of armor count as 1 medium piece of the same type, and 1 medium plus 1 small piece of the same type of armor together count as 1 large piece of that type. For example, 2 small pieces of chain mail count as 1 medium piece; a medium piece of chain mail plus a small piece count as 1 large piece of chain mail.

These rules assume that characters choose pieces of armor of the appropriate size for their race to create a piecemeal suit. A large piece of troll-sized armor is far too large for most other races to use; likewise, only a windling can feasibly wear a small piece of windling-sized armor. To determine the weight and cost of armor for windlings, obsidimen and trolls, use the armor weights, modified as normal for the character's race. Use the costs listed in the Piecemeal Armor Price Table as the base cost.

Richard is creating a troll character from the highlands and wants his troll to have a set of piecemeal armor. He decides to combine three pieces: a large piece of ring mail and two others. A large piece of armor is worth 3 Armor Points, so Richard can only add 2 additional small pieces or 1 additional medium piece. He chooses 1 small piece of hardened leather armor and 1 small piece of padded leather armor, for a total of 5 Armor Points.

Physical and Mystic Armor

Most suits of armor are built to be worn as a whole rather than divided into many smaller pieces. Therefore, using most types of armor in piecemeal fashion significantly decreases their effectiveness, particularly the protection represented by their Mystic Armor rating. The Piecemeal Armor Rating Table lists the Physical and Mystic Armor ratings for small, medium, and large pieces of each type of armor. In each column, the number to the left of the slash represents the Physical Armor rating for each piece, and the number to the right of the slash represents the Mystic Armor rating. Once a character has created his piecemeal suit, add together the ratings for each piece to determine the suit's total Physical and Mystic Armor rating.

Characters wearing piecemeal armor may still use shields according to the normal rules.

PIECEMEAL ARMOR INITIATIVE PENALTY TABLE			
Armor	**Small**	**Medium**	**Large**
Bark	1	1	2
Chain Mail	1	2	2
Crystal Plate	2	3	4
Crystal Ringlet	1	1	2
Fernweave	0	0	0
Hardened Leather	0	0	1
Hide	0	0	1
Leather	0	0	1
Padded Cloth	0	0	1
Padded Leather	0	0	1
Plate Mail	2	2	3
Ring Mail	1	1	2

Richard creates a suit of piecemeal armor for his troll character using a large piece of ring mail, a small piece of hardened leather, and a small piece of padded leather. Consulting the Piecemeal Armor Rating Table, he sees that the large piece has Physical Armor 3 and Mystic Armor 0; the 2 small pieces each have Physical Armor 1 and Mystic Armor 0. Therefore, the totals for this suit of armor are Physical Armor 5 and Mystic Armor 0.

Initiative Penalties

Like standard armor, piecemeal suits often restrict the wearer by their weight or by inhibiting the wearer's flexibility. The Piecemeal Armor Initiative Penalty Table reflects such restrictions applicable to the various sizes and types of armor pieces available. As with calculating Physical and Mystic Armor ratings, add together the modifiers for each piece to determine the total Initiative Penalty for any suit of piecemeal armor.

After choosing the different types and sizes of piecemeal armor for his character, Richard must determine his armor's total Initiative Penalty. According to the Piecemeal Armor Initiative Penalty Modifier Table, a large piece of ring mail has a modifier of 2, while the two small pieces of leather each have modifiers of 0. This add together to give Richard's suit of armor a total Initiative Penalty of 2. Anyone wearing this armor suffers a –2 penalty to his Initiative Tests.

Purchasing Armor Pieces

If a character cannot acquire the various pieces of armor for a piecemeal suit by removing armor from dead opponents or finding it in kaers or citadels (the way most highland trolls acquire their armor), he must purchase individual armor pieces. Because most makers and sellers of armor prefer to sell whole suits rather than separate pieces, buying armor bit by bit is an uncommon practice. To reflect this fact, Availability Ratings for individual pieces of armor are worsened by one level (see **Purchasing Goods**, p. 432). If players want their characters to begin the game with a suit of piecemeal armor, they must pay the costs listed on the Piecemeal Armor Price Table from their starting funds. Characters may only create piecemeal armor suits with gamemaster approval. Unless otherwise noted, all prices are in silver pieces.

PIECEMEAL ARMOR PRICE TABLE				
Armor	**Small**	**Medium**	**Large**	**Availability**
Bark	15	35	50	Unusual
Chain Mail	30	60	90	Average
Crystal Plate	2,000	4,000	6,000	Average
Crystal Ringlet	85	165	250	Average
Fernweave	20	45	65	Unusual
Hardened Leather	5	15	20	Average
Hide	10	15	25	Average
Leather	2	3	5	Average
Padded Cloth	3 cp	7 cp	1	Average
Padded Leather	3	7	10	Average
Plate Mail	500	1,000	1,500	Unusual
Ring Mail	20	35	55	Average

Richard determines the cost of his armor by consulting the Piecemeal Armor Price Table. The large piece of ring mail costs 55 silver pieces, the small piece of padded leather armor costs 4 silver pieces, and the small piece of hardened leather armor costs 7 silver pieces, for a total cost of 66 silver pieces.

Magical Equipment

Many magical items are available for purchase and use by adventurers, from blood charms to healing aids.

Windling Magical Equipment

Windlings, like other Name-givers, use magical equipment, but it must usually be custom-made or portioned relative to their small size. Unfortunately, a windling's size does not reduce the cost of these items: though they generally require less raw material, it requires more exacting labor to create them for windlings.

Non-windling enchanters find it difficult to make small magical items—troll and obsidimen enchanters almost impossibly so—and therefore charge more for their efforts. Similar items made by windling enchanters cost 25 percent less, but have an Availability Rating one level higher than normal. Multiply the weight of magical equipment by .2 to determine the weight of equipment sized for windlings.

Blood Charms

Blood charms are magical items that draw on the magical power within a character's blood. Frequently used in the days before the Scourge, blood charms have remained popular and enjoy widespread use in Barsaive's burgeoning age of exploration, despite the very real cost they exact from those who wear them. All blood charms cause the wearer damage that cannot be healed until the charm is used or destroyed. Characters must attach blood charms directly to their skin; the charm breaks through the skin to reach the blood it needs to activate.

Blood charm magic builds slowly. **A character must wear a charm for at least 24 hours before he can use it.**

Charms that may be recharged after use require the character to first heal the permanent damage taken when implanting the charm. Then the character takes permanent damage again to recharge the charm. Because the blood charm is already attuned to the character, he does not need to wait another 24 hours before again using it.

Blood Charm Descriptions

Absorb Blow: Absorb blow charms are usually made from quartz, veined red from the character's blood. Implanting the charm causes the character 2 permanent Damage Points. When activated, it absorbs the first 12 Damage Points inflicted on the character. Armor-Defeating Hits are resolved normally, bypassing the charm's magical benefits. A character cannot use the charm if he is Surprised or Blindsided (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 406). After absorbing 12 Damage Points, the charm is destroyed, leaving only a cracked, blackened piece of stone.

Astral-Sensitive Eye: Astral-sensitive eyes are magically

treated lumps of amber, hollowed out and filled with nourishing fluid and a gel worm, then attached to an eye patch. When first worn, the worm burrows into the character's eye, destroying it. Though the fluid in the gem makes it relatively painless, this process causes the character 2 permanent Damage Points. Once implanted, the charm can never be removed—the permanent damage can never be healed. Though the character's normal vision through the gem is slightly cloudy, the eye allows him to see into astral space as if he possessed the Astral Sight talent (see the **Talents** chapter, p. 170). The character gains a +1 bonus to his Astral Sensing Test, using his Perception step. If the character knows the Astral Sight talent, he gains a +1 bonus to his Astral Sight Test. Each time the charm is used to make an Astral Sensing Test, the character takes 1 Strain Point of damage.

Blood Karma: Blood karma charms are crafted from intricately woven gold, silver and copper wire, set with small diamonds. Implanting the charm causes the character 1 permanent Damage Point. When activated, it allows the character to spend multiple Karma Points on a single Talent Test. The character takes 1 Strain Point of damage for each Karma Point he spends. Karma is spent on the Talent Test one point at a time, until the test is successful, the character runs out of Karma Points, or he decides to stop. After use, the charm is destroyed, leaving the character with a tarnished filigree of twisted wire embedded with cracked dusty black diamonds.

Blood Knuckles: Blood knuckles are small stones of jade, agate or lapis lazuli set into the character's knuckles in a manner similar to that for blood pebble armor. Veins of the character's blood appear in the stones, darkening them. For 1 Strain Point of damage the character may use his blood knuckles to add a +2 bonus to an unarmed Damage Test. Warriors have been known to place blood knuckles in the joints of their feet, knees, or tails (in the case of t'skrang), to take advantage of their favored attack methods. Implanting blood knuckles causes the character 2 permanent Damage Points. The process of implanting or removing blood knuckles requires a trained Weaponsmith and takes four hours to complete.

Blood Matrix: A blood matrix acts as a spell-specific spell matrix. When preparing a blood matrix, a magician makes an Alchemy Test to alter the item's pattern so that it holds some of the essential pieces of a specific spell pattern. This change enables the magician to store the pattern of the spell in the item, in much the same way as storing a spell in a standard spell matrix. Creating a blood matrix requires a successful Alchemy Test against the Reattunement Difficulty of the spell being attuned to the blood matrix. To create Enhanced or Armored blood matrices, the magician must achieve an Excellent or Extraordinary result (Enhanced or Armored, respectively) on a second Alchemy Test against the stored spell's Reattunement Difficulty. Nethermancers can create blood matrices using half-magic. The blood matrix acts as a normal spell matrix of the equivalent type (Armored, Enhanced, or Spell; there are no Shared Matrix versions of this charm), except it can contain only the spell pattern it was specifically created to store. Attaching a blood matrix charm causes the character 2 permanent Damage Points. For 2 Strain Points of damage the character may cast the spell attuned to the blood matrix. Casting the spell requires the character to make Thread Weaving Tests for the type of magic involved to weave any remaining spell threads, then make a Spellcasting Test as normal. If the character does not possess the appropriate talents or skills to cast the spell, the charm cannot be used. Using an Enhanced blood matrix charm costs the wearer 3 Strain Points of damage; using an Armored blood matrix charm costs the wearer 4 Strain Points of damage.

Blood Weapon: *Susceptible to stress depatterning.* A blood weapon replaces part of the character's anatomy with a living crystal item that enhances his unarmed damage capability. The item usually mimics the natural weapons of animals or creatures: razor-sharp teeth, claws attached to a hand or foot, a stinger (embedded in a t'skrang's tail, for instance), or sharpened horns implanted in the character's skull. All of these different blood weapons have the same effect. Installing or removing the blood weapon requires a trained Weaponsmith and takes eight hours to complete, during which time the character takes 3 permanent Damage Points. For 1 Strain Point of damage, the blood weapon grants a +4 bonus to the character's unarmed Damage Test.

Bone Charm: Many ork tribes make magical charms from the bones of dead enemies who fought with valor, hoping to take the dead opponent's strength and courage for themselves. They are available in two versions:

Common bone charms are left unshaped as small chunks of knuckle-sized bone set into the wearer's skin with a metal pin. Implanting the charm causes the character 1 permanent Damage Point and grants a +1 bonus to any Recovery Tests he makes.

Shaped bone charms are worn only by tribal chieftains or magicians and are carved into shapes meaningful to the wearer, often crude or intricate representations of one of the Passions. These may be up to four inches long, are attached along the character's forearm, and are otherwise identical to absorb blow charms.

Crystal Arm: *Susceptible to stress depatterning.* A crystal arm is made of living crystal and implanted in the character's chest, or between his shoulder blades. Installation or removal of the arm requires a trained Weaponsmith, takes eight hours, and causes the character 3 permanent Damage Points. Once implanted, the arm can be used to pick up and move things as normal. For 1 Strain Point of damage, the character may use the crystal arm to make an unarmed combat Attack Test in addition to his other actions, but suffers a –2 penalty to all Action Tests that round, including the bonus Attack Test. A character may instead choose to only make an unarmed combat attack that round, thus avoiding the penalty. Alternatively, if the character knows the Second Attack or Swift Kick talent or skill, his crystal arm may be used to perform them without penalty. Damage dealt by the arm is based on the character's Willpower step, rather than his Strength step. Having an extra arm can be quite inconvenient; accommodating it requires a whole new wardrobe, custom-made torso armor and adjusting to new sleep positions. However, a character who has lost a real arm and replaces it with a crystal arm does not suffer the inconveniences of an unnaturally placed appendage. He may use it as he would a normal limb, however, he loses the ability to make a bonus unarmed attack.

Darksight Eye: A darksight eye is a magically treated piece of living crystal, hollowed out and filled with nourishing fluid and a gel worm, then attached to an eye patch. When first worn, the worm burrows into the character's eye, destroying it. Though the fluid in the gem makes it relatively painless, this process causes the character 2 permanent Damage Points. Once implanted, the charm can never be removed—the permanent damage can never be healed. Though the character's normal vision through the gem is slightly cloudy, the eye allows him to see in the dark as if he possessed the racial Low Light Vision ability (see the **Creating Characters** chapter, p. 49). A character who already has this ability gains no benefit from wearing a darksight eye.

BLOOD CHARM TABLE

Charm	DR	EDN	Cost	Weight	Availability
Absorb Blow	0	11	100	1	Unusual
Astral-Sensitive Eye	0	13	325	1	Unusual
Blood Karma	0	16	2,000	1	Rare
Blood Knuckles	1	11	180	1	Rare
Blood Matrix:					
Normal	1	Spec.	1,500	1	Unusual
Enhanced	1	Spec.	2,500	1	Rare
Armored	1	Spec.	3,500	1	Very Rare
Blood Weapon	1	20	500	3	Rare
Bone Charm:					
Common	0	12	175	1	Rare
Shaped	0	11	175	1	Rare
Crystal Arm	2	18	1,700	10	Very Rare
Darksight Eye	0	11	200	1	Unusual
Death Cheat	0	17	450	1	Unusual
Desperate Blow	1	14	275	1	Unusual
Desperate Spell	1	14	300	1	Unusual
Disturbing Appearance	3	20	1,000	1	Rare
Elemental Fend:					
Air	0	17	250	1	Unusual
Earth	0	17	200	1	Unusual
Fire	0	17	350	1	Unusual
Water	0	17	300	1	Unusual
Wood	0	17	400	1	Rare
Garlen Stone	NA	15	250	1	Rare
Horn Needle	1	14	450	1	Rare
Horror Fend	0	17	500	1	Unusual
Initiative Booster	1	21	600	1	Rare
Karma	2	16	1,000	1	Rare
Karma Absorber	3	20	500	Neg.	Very Rare
Poison Sac	2	18	1,000	1	Very Rare
Spore Glands	2	19	300	Neg.	Very Rare
Strength Booster	1	13	300	1	Rare
Targeting Eye	0	13	450	1	Unusual
Wings of Fire	2	18	1,000	3	Very Rare
Wound Balance	1	14	200	1	Unusual

DR: The value added to the character's Depatterning Rating (see **Blood Charm Depatterning**, p. 446).
EDN: The item's Enchanting Difficulty Number (see the **Enchanting** chapter, p. 275)
Neg.: Negligible weight for encumbrance purposes. At the gamemaster's discretion, approximately 10 such items weigh 1 pound.
Spec.: Special rules apply to the creation or purchase of these blood charms. See the charm's description for details.

Death Cheat: Usually made of turquoise or tourmaline, this charm bears a characteristic red spot drawn from the wearer's blood. Implanting a death cheat charm causes the character 3 permanent Damage Points. Upon the character's death, the death cheat charm allows the character to make a Recovery Test with a +6 bonus. Should the character have no Recovery Tests available, it grants a bonus Step 6 Recovery Test. If the result is enough to bring the character's Current Damage total below his Death Rating, then he lives, otherwise he remains dead. Once the charm has been used, it becomes inert, appearing as a translucent stone drained of most of its color. Though the charm has no intrinsic value thereafter, nobles or would-be heroes often offer up to 100 silver pieces for a used death cheat charm, openly wearing them as an unearned badge of honor.

Desperate Blow: Charm makers usually fashion desperate blow charms from steel and quartz. Implanting the charm causes the character 3 permanent Damage Points. The character's blood infuses the quartz with red, and one drop of blood is perpetually suspended from the steel. When activated, a desperate blow charm grants a +6 bonus to an Attack or Damage Test, chosen by the character. The charm may be recharged after use, which first requires the character to heal the permanent damage caused by using the charm.

Desperate Spell: Implanting a desperate spell charm causes the character 3 permanent Damage Points. Made of silver and a small pearl, the character's blood leaves brilliant red speckles on the pearl. When activated, a desperate blow charm grants a +6 bonus to a Spellcasting or spell Effect Test, chosen by the character. The charm may be recharged after use, which first requires the character to heal the permanent damage caused by the charm.

Disturbing Appearance: *Susceptible to stress depatterning.* Disturbing appearance charms cover a wide range of cosmetic alterations, all of them alarming. Examples include: skin made of glass, compound or serpentine eyes, scaled hide, gems in place of fingernails, hair made of wire or silk, bright-colored teeth or radically altered musculature. A character might also become disturbingly beautiful, with unnaturally fine and symmetrical features. The charm itself is innocuous—a small piece of black crystal, no bigger than a copper piece, embedded anywhere on the character's body. Implanting the charm causes the character 1 permanent Damage Point. For 1 Strain Point of damage, the disturbing appearance charm grants the wearer a +2 bonus to Interaction Tests where the alteration caused by the charm may prove beneficial. (Sometimes it's an advantage to be intimidating, awe-inspiring or unnervingly beautiful.) The bonus might also apply when attempting to seduce particularly perverse individuals.

Elemental Fend: Elemental fend charms are infused with True wood, fire, water, air or earth, protecting the character against the powers of spirits of the same element. An elemental fend charm is made by soaking a small piece of orichalcum in a special alchemical solution. After one week, the orichalcum is removed and a kernel of one of the five True elements is woven into it; at this point, the charm takes on the appearance of the True element in question. Implanting the charm causes the character 3 permanent Damage Points. When activated, the character adds +3 to his Physical and Spell Defense against spirit powers of the chosen element at a cost of 1 Strain Point of damage per combat round. When the character stops using it, the charm falls from his body, destroyed. The charm may be reattached, but requires the character to heal the damage the charm causes before recharging.

Garlen Stone: Garlen stones are small pebbles covered in golden caterpillar-like hairs. When swallowed, the hairs lengthen into spines and the stone attaches itself to the character's stomach or intestinal wall. Swallowing a Garlen stone causes the character 4 permanent Damage Points. Once ingested, a stone cannot be removed without killing its owner. For this reason, the permanent Damage Points caused by swallowing the Garlen stone can never be healed. Once per day, the character may use one of his available Recovery Tests to heal a Wound instead of healing Damage Points. This causes the character 2 Strain Points of damage, which are taken after the Wound is healed. The Garlen stone cannot be used again until the character has healed all Wounds and Damage Points he has incurred between uses. Garlen stones can only be created by questors of Garlen using the Alchemy skill (see the **Skills** chapter, p. 234). Implanting or using a Garlen stone never causes the character to increase his Depat-

terning Rating or make a Depatterning Test.

Horn Needle: These charms are small pieces of ivory or other animal horn painstakingly carved into thin needles. When implanted under the user's skin, the needle darkens from yellowish-gray to red with black streaks, and remains visible through the skin. This causes the character 3 permanent Damage Points. The charm increases the wearer's resistance to poisons and diseases. For 2 Strain Points of damage, the character gains a +3 bonus to Toughness-based Tests or adds +3 to his Spell Defense when resisting the effects of poison or disease.

Horror Fend: Charm makers construct Horror fend charms from gold and silver designed around a piece of True earth. Two drops of the wearer's blood travel along the gold, soak into the earth, emerge in the silver, then soak into the earth to start the pattern again. Implanting the charm causes the character 3 permanent Damage Points. Horror fend charms offer protection against the Horrors or their constructs. When activated, the character adds +3 to his Physical and Spell Defense against Horrors and Horror constructs at a cost of 1 Strain Point of damage per combat round. When the character stops using it, the charm falls from his body, inert. The charm may be reattached, but requires the character to heal the damage caused by the charm before recharging.

Initiative Booster: Made from ruby-colored crystal, Initiative booster charms turn as dark as obsidian when they absorb the wearer's blood. Implanting the charm causes the character 4 permanent Damage Points. These charms grant their wearer a bonus to Initiative Tests; for every Strain Point of damage the character takes, he gains a +1 bonus to his Initiative Test. The character must declare he is using the charm before he makes his Initiative Test.

Karma: Karma charms enable adepts to use Karma Points on non-Discipline talents. Each Karma charm is made for a specific talent, such as Melee Weapons, and can only be made for talents that are Discipline talents for at least one Discipline, and whose use requires an Action Test. Implanting a Karma charm causes the character 3 permanent Damage Points. After implanting the charm, the character may take 2 Strain Points of damage (in addition to the Strain cost of the talent) and spend a Karma Point on the talent. The charm does not actually make the talent a Discipline talent; if the talent requires Karma the adept must still spend the requisite Karma Point (see the **Talents** chapter, p. 167).

Karma Absorber: *Susceptible to stress depatterning.* To gain a Karma absorber, the character undergoes ritual scarification, which causes him 3 permanent Damage Points. Over a period of two months, the raised welts grow into a ring of tumor-like flesh around the crown of the skull. (In trolls, this soft flesh covers the hard cartilage of the horns.) The tissue acts as a lightning rod for Karma. Each time the character successfully strikes an opponent with a melee or missile weapon, an unarmed combat blow or a damage-causing spell, the character may take 2 Strain Points of damage to gain one of his opponent's Karma Points (his opponent reduces his Karma Points total accordingly). This blood charm is only effective against opponents who have Karma. The Karma absorber is sensitive to the touch. If it is hit by an opponent making a Called Shot, the character suffers an Armor-Defeating Hit and a minimum of 1 Wound. Such an attack also destroys the Karma absorber; it bursts, and spurts bloody pus all over the character. An opponent can only be affected by one use of this charm each round.

Poison Sac: Poison sacs are attached to blood weapons, so a character must already possess a blood weapon to have a poison sac installed. The installation causes 1 permanent Damage Point.

Blood Charm Depatterning

Optional Rule: "Depatterning" is the bland euphemism coined by magicians to describe what happens when excessive stress placed on a Name-giver's True pattern causes that pattern to collapse in on itself. Depatterning is always fatal, often spectacularly so. The most common cause of depatterning is from the use of blood charms. When a character uses a blood charm, he adds to his Depatterning Rating. The Depatterning Rating is a measure of how much stress the use of blood magic has caused to the character's True pattern. Each blood magic charm has its own Depatterning Rating, the amount by which the character's rating increases if he uses the item.

While the act of implanting a blood charm causes no harm (other than any permanent Damage Point costs associated with it), the first time a character uses a blood charm with a Depatterning Rating, he gains that rating. For every subsequent use of a blood charm, even those charms with a Depatterning Rating of 0, the gamemaster makes a Depatterning Test for the character, using the character's Willpower step against a Difficulty Number equal to the character's current Depatterning Rating. If the test fails, the character's True pattern begins to weaken, and the character's Depatterning Rating is increased by +1. If at any time the Depatterning Rating exceeds the character's Willpower value, the next time that character uses a blood charm and fails the Depatterning Test his True pattern dissolves and he dies spontaneously and horribly. The test is only made on activation of the charm. For example, if the charm has a Strain cost per round, the gamemaster makes a Depatterning Test only when the charm is activated, not each round.

The gamemaster may choose the manner of death from the following list or create another unique form of demise, depending on what seems most entertaining at the time:

- The character suffers a massive, fatal heart attack.
- The character implodes, deflating like a punctured balloon.
- The character explodes in a shower of mangled flesh.
- The character turns to crystal and shatters into a million shards.
- The character melts like wax in a flame.
- The character putrefies on the spot.

Once a character fails a Depatterning Test, his astral imprint reflects the weakening of his pattern. Characters can detect this weakening in astral space by achieving a Good result against the affected character's Spell Defense with an appropriate talent or spell, such as Astral Sight.

If the depatterning is detected before the affected character next uses one of his blood charms, he can restore his True pattern by removing all blood charms and not employing any form of blood magic, except the Strain caused by talent or other ability use, for a year and a day. After this time, the character's True pattern is restored. He can thereafter use blood charms if he so chooses, and begins the hazardous cycle all over again.

Characters suffering from weakened patterns are especially susceptible to spells and talents that target the character's True pattern. Using a spell or talent against a character with a weakened True pattern adds the character's current Depatterning Rating to the Spellcasting or Talent Test result.

Stress Depatterning

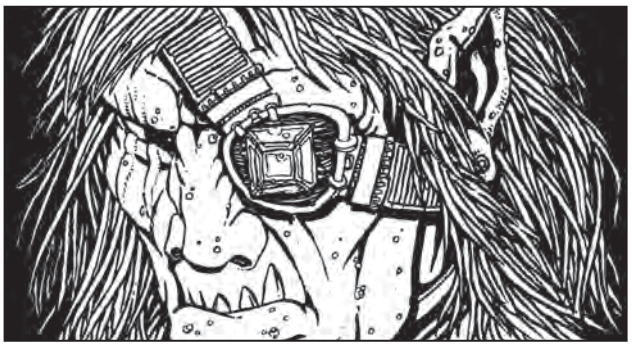
If a character has a blood charm noted in the description as being *susceptible to stress depatterning* implanted in his body, and suffers an injury to the specific part of his anatomy to which the blood charm is attached (as the result of a Called Shot, for instance), the character makes an immediate Depatterning Test. On a Pathetic result, the character dies instantly and horribly in a manner determined by the gamemaster. Magicians call this unfortunate phenomenon "stress depatterning." They don't readily admit that it can happen, simply because it depresses sales of blood charms.

A character with multiple blood weapons must specify to which one the poison sac is attached. No test is required for the character to affect a target with the poison—if the victim suffers a Wound from the blood weapon (see the **Combat** chapter, p. 403) the poison takes effect. The poison has a Spell Defense and Damage step equal to the character's Toughness step. Armor does not protect against this damage. A victim of a poison sac is immune to further hits from poison-sac-equipped weapons until he stops taking damage from the current one.

Spore Gland: A spore gland charm is a fungal parasite implanted in the glands around the character's throat. The implantation procedure causes the character 2 permanent Damage Points. Thereafter, whenever damage taken knocks the character unconscious, the gland opens up and sprays a cloud of corrosive spores. The cloud inflicts Step 4 damage to the unconscious character, and inflicts Toughness step damage to all other living targets within a 10 yard radius. No armor protects against this damage, although characters who have imbibed an anti-sporific potion are unaffected by the spores. Each character within range of the spores makes a Toughness Test against the unconscious character's Willpower step. Success indicates the character takes only half damage from the spores. The character's permanently swollen glands are visible only on close inspection, and the character smells slightly musty on humid days.

Strength Booster: Strength boosters are most often made of clear crystal that turns deep red when activated by the wearer's blood. These charms grant their wearer a bonus to Strength Tests; for every 2 Strain Points of damage the character takes, he gains a +1 bonus to Strength-only Tests. A strength booster charm cannot be used to augment Damage Tests in combat. Attaching a strength booster charm causes the character 2 permanent Damage Points.

Targeting Eye: A targeting eye is a magically treated piece of quartz, hollowed out and filled with a gel worm and nourishing fluid, then attached to an eye patch. When first worn, the worm burrows into the wearer's eye, destroying it. Though the fluid in the gem makes it relatively painless, the process causes the character 2 permanent Damage Points. Once implanted, the charm can never be removed—the permanent damage can never be healed. The character sees through the quartz normally, though his vision through that eye is a little cloudy. For 1 Strain Point of damage, the character gains a +2 bonus to his ranged combat Attack Test.



Wings of Fire: *Susceptible to stress depatterning.* The wings of fire charm consists of several magically treated fire opals embedded into the character's back in a crisscross fashion. The implantation process inflicts 3 permanent Damage Points. After a month-long healing period, the character can use the charm to fly for short periods. The character can remain airborne for up to Toughness step rounds. Each round spent flying causes 1 Strain Point of damage. The character's flying speed is determined as if he were a flying windling. When the charm is activated, jets of flame shoot out from the opals in the character's back. These magical flames are not hot, and cannot be used to damage opponents or to start fires. Windlings who have lost their wings sometimes resort to using this dangerous blood magic.

Wound Balance: Wound Balance charms are made of amber-colored crystal and turn a deep orange when activated by the wearer's blood. This charm grants the character a +3 bonus to Knockdown Tests. Each use causes the character 1 Strain Point of damage. Embedding a Wound Balance charm causes the character 3 permanent Damage Points.

Common Magic Items

Common magic items are those that do not require a woven thread to use. Many of these items have been created with one of the five True elements woven into their structure, which is what gives them their varied magical properties.

These properties can usually be activated or deactivated by a command word or gesture, though some are designed to react to other stimuli.

Common Magic Item Descriptions

Air Elevator: The type of air elevator most commonly found in Barsaive is a primitive version of those at the Theran fortress of Sky Point. Common air elevators are platforms, usually wooden, into which kernels of True air are woven. The True air allows the platform to rise and fall at the command of a person standing on the platform. Air elevators rise and descend at a rate of approximately one yard per round. They can be pushed from side to side, but remain steady against winds and such. Small air elevators are most often used to carry heavy items or provide access to high library shelves, such as those in the Great Library of Throal. They are also a means of reaching the upper floors of multi-story buildings that lack ladders or stairs. Larger air elevators are used to load cargo and materials on to floating airships. The cost shown is for a 3 yard by 3 yard by 1 yard elevator. Larger elevators will cost at least two to three times the listed price, at the gamemaster's discretion.

Bedroll of Comfort: Bedrolls of comfort are magically enchanted to change temperature as needed to keep their users comfortable. The bedrolls are made of *glinsthin* and *frasth* fibers—*glinsthin* grows on the highest and coldest mountain peaks, while *frasth* grows by the shores of Death's Sea. This combination of cold and warm plant fibers, plus a tiny infusion of True air, enables the bedroll to magically adjust to the user's body temperature and keep him comfortable

Boots, Dry: Dry boots are leather boots able to repel water to keep the wearer's feet dry. Kernels of True water are woven into the boots, essentially sealing the boots against outside moisture. This ability is constantly working, but has an unfortunate side-effect. Because of its nature, the True water will keep moisture inside the boots as effectively as keeping it from entering. However, this also means that the boots will take a very long time to dry out should water or liquid get inside them.

Boots, Huntsman's: Huntsman's boots are an improved version of the dry boots. These leather boots are designed for the huntsman who spends extended periods of time in the forest. Woven with kernels of True air and True water, these boots keep the wearer's feet both warm and dry, and add a spring to his stride that makes a long day of hunting less tiring. A character wearing a pair of huntsman's boots can walk an additional five miles each day.

Chair of Comfort: Chairs of comfort may be crafted in any shape or style, but these wooden chairs always possess the grace and beauty characteristic of elven craft. The True wood used in their construction gives them exceptional strength and a springy quality that makes them as comfortable as cloth cushions. Additionally, these chairs mold themselves to the shape of the person sitting in them—which enables even blood elves to sit comfortably. Very few chairs of comfort are crafted on a large enough scale to accommodate trolls or obsidiman (increase the cost and weight by +50 percent each, and worsen Availability by one level).

Cleaning Broom: Kernels of True wood and True earth are woven together in these magical whisk brooms, which capture all

loose dust and dirt with which they come in contact. A simple command word allows the user to dump all the dust that the broom picks up, so that the broom can be used over and over again.

Cloak, Dwarf Winternight: Dwarf winternight cloaks are made with magically treated cloth. These waterproof garments have a lining with a special ribbed design that produces enough heat when rubbed to keep a traveler warm on the coldest night. These cloaks add +2 to the character's Physical and Mystic Armor against cold damage from spells, ice weapons, or other cold sources.

Cloak, Everclean: Everclean cloaks repel dirt and stains to stay clean for extended periods. The kernels of True water and True air woven into the cloak repels dirt and oils that might cause stains. Eventually, after many months of use, these cloaks become stained and must be cleaned like other clothes. As with warm cloaks, all kinds of garments are made in the manner of everclean cloaks.

Cloak, Oak-Leaf: Oak-leaf cloaks are woven of leaves harvested from the blood oak trees common to the Blood Wood. The cloaks provide a measure of protection from cold and rain, but more importantly, they provide camouflage for those who need to move about wooded areas unobserved. In wooded settings, the cloak aids the wearer by blending in with the surroundings. The wearer gains a +2 bonus to any Action Tests related to avoiding being seen. Within the Blood Wood, this is increased to a +3 bonus, and should the wearer be hiding in or next to a blood oak tree, it is increased again to +5. For three months of the year, the leaves of the cloak turn crimson red, just as the leaves of the blood oak tree do. During this time, the cloak is only effective when the wearer is hiding among the branches of a blood oak tree; it is effectively useless for hiding in other surroundings during this season.

Cloak, Warm: A warm cloak is a woolen cloak that keeps its wearer warm when temperatures outdoors drop below a certain point. The magic of these cloaks comes from the kernels of True air and True fire woven into them. The True air reacts to changes in temperature, and the True fire serves to warm the wearer. Though many types of garments are made in this fashion, the warm cloak is the most common.

Cloaksense Brooch: A cloaksense brooch infuses any cloak it is fastened to with magic. The brooch uses the character's Perception step as a magical probe. When the character is in immediate danger of a surprise attack, he makes a Perception Test against the lowest Spell Defense rating among the attacking group. If the test succeeds, the cloaksense brooch warns the character of the attacker's presence, foiling Surprise or Blindside attacks.

Cloaksense only works against ambushes within 10 yards of the character, and each attempt to use the brooch causes the wearer 1 Strain Point of damage. In a situation where use of a cloaksense brooch might come in handy for the character, the gamemaster should ask the player if he wants to use it or not, at which point the character makes his choice (and takes the Strain).

Divining Rod: Some adventurers use magical divining rods to locate water sources. These items resemble forked branches and are enchanted with True water. A character with a magical divining rod gains a +3 bonus to Wilderness Survival Tests to locate water.

Elfweave Robe: These beautiful garments display a fine, delicate craftsmanship that human and dwarf weavers envy, but cannot yet copy. Elves most commonly wear elfweave robes, though some humans also wear them. Though the elves disclaim the rumors attributing magical properties to the robes, courtiers have long noted that the robes never quite sit right on an ork or dwarf.

Firefly Chalk: Firefly chalk is made by enchanting a special type of soft clay, then forming the clay into sticks about four inches long and a quarter of an inch in diameter. The sticks remain the dull color of the original clay but produce a dimly glowing script that may be read under all lighting conditions. If more than five words are written with the chalk, the glow provides enough light to qualify as low-light conditions. Most people use the chalk to leave messages in naturally dark places, such as kaers or mines, though Troubadours and Illusionists sometimes paint their faces and bodies with it prior to night-time performances. Firefly chalk washes off most surfaces if rubbed or doused with water.

Fire Starter: A fire starter is a short wand that will produce a small flame at one end. This flame can be used to start larger fires. Fire starters have a kernel of True fire woven into them. The flame is activated by a spoken command word.

Floating Chair: True air is woven into the cushions and fabric of sedan chairs to create floating chairs. These chairs hover about one yard off the ground and can be pushed around slowly. They turn and move at a comfortable pace and do not drift once they come to rest. Most floating chairs can only support human-sized or smaller occupants: dwarfs, elves, humans, orks, windlings and t'skrang. Chairs large enough to support trolls and obsidimen are available in some markets.

Hambrell's Contract: Hambrell's contracts are magical parchments used for contracts between two parties. The contracts were originally created by Wizards in the employ of House Hambrell, a renowned merchant house of Kratas. The secret of creating the parchments was lost during the Scourge, along with the last members of House Hambrell. Most magical scholars believe that the contracts make use of trapped ally spirits. No one knows how many Hambrell's contracts were originally made, or how many survived the Scourge, but several dozen at least have been reported to exist in Barsaive and the Theran Empire. A Hambrell's contract is a single page the size of a large book, though it can be smaller. The parties involved in the contract write the terms of their agreement on the magic parchment. The entire contract must fit on one side (the Hambrells apparently felt that short, to-the-point agreements worked better for all concerned). Once the agreement is written and all parties sign the contract, the contract creates duplicates of itself, one for each contributing party. Until the signed contract is fulfilled by all the involved parties meeting their obligations, the parchment cannot be used again. Upon fulfillment of the contract, the writing fades and the duplicates disappear. The Hambrell's contract may then be used for another agreement. All parties must enter into the agreement willingly and understand all of its terms. Any agreement acceptable to all parties is valid, even if one of the parties gets nothing from it. If any party breaks a term of the contract, all copies of it start to show signs of wear and age. If a serious violation occurs, the edges of the parchment start to appear burnt and cracked. These changes alert all parties that the contract has been breached. Additionally, any character who has broken a contract written on one of these parchments may not

COMMON MAGIC ITEMS TABLE

Item	EDN	Cost	Weight	Availability
Air Elevator	12 A	3,000	NA	Rare
Bedroll of Comfort	11 A	340	2	Rare
Boots:				
Dry	12 A	250	2	Rare
Huntsman's*	11 AW	700	2	Rare
Chair of Comfort*:				
Standard-sized	13	600	6	Rare
Troll/Obsidiman-sized	14	900	9	Rare
Cleaning Broom	11 AWd	25	2	Rare
Cloak:				
Dwarf Winternight	12 F	275	2	Unusual
Everclean	11 AW	275	1	Rare
Oak-Leaf*	12	800	1	Rare
Warm	11 AF	300	2	Rare
Cloaksense Brooch	13	350	2	Unusual
Divining Rod	12	75	1	Rare
Elfweave Robe	13	80	2	Unusual
Fire Starter	12 F	100	2	Rare
Firefly Chalk (per stick)	12	12	Neg.	Unusual
Floating Chair:				
Standard-sized	12 A	250	NA	Rare
Troll/Obsidiman-sized	13 A	600	NA	Rare
Hambrell's Contract	NA	700	Neg.	Very Rare
Heat Stone	11 EF	100	3	Rare
Hot Pot	12 F	100	8	Rare
Light Quartz:				
Small	13	75	2	Unusual
Medium	14	125	6	Unusual
Large	15	200	20	Rare
Light Quartz Weapon	13	100	1	Rare
Message Stone	10 AE	300	2	Unusual
Message Stone (Warded)	20 AE	600	2	Rare
One-Size (fits all) Hat	13	35	1	Unusual
Orichalcum Container	10	5,000	1	Rare
Pot of Grumbah:				
Small (1 foot diameter)	12 A	75	2	Rare
Large (1 yard diameter)	13 A	200	5	Rare
Pure Water Pot	16	150	2	Rare
Quiet-Fingers Gloves	13	140	1	Unusual
Quiet Pouch	13	65	2	Rare
Season Lamp	11 AF	350	NA	Rare
Talisman:				
First Circle	16	150	2	Rare
Second Circle	18	300	2	Rare
Third Circle	19	450	2	Rare
Fourth Circle	21	600	2	Rare
Fifth Circle	22	750	2	Rare
Traveler's Mug	12 W	350	1	Rare
Upandal's Blessings	11 EWd	275	3	Rare
Volus Brooch	11	500	2	Rare
Wind Instrument	12 A	250	2+	Rare

* Halve the cost and better the Availability by one level if the item is purchased from blood elves.

EDN: The item's Enchanting Difficulty Number (see the **Enchanting** chapter, p. 275). If the item requires True elements to be woven into it separately, the type of element is noted in superscript (A = True air; E = True earth; F = True fire; W = True water; Wd = True wood). See **Weaving True Elements Into Patterns** in the **Enchanting** chapter, p. 274.

enter into a different Hambrell's contract until he has fulfilled the terms he agreed to in the first contract. If he tries to enter into another one, his name fades from the parchment almost immediately after he signs it, and no duplicate contracts appear. This alerts the other parties present that the character has broken a previous Hambrell's contract and has not made amends. Destroying a Hambrell's contract also destroys any duplicates of it. If a copy is destroyed, the copyholder may reform it by returning to the holder of the original contract and re-signing it.

Heat Stone: Heat stones contain nuggets of True earth and True fire that make the stone glow deep red and become as hot as a burning coal. The True earth and True fire are slowly consumed over a period of about a year, depending on the quality of the stone's enchantment. Heat stones are generally kept in metal or ceramic containers. The steady heat they give off makes them ideal as bed-warmers, room heaters and for starting fires.

Hot Pot: A hot pot is a ceramic cooking pot that has been woven with kernels of True fire. The True fire heats the ceramic, allowing the user to cook food in the pot without actually using fire. A spoken command word can heat up the pot, but the temperature cannot be regulated. The hot pot simply heats to a given temperature, and no higher.

Light Quartz: Enchanted with magical light, light quartz comes in a wide variety of sizes and colors. The most common pieces, roughly 3 inches in diameter, are used in lanterns. Light quartz was used extensively inside kaers (large quartzes) during the Scourge, and these gems can still be found in use in most towns and cities. Most light quartzes can be dimmed and turned on or off on command. To provide sustenance for the living crystal, the light quartz is enchanted. The enchantments must be renewed each year at a cost of 10 silver pieces. Without the enchantment the crystal loses its ability to glow and the living crystal becomes dormant.

Light Quartz Weapon: Though rarely found in Barsaive, weapons with small light quartz crystals embedded in their hilts permit their wielders to use the weapons as light sources. Such weapons are favored by adventurers who explore underground regions, especially kaers. The light quartzes used are smaller than standard light quartzes and roughly half as effective. Also, light quartz crystals can be installed in a weapon's hilt only when a weapon is being made. The cost of the weapon is additional to the cost of the quartz. Like small light quartzes, the enchantment must be renewed each year at a cost of 10 silver pieces.

Message Stone: Message stones are living crystals woven with True earth and True air that enable them to capture sounds within their crystalline structure. A spoken command is used to release the message. Government couriers and wealthy merchants often use these stones to deliver important messages in the sender's own voice. More expensive message stones have wards cast on them to safeguard their messages against tampering.

One-Size Hat: This high-quality headgear is made with minor magics that makes the hat fit perfectly to any head. Any one-size hat of the correct basic size tailors itself to fit the individual customer's skull shape. Any race, including obsidimen and t'skrang, can wear a one-size hat.

Orichalcum Container: A small container sufficient to hold up to 20 kernels of a True element. These containers usually are fashioned in the form of small boxes with hinged lids and engraved with protective runes and symbols.

Pot of Grumbah: Pots of *grumbah* are heavy-lidded pots made of black iron and the hides of ice flyers, with kernels of True air woven into them. They are most often used to carry food, and occasionally used to transport the remains

of creatures. The pots are airtight once sealed and keep their contents cold, tripling the amount of time the contents remain fresh before decaying. The pots come in a variety of sizes ranging from 1 foot to 1 yard in diameter and weighing anywhere from 2 to 5 pounds.

Pure Water Pot: For the most part, water from running brooks, streams, or rivers is clean enough for drinking, though characters may wish to purify it just to be safe. Some adventurers carry magically enchanted pure water pots that cast the Purify Water spell on any water or other liquid placed in them. The pot casts the spell on its contents with a Spellcasting and Effect step of 8 (see **Purify Water** in the **Elementalism Spells** chapter, p. 296).

Quiet-Fingers Gloves: These gloves muffle the sound of the character's hands bouncing or bumping against someone else's property. If another person tries to detect the character wearing these gloves while he is attempting to pick a lock or a pocket, add +1 to the Difficulty Number for the required Perception Test. Quiet-fingers gloves only work when the character is actively using his hands.

Quiet Pouch: Minor silencing illusions, such as those used in quiet-fingers gloves, are woven into the fabric of these pouches and prevent noise from emerging. Wealthy travelers often use quiet pouches to keep thieves and beggars from hearing the jingling of coins as they walk.

Season Lamp: These elaborate hanging lamps are made from brass or iron woven with True air and fire. The two elements alternately warm or cool the room where the lamp hangs, keeping it at a constant temperature regardless of the weather outside. Season lamps are most commonly used in the homes of the well-to-do to create a comfortable environment.

Talisman: Talismans are single-use spell matrix objects (see **Using Spell Matrix Objects** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 288). Every talisman is rated by the maximum spell Circle it can hold. For example, a First Circle Talisman can store First Circle spells, while a Fifth Circle Talisman can store spells of any Circle up to Fifth Circle. Talismans can store only those spells that the magician can cast normally, and are limited to spells requiring no threads to cast. To store a spell pattern in a talisman, the magician must make a successful Thread Weaving Test against the Reattunement Difficulty of the spell to be stored. This process takes a number of hours equal to the spell Circle. A magician can maintain a maximum number of talismans equal to his Thread Weaving rank; this includes talismans he has attuned for others. If the magician wishes to attune another talisman above this limit, he must first expend a currently attuned one. To use a talisman, the magician must touch or hold it. For 2 Strain Points of damage, the magician can cast the spell the talisman contains as if it were held in a spell matrix. Once used, the talisman must be reattuned using the magician's Thread Weaving talent, as normal.

Traveler's Mug: Traveler's mugs are large steel mugs decorated with symbols of healing and endurance executed in precious metals. These pint mugs are enchanted with orichalcum and True water and fill up once per day with cool fresh water upon a spoken command.

Upandal's Blessings: These wooden-handled tools, which combine a file with a chisel and hand drill, have won much praise from artisans and enchanters. The central shafts of each tool are made of rune-encrusted metals woven with generous amounts of True earth and True wood. The tools enable an artist to correct mistakes when crafting items from any substance, so long as he does so within 5 minutes of the error occurring. The tools are especially useful to artists working with precious metals or similar substances, as they can correct errors without whittling their carvings down to a smaller size. Often used by craftsmen to decorate shields and weapons, Upandal's blessings were also used to etch runes into kaer doors during the Scourge. Should the user of these tools fail a Craftsman or Artisan Test he may immediately erase his mistake and make a second test. Using Upandal's blessings when crafting magical items requires a Craftsman or Artisan Test against the item's Spell Defense. On a Pathetic result, any errors made while crafting the item cannot be corrected.

VOLUS BROOCH TABLE

Magic Type	Difficulty Number
Raw Magic	4
Creature Magic	9
Adept Magic	11
Magical Items	12
Matrix-cast Spells	14

Volus Brooch: These small brooches are made from the preserved magic-sensing organ of a volus (see the **Creatures** chapter on p. 352 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**), encased in a living-crystal casing lined with orichalcum. The brooch offers the wearer a limited version of the volus' magic-sensing ability. When the wearer is within 1 mile of a source of magic, the gamemaster makes a Step 8 Spellcasting Test against a Difficulty Number based on the type of magic being used, as shown in the Volus Brooch Use Table. If the test succeeds, the crystal casing glows dimly; as the wearer nears the source of the magic, the glow brightens. Adepts rarely use volus brooches, as their own magic often interferes with the brooch's abilities and advertises their magical powers to others.

Wind Instrument: Wind instruments, such as flutes or trumpets, often have True air woven into them to give the instrument a clearer, purer sound that carries much better than usual. The True air also allows the musician to play the instrument with less effort and for longer periods of time than he could play a non-magical instrument. The musician gains a +1 bonus to his Emotion Song Tests, if he possesses the talent or skill, and to any other Action Tests made to determine how well he plays the instrument.

Healing Aids

Ever since the end of the Scourge, healing aids have boomed in popularity. Demand continues to outstrip supply, driving up the prices from the steady levels of past years. Occasional shortages temporarily drive prices even higher. All of the healing aids described below are potions and are sold in clay or ceramic vials, each holding one dose.

Unless noted in the item description, healing aids that grant a Recovery Test bonus, do so following the rules for making Recovery Tests and recovering from damage in the **Effects of Injury** section of the **Combat** chapter, p. 403.

Healing Aid Descriptions

Anti-Sporific: The magicians who install spore glands (see **Blood Charms**, p. 443) also sell potions that protect others from the effect of the spores. Each dose works for four hours, during which time the character is immune to the effect of spore gland spores. Characters with spore glands implants often give these potions to companions they are traveling with. The anti-sporific, while especially efficacious against spore gland spores, is also effective against other types of spores. The character gains a +5 bonus to any Toughness-based Tests made to resist the effects of spore-based attacks.

Booster Potion: A booster potion improves the effectiveness of the character's healing processes, granting a +8 bonus to his next Recovery Test. If the character has no Recovery Tests available, the booster potion has no effect.

Confidence Booster Potion: A confidence booster potion produces a mild, invigorating intoxication that grants a +3 bonus to any Willpower Tests the character makes to resist the effects of intimidation or fear, such as those caused by use of the Battle Shout, Battle Bellow or Taunt talents, or from the effects of the Fog of Fear or Death's Head spells. Each dose lasts for two hours.

HEALING AID TABLE				
Item	**EDN**	**Cost**	**Weight**	**Availability**
Anti-Sporific	13	250	1	Rare
Booster Potion	11	50	2	Unusual
Confidence Booster	13	150	2	Rare
Cure Disease Potion	13	500	2	Rare
Healing Potion	13	300	2	Rare
Kelia's Antidote	13	125	2	Rare
Kelix's Poultice	11	50	1	Unusual
Last Chance Salve	13	600	1	Very Rare
Resist Disease Potion	13	75	2	Unusual
Salve of Closure	9	200	1	Rare

EDN: The item's Enchanting Difficulty Number (see the **Enchanting** chapter, p. 275)

After the potion wears off, the character feels extremely lethargic. He takes 3 Strain Points of damage and is considered Harried while so affected (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408). Fortunately, this run-down feeling only lasts for 10 minutes.

Cure Disease Potion: A cure disease potion boosts the character's immune system, granting a +5 bonus to any Toughness-based Tests made to resist the effects of disease during the potion's duration. Each dose lasts for four hours.

Healing Potion: A healing potion automatically heals one Wound and grants a +8 bonus to the character's next Recovery Test. The character may use a healing potion regardless of whether or not he has a Recovery Test available. If the character has no Recovery Tests left, the healing potion heals one of the character's Wounds and grants him a bonus Step 8/2D6 Recovery Test.

Kelia's Antidote: Kelia's antidote neutralizes the effect of a single dose of poison. The character takes no damage from the poison for four hours. During this time, the antidote grants a +4 bonus to any Toughness-based Tests the character makes to resist the effect of any new poison introduced into the character.

Kelix's Poultice: Kelix's poultice grants a +5 bonus to any Toughness-based Tests the character makes to resist the effects of poison. The poultice must be applied to the Wound where the poison entered the character's system. If no Wound exists—for instance, if the character swallowed poison—a Wound must be created before the poultice is applied. The effect of the poultice lasts for 5 rounds.

Last Chance Salve: A last chance salve can be applied to a character who has been dead for a number of hours no greater than the higher of his Toughness or Willpower steps. After it is smeared over the character's body, the clear salve glows a gentle blue as it works its magic, a process that takes 10 minutes. The character may take all of his remaining Recovery Tests. If he has no Recovery Tests available, the last chance salve grants him a bonus Recovery Test. If the character's Current Damage total is brought below his Death Rating, then he returns to life, otherwise he remains dead. Multiple last chance salves may be applied to a character, but only one salve will be effective during any one hour period.

Resist Disease Potion: A resist disease potion grants a +3 bonus to the next Toughness-based Test the character makes to resist the effects of disease. The potion's effect lasts for 24 hours or until it is used.

Salve of Closure: A salve of closure automatically heals any Wound to which it is applied. Activating the salve costs the character one of his Recovery Tests. If he has no Recovery Tests available, then the salve has no effect. Salve of closure is sea-green in color and has a foamy texture, which leads many to believe that sea water is an essential ingredient in the potion's formula.

Adventuring Equipment

Adventuring equipment includes items such as backpacks, bedrolls, tents, rope, and other equipment commonly used by characters during their adventures.

Much of the equipment listed is basic gear that requires no explanation. Items with specific game functions are described following the relevant sections.

Windling Adventuring Equipment

Windlings use all manner of equipment, but it must be custom-made small enough for them to use or wield. Unfortunately, its small size does not reduce the cost of this equipment: even though it may need less raw material, it requires more exacting labor. Human-sized craftsmen find it difficult to make small items with their large fingers and hands—troll and obsidimen craftsmen almost impossibly so—and therefore charge more for their efforts. Similar goods made by windling craftsmen cost 25 percent less, but have an Availability Rating one level higher than normal. Multiply the standard weight by .2 to determine the weight of equipment sized for windlings.

Equipment Descriptions

Adventuring Kit: The adventuring equipment package deal includes basic equipment most adventurers can reasonably expect to need and use, and offers players a simple method of buying adventuring equipment for their characters. All characters begin game play with an adventurer's kit (see **Equip Your Character** in the **Creating Characters** chapter, p. 52).

Alchemist's Kit: A portable alchemy lab used by traveling alchemists and fitting into a case the size of a backpack. It contains the absolute minimum of equipment required to perform alchemical tasks. A character using an alchemist's kit suffers a –3 penalty to his Alchemy Tests (see **Alchemy** in the **Skills** chapter, p. 234).

Alchemist's Shop: A complete alchemy lab containing glassware, mortars, jars, elemental burners, crucibles and the like, for use with the Alchemy skill (see the **Skills** chapter, p. 234). An alchemist's shop is not portable because of all of the bulky and delicate apparatus involved.

Artisan Tools: The tools required for the characters to perform his Artisan skill. These are adequate to carry out typical work related to the character's Artisan skill—for more intricate tasks, the character will usually require a more complete set of tools, at a cost of five or more times that given in the Adventuring Equipment Table. The cost of these tools does not include any materials that may be required. All characters begin game play with artisan tools appropriate to their Artisan skill (see **Equip Your Character** in the **Creating Characters** chapter, p. 52).

Backpack: Usually made from leather or burlap, the standard backpack can hold approximately 50 pounds of goods.

Bait Jar: A clay jar filled with soil and selected earthworms for fishing.

Bedroll: Bedding and a blanket slim enough to be rolled up and tied for carrying. Adventurers use them to sleep in an impromptu fashion on the road. Each bedroll can accommodate 1 person.

Belt Pouch: A small leather or cloth bag either tied to or threaded through one's belt, the belt pouch typically holds approximately 5 pounds of goods.

Blanket: A thicker, wool blanket. Standard gear for travel in cold, mountainous terrain.

Candle: A wax cylinder with a wick in its center and a clay or metal plate to hold the melting wax. The standard light source for home use, a candle illuminates a 3 yard radius. A favorite of troubadours and magicians when writing late at night.

Chain: A 3 yard length of chain that can be used for binding and capturing as well as climbing. Obsidimen and trolls require the

ADVENTURING EQUIPMENT TABLE

Item	Cost	Weight	Availability
Adventurer's Kit:			
Backpack, bedroll, flint and steel, torch, waterskin, large sack	15	14	Average
As above, plus a tent	40	34	Average
Alchemist's Kit	500	15	Unusual
Alchemist's Shop	2,000	NA	Unusual
Artisan Tools:			
Carving	15	3	Average
Embroidery/Sewing	25	1	Average
Forge	100	20	Unusual
Painting	45	2	Average
Sculpting	30	3	Average
Bait Jar	2	1	Average
Backpack	5	3	Average
Bedroll	5	4	Average
Belt Pouch	8 cp	1	Everyday
Blanket	15 cp	2	Everyday
Candles (2)	7 cp	8 oz.	Everyday
Chain:			
Heavy (3 yards)	50	9	Average
Light (3 yards)	10	6	Average
Chalk (5 pieces)	3 cp	4 oz.	Everyday
Climbing Kit:			
Rope (6 yards), Light Chain (3 yards), 2 Pitons, Grappling Hook	36	19	Average
Craftsman Tools	25	5	Average
Disguise Kit	50	6	Average
Fish Hook	1 cp	Neg.	Everyday
Fishing Kit:			
10 Fish Hooks, Fishing Net, Fishing Rod, Bait Jar	20	14	Average
Fishing Net (9 sq. yards)	15	10	Average
Fishing Rod	2	2	Everyday
Flint and Steel	1	8 oz.	Everyday
Grappling Hook	10	5	Average
Healing Kit:			
Basic (3 applications)	75	5	Unusual
Refill (3 applications)	50	Neg.	Unusual
Iron Pot	20	8	Average

ADVENTURING EQUIPMENT TABLE

Item	Cost	Weight	Availability
Lantern:			
Hooded	9	3	Average
Bull's-Eye	27	3	Average
Light Quartz	85	5	Unusual
Map or Scroll Case	8 cp	1	Average
Musical Instrument:			
Drum	7	5	Average
Flute	2	2	Average
Horn	70	7	Average
Lute	25	6	Unusual
Whistle	2 cp	1	Everyday
Navigation Charts	15	2	Average
Novelties, T'skrang	1–1,000	1+	Unusual
Oil Flask	6	1	Everyday
Paper/Parchment (sheet)	1	Neg.	Unusual
Physician's Kit:			
Basic (3 applications)	50	3	Average
Refill (3 applications)	25	1	Average
Piton	9 cp	1	Average
Quill Pen	1	Neg.	Average
Rope:			
3 yard length	8	3	Average
6 yard length	15	6	Average
15 yard length	25	15	Average
Sack:			
Large	2	2	Everyday
Small	1	1	Everyday
Tent	30	20	Average
Thieves' Picks and Tools	100	1	Unusual
Torch	5 cp	1	Everyday
Whetstone	2 cp	1	Everyday
Water or Wine Skin	2	4	Everyday
Writing Ink (per vial)	10	8 oz.	Unusual
Writing Kit:			
Quill Pen, Writing Ink, 10 Sheets of Parchment or Paper, 2 Candles, 10 Pieces of Chalk	23	2	Unusual

Neg.: Negligible weight for encumbrance purposes. At the gamemaster's discretion, approximately 10 such items weigh 1 pound.

heavy version to assist them when climbing. If used to bind someone, light chain can be broken with a successful Strength (10) Test; heavy chain with a successful Strength (13) Test.

Climbing Kit: Comes with all the tools necessary for climbing.

Craftsman Tools: Craftsman tools are necessary to use Craftsman skills (see the **Skills** chapter, p. 238).

Disguise Kit: A metal box filled with makeup, hair dye, cheap accessories, and clothing outfits useful for creating disguises. Essential for using the Disguise skill (see the **Skills** chapter, p. 239).

Fishing Kit: Comes with all the tools necessary for using the Fishing skill (see the **Skills** chapter, p. 241).

Fishing Rod: A wooden rod with a thin line attached for fishing. A fisher ties a fish hook to the line and then attaches a lure, usually bait such as earthworms.

Flint and Steel: A piece of flint and steel that, when struck forcefully together, creates sparks for starting fires. Used to light tinder to create campfires and to ignite torches.

Grappling Hook: A hook with an eye for attachment to a length of chain or rope. The grappling hook is used to secure a rope or chain for climbing. Grappling hooks can be thrown using the Throwing Weapons talent or skill against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster (usually 7). The character must use the Called Shot combat option to hit the intended location.

Healing Kit: A healing kit comes in a small shoulder bag and contains bandages, salves, and herbal potions that can speed recovery from injury. A character treated with a healing kit (treatment takes 10 minutes) gains a +1 bonus to his next Recovery Test. Each healing kit contains enough supplies for 3 applications. A 3-application refill can be purchased separately but requires the basic components of a healing kit to be useful.

Iron Pot: An iron pot is common in households throughout Barsaive as the standard form of cooking-ware, but is sometimes used by adventurers to prepare meals on the road. Adventurers who hunt commonly carry this item to create stews from smaller game.

Lantern: Lanterns are used for light by the ordinary inhabitants of cities and towns as well as by adventurers. A hooded lantern lights an effective area roughly 10 yards in radius. A bull's-eye lantern focuses the light into a beam that extends for a distance of 20 yards. Most lanterns burn oil, but some use light quartz to provide illumination equivalent to a hooded lantern.

Map and Scroll Case: A capped vellum tube used for storing rolled pieces of paper or parchment. When capped, the case is water resistant, but not necessarily watertight

Musical Instrument: Musical instruments for use with the Entertainer skill (see the **Skills** chapter, p. 240).

Navigation Charts: A map and scroll case with a basic chart of the stars. Required to use the Navigation skill (see the **Skills** chapter, p. 243).

Novelties, T'skrang: T'skrang novelties come in many shapes and sizes, all skillfully and lovingly created by craftsmen who combine elemental water and earth with mundane wood, stone, and metals with delightful results. The well-known t'skrang affinity for pranks and theatrics puts their novelties in great demand, which they satisfy by producing a variety of goods too numerous to list. A fairly representative example includes small spheres made of water that swirl with different colors when shaken, small figurines that cry when held gently in the hand of a child, and stone rings that change color during the course of the day. The novelties range greatly in quality and price, usually running anywhere from 1 to 1,000 silver pieces each.

Oil Flask: Used as fuel for lanterns and torches, each flask holds enough oil to fuel a lantern for eight hours. Characters can also hurl flaming flasks of oil at opponents (see **Throwing Weapons**, p. 437).

Paper/Parchment: A prepared piece of cloth or vellum for writing on.

Physician's Kit: A metal box filled with tools for diagnosing illness, as well as unguents, salves, and specialized components to treat more serious injuries. A basic physician's kit can be used 3 times before its consumable supplies are exhausted. A 3-application refill can be purchased, but requires the tools from the basic kit to be useful. A physician's kit is required to use the Physician skill (see the **Skills** chapter, p. 244). Many physicians also carry around a healer's kit for use with less serious ailments.

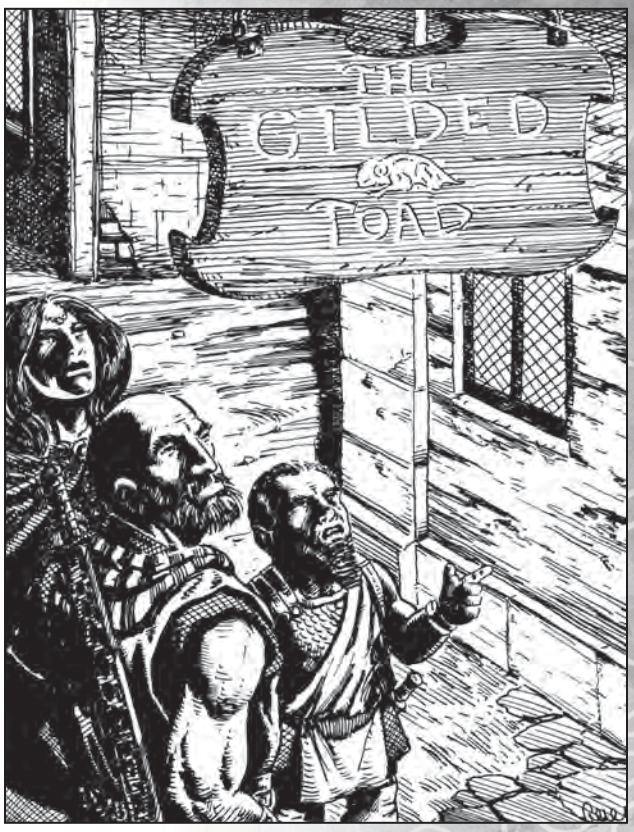
Piton: A small spike with an eye for attachment of rope or chain useful for creating handholds when climbing rock walls.

Quill Pen: A feather with a specially shaped tip. When dipped in a vial of ink, it draws the liquid in, and leaves a trail when drawn across a piece of paper or parchment. An common tool for Troubadours and magicians.

Rope: Rope of various lengths, usually made of hemp, and useful for binding and capturing, as well as climbing. If used to bind someone, the rope can be broken with a successful Strength (8) Test.

ACCOMMODATION TABLE

Accommodation (per night)	Cost	Availability
Flophouse (no bed)	1 cp	Everyday
Cheap Inn:		
Public Room, one large bed	5 cp	Everyday
Private Room, one bed	1	Average
Guild Inn:		
Room, with bed and bath	8	Average
Room, with security lock	12	Unusual
Luxury Inn:		
Room, with bed and bath	25	Average
Room, with magical amenities	40	Unusual
Room, plus private valet	55 + tips	Rare
Merchant Inn:		
Private Room, one bed	3	Average
Private Room, with bath	5	Unusual



Sack: Made of burlap or heavy cloth, a large sack holds approximately 30 pounds, a small sack around 15 pounds, of goods.

Tent: A simple tarpaulin shelter large enough to accommodate two human-sized characters.

Thieves' Picks and Tools: A set of these specialist tools is required for a character to make use of the Lock Picking skill (see the **Skills** chapter, p. 242).

Torch: A wooden rod with its tip wrapped with an oil soaked rag. It can be lit by the spark from a flint and steel and typically burns for around an hour. The standard light source for adventurers, a torch illuminates a 10 yard radius. Unlit, it acts as a club in melee combat, but is treated as an improvised weapon when used this way (see the **Combat** chapter, p. 409). A lit torch may also set flammable targets such as dry straw or cloth alight, see **Fire** on p. 108 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**.

Water or Wine Skin: A leather pouch with a constricted bottleneck useful for holding liquids. A typical waterskin holds enough water for 1 day. The weight shown on the Adventuring Equipment Table is for a full skin.

Whetstone: A tool for sharpening and maintaining weapons.

Writing Ink: Black ink for writing. Each vial contains enough ink to write 8 to 10 pages of information, on average. Dyed inks of other colors are harder to find—increase the Availability rating by one level—and cost two or more times the price of black ink.

Writing Kit: Comes with all the tools necessary for writing.

Services

Accommodation

Nearly all towns and cities in Barsaive offer lodgings of varying quality. The most typical types of lodging are described

below.

Accommodation Descriptions

Flophouses: Flophouses are the most inexpensive lodging available. These facilities are basically large, common rooms where characters roll up in their own blankets and sleep on the floor. Flophouses offer no services of any kind.

Cheap Inns: Cheap inns offer both public and private rooms. Public rooms have one large bed which can accommodate several people. A private room contains a single-occupancy bed. Cheap inns usually offer simple and average meals, and average ale and wine.

Guild Inns: Guild inns are run by the dwarf guilds, who originally built these facilities to house journeyman guild members. Over the years, many have begun to serve travelers, who generally have more ready coin than the average journeyman or apprentice. Most rooms at these inns have security locks, resistant to lock picking. These magic locks fit over the door's regular lock on both sides of the door. Picking a security lock requires a successful Lock Pick (15) Test. A successful Dispel Magic (12) Test also defeats these locks.

Luxury Inns: Luxury inns exist only in larger towns and cities. The staff at these establishments pay particular attention to details and try to fulfill any reasonable customer requests. Typical magical amenities include lamps and fireplaces that ignite and douse on command, wine buckets that automatically chill wine to the right temperature, and baths that sense which muscles ache and massage them. For nervous travelers carrying valuables, luxury inns feature in-room safes and safety deposit boxes.

Merchant Inns: These inns offer higher quality accommodations than cheap inns, but also cost more. They offer only private rooms, some of which come with private baths. Merchant inns offer all types of food and drink, from simple meals to sumptuous feasts.

Provender

Provender includes rations, food and drink. A variety of different (and often unique) foods and beverages can be obtained in addition to those listed in the Provender Table, below.

Windling Provender

Windling-sized portions of food and drink cost 50 percent of the prices listed in the Provender Table. Multiply the standard weight by .2 to determine the weight of provender.

Provender Descriptions

Drinks: Ale and wine are the most common drinks available, ranging in quality from average to fine. Prices also vary, ranging from a few copper pieces for a mug to a king's ransom for the best vintages.

Bloodberry Wine: Bloodberries appear on low-growing bushes native to marshy, muddy regions of the Blood Wood. The berries grow in small clusters and are a deep shade of red, bordering on purple. Not terribly sweet when eaten raw, they can be crushed and fermented to make bloodberry wine (also called blood wine), a dry wine with the kick of a well-aged brandy. In the few places outside the Blood Wood where bloodberry wine is known, a bottle may easily fetch 50 silver pieces or more.

Keesris: The windlings produce and sell a unique wine called *keesris*. This wine is made from *keesryp* berries.

Dwarf Mine Rations: Dwarf mine rations consist of nuts and vegetables grown exclusively underground. Hearty and lightweight, dwarf mine rations have the consistency of gravel, unfortunately, and some claim they have a taste to match. Those who eat only dwarf mine rations for an entire day add a +1 bonus to their first Recovery Test the following day. Though undeniably healthier than other rations, dwarf mine rations often cause strife within mining groups and adventuring parties. After a week of eating such rations, each character must make a Willpower Test each morning to see if he can face eating more, with a Difficulty Number based on their race: obsidimen and dwarfs must make a successful Willpower (2) Test; humans, trolls and orks a Willpower (3) Test; elves, t'skrang and windlings must make a successful Willpower (4) Test.

Fish, T'skrang: The t'skrang preserve and sell three grades of fish. The special ingredients and secret magical method they use to prepare this delicacy gives the fish a unique, delicious taste that only they can produce, thus creating a constant demand for their product. The tastiest, most expensive, and longest-lasting fish, *Grade A*, takes two months to prepare. Also high quality but slightly less hardy, *Grade B* takes one month to prepare. *Grade C* fish spoils quickest and takes two weeks to prepare. The t'skrang also sell fresh fish to inhabitants along the Serpent River for one-half the Grade C price. Each grade of fish remains edible for as long as it took to prepare; for example, Grade A fish lasts two months before it spoils. Fresh fish must be eaten almost imme-

PROVENDER TABLE

Item	Cost	Weight	Availability
Drinks:			
Ale:			
Average	5 cp	NA	Everyday
Dwarf Stout	2	NA	Average
Good	1	NA	Average
Wine:			
Average (per bottle)	5 cp	1	Average
Average (per glass)	1 cp	NA	Average
Bloodberry (per bottle)	50*	1	Rare*
Bloodberry (per glass)	10*	NA	Rare*
Fine (per bottle)	5	1	Unusual
Fine (per glass)	1	NA	Unusual
Keesris (per bottle)	10**	8 oz.	Rare**
Keesris (per glass)	2**	NA	Rare**
Fish, T'skrang:			
Grade A (per *duari*)	500	300	Rare
Grade B (per *duari*)	200	300	Unusual
Grade C (per *duari*)	100	300	Average
Food:			
Average Meal	1	NA	Average
Good Meal	3	NA	Average
Simple Meal	3 cp	NA	Everyday
Sumptuous Feast	50	NA	Unusual
Theran Uyglar	25	NA	Rare
Rations:			
Dwarf Mine (1 week)	25	6	Unusual
Trail (1 week)	10	8	Average
Spice, T'skrang:			
Pestain	5	1 oz.	Unusual
Trikella	20	1 oz.	Unusual
Ustandar	10	1 oz.	Unusual

* Halve the cost and better the Availability by one level if the item is purchased from blood elves.

** Halve the cost and better the Availability by one level if the item is purchased from windlings.

TRADE SERVICES TABLE		
Service	**Cost**	**Availability**
Armorer:		
Repair (per point of Physical or Mystic Armor repaired; requires 1 week per point repaired)	10%*	Average
Basic Decoration	35	Average
Ornate Decoration	140	Unusual
Farrier	5	Average
Library Access:		
Major City	25	Average
Throal	20	Average
Messenger:		
City to City	30-75	Unusual
Local	5	Average
Sage	15-100	Unusual
Scribe	50-75	Average
Weaponsmith:		
Repair (per Damage step repaired; requires 1 week per step repaired)	10%*	Average
Basic Decoration	45	Average
Ornate Decoration	180	Unusual
* Percentage of basic cost of new item.		

diately. The longer it takes for a t'skrang village to prepare each grade of fish, the higher the chance becomes that the process will fail. If the magic fails to take hold as they preserve the fish, the decay of the preceding weeks immediately sets in and the food becomes inedible. Because it takes the longest to prepare, Grade A fish has the highest rate of failure. Grade B is slightly easier to produce; Grade C is commonly available. The t'skrang normally sell their fish for the prices per *duari* listed in the Provender Table (a *duari* is a type of barrel used as a standard unit of measure by Serpent River traders).

Food: Daily food and lodging is available at the numerous inns and taverns of Barsaive's cities, towns, and villages. The costs listed are fairly standard from city to city. All of the meals described below are full meals capable of sustaining a character for a full day.

Average Meal: The average meal includes fatty meat, bread, cheese, seasonal fruit, and a few mugs of average ale to wash it down.

Good Meal: A good meal includes fine fish or lean meat, vegetables, three or more types of bread, a bowl of soup, and a few mugs of good ale. Dessert may or may not be included, depending on the establishment.

Simple Meal: A simple meal consists of cheese, bread, and seasonal fruit. This type of meal emphasizes quantity over quality.

Sumptuous Feast: A sumptuous feast includes at least nine courses, including appetizers, soup, ale-tasting with various breads, salad, ale-tasting with different cheeses, a shared entree, a personal entree, ale-tasting with nuts, and dessert. Fine dwarf stout is served throughout the meal, a different variety for each course, with at least three varieties served during each ale-tasting.

Theran Uyglar: This rare dessert is a light, custardy parfait traditionally served without a glass. Instead, magic keeps it afloat. The taste changes into a variety of flavors as the dessert is eaten, caramel and sweetmeg being the most common.

Spice, t'skrang: The t'skrang cultivate many unique spices. These include: *trikella*, a light green powder, often with silver sparkles; *ustandar*, red and coarse, like sand; and *pestain*, small green leaves, finely chopped. The spices one buys represent mixtures of several compounded herbs and often require many intermediate preparation steps to reach their final state. T'skrang rarely, if ever, sell unprocessed spices.

Trail Rations: Most adventurers and travelers use rations, generally dried food prepared to last long periods of time without spoiling. Trail rations consist of dried fruit, dried meat, and nuts.

TRADE SERVICES

For a price, characters can contract the services of messengers, sages, scribes, weaponsmiths, armorers and others.

Trade Service Descriptions

Armorer: Armorers forge new and repair armor and shields. Most also sell armor. Armorers will also decorate armor, for instance, etching a group symbol on a breastplate or shield.

Farrier: Farriers are paid to look after animals, providing services such as horse shoeing and basic veterinary care.

Library Access: Many cities in Barsaive have libraries that characters can use to research legends and history. Library access usually includes aid from library assistants, and sometimes the services of a scribe. The most famous library in Barsaive is the Great Library of Throal.

Messenger: Messengers carry messages between clients. Most messengers work only within city limits or a certain defined area, though some will carry messages to other cities or regions. Windlings and obsidimen specialize in providing messenger services, though individuals of any race can be messengers. Many city residents use windlings to ensure quick delivery. However, obsidimen, although slower, have a better reputation for reliability.

Sage: Sages possess immense knowledge in many scholarly areas, especially magic. They can provide characters with information on history and legends that may help them in their adventures.

Scribe: Skilled in writing, scribes pen letters and formal documents for a fee. A talented scribe can also translate a group's adventure log from a pile of disjointed notes into a stirring epic of heroic adventure.

Weaponsmiths: Weaponsmiths forge and repair all types of weapons, from swords and staffs to maces. They can also add decorative markings to weapons.

TRANSPORTATION TABLE

Transportation	Cost	Availability
Boat:		
Canoe	20	Average
Rowboat	50	Average
Sailboat (long)	80	Average
Sailboat (small)	60	Average
Carriage *or* Coach	150	Unusual
Cart:		
Large	40	Average
Small (hand)	15	Average
Transport (per person/mount*):		
Airship	20-30**	Rare
Caravan	3-5**	Average
Ferry	1-2**	Average
Riverboat	5-6**	Unusual
Wagon:		
Large	50	Average
Small	30	Average

* Large mounts (thundra beasts, elephants, griffins, etc.) count as two mounts for transportation purposes.
** Per day of travel.

Transport

There are many modes of transport which can be secured. Characters can arrange for passage aboard a t'skrang riverboat, or in a caravan traveling between cities, or even book passage on an airship (though this is often difficult to arrange and costs a great deal). Though not commonly available, vehicles are sold in larger towns and cities.

The costs shown do not include the price of any animals required to draw the vehicle.

Transport Descriptions

Canoes: Canoes are small boats capable of carrying only one or two human-sized passengers safely. Propelled by oar, most canoes are 3 to 5 yards long by 1 yard wide at the center. The ends of the canoe taper to a width of 3 to 4 inches. These craft are used most often for travel along the running streams and rivers near large hills and mountain ranges.

Carts: Carts are wheeled vehicles used by merchants to transport goods. Large carts usually measure 1 to 2 yards long by 1 yard wide. Pack mules usually pull carts, but some merchants also use horses for the task. Smaller carts can be pushed by hand.

Rowboats: Rowboats are propelled by oars fixed onto side brackets. Usually 3 to 4 yards long by 1 to 2 yards wide, these boats can carry up to four human-sized passengers safely. At least one of the passengers must work the oars. These craft are often used as fishing boats on calmer streams and rivers.

Sailboats: Sailboats are most often used on the open sea and the Serpent Lakes. These craft range from 3 to 15 yards in length. The smallest sailboats carry only two human-sized passengers, while the largest carry up to five crew plus another ten to fifteen passengers. Merchants who travel the sea and lakes, trading at various towns along the shoreline, use larger sailboats.

Wagons: Wagons are capable of carrying two to five human-sized passengers. Usually a team of horses pulls a wagon, but mule teams are used with some smaller and slower wagons.

Animals and Mounts

Animals are used in many regions. When they aren't used for labor, they are often used for entertainment.

Full statistics and descriptions for the animals and mounts in this section can be found in the **Creatures** chapter on p. 266 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**.

Mounts

For long journeys, characters may prefer riding, because mounts can carry them faster and farther in a single day than their own two feet. Not every mount can carry a character of any Name-giver race; some races are either too large or too small for certain types of mounts. Humans, elves and orks can ride nearly any type of mount except for the tiny kue and zoaks, which are used primarily by windlings. T'skrang can also ride just about any mount, though most prefer not to do so. Dwarfs can ride ponies, huttawas, troajin and pack mules, but their legs are too short to reach the stirrups on most horses. Trolls are too big and heavy for riding horses and smaller mounts, but war horses are strong enough to carry them. More often, trolls ride sturdy granlains or (on occasion) thundra beasts. Only thundra beasts and elephants are strong enough to carry obsidimen. In many adventuring groups, obsidiman members don't ride mounts at all—instead, they ride in wagons or carts pulled by a pair of pack mules or large draft horses. Griffins are the most exotic mounts used in Barsaive, and only high-Circle Cavalryman or Beastmaster adepts have the necessary skills to ride them.

Mounts purchased at character creation, a Cavalryman's starting mount, or any mount bought from a typical dealer, come trained for riding and will generally not get spooked in combat, although temperament may vary among individuals. Untrained mounts may be purchased for 75 percent of the standard list price. Except where already noted, combat-trained mounts cost ten times the prices shown, sometimes more. Training can be accomplished with the Animal Bond and Animal Training talents, both of which also may be learned as skills.

Care and Feeding

A rider must ensure that his mount gets adequate rest, warmth and food if he wants the mount to perform well. Ideally, a mount should be rubbed down after a long day's ride or a long gallop, given a clean stable to sleep in every night, and fed and watered each day. Make sure that characters spend the time and money needed to care for their mounts. If they don't, their mounts become irritable and sluggish, slow down the pace of travel and force the characters to stop frequently.

Most mounts are herbivores—they eat mostly grass and hay, occasionally supplemented by high-energy grains such as oats. A few mounts, such as troajins and griffins, are carnivores. Meat usually costs more than grain, so feeding a carnivorous mount costs more than feeding a horse or a mule. Characters can allow carnivorous mounts to hunt, but a mount cannot hunt while being ridden—and most riders are understandably reluctant to let their valued mounts wander into the wilderness in search of prey.

Riders usually allow their mounts to graze whenever they stop to rest, and they frequently carry an additional supply of feed to supplement the mount's diet. Carnivorous mounts can consume preserved meat, but they prefer it fresh. When hunting or using survival skills to provide food for a band of adventurers, player characters should treat a carnivorous mount as another member of their party. For example, troajin generally eat as much meat per day as a Name-giver, while griffins require at least three times that amount.

Healing Mounts

Mounts injured in combat can be healed by some of the methods used on Name-givers. However, most booster and healing

potions are designed only for Name-givers and may not be effective on some mounts, depending on their physiology. Additionally, mounts may refuse to ingest potions and herbs. Characters can mix potions and herbal remedies with a mount's feed, but this reduces the effectiveness of such medicines by half. For example, a booster potion mixed with feed works at half its normal efficacy, granting only a +4 bonus to the mount's Recovery Test.

The most effective means of healing certain mounts are the Blood Share and Heal Animal Servant talents, which allow a mount to recover damage quickly. However, keep in mind that a character can only use these talents to heal his own mount or animal servants.

If a mount goes lame, its rider has a serious problem on his hands. A mount that suffers more than 3 Wounds in combat or is hit by a combat spell, such as Bone Shatter, may suffer a crippling injury to one of its limbs or wings. If the optional **Damage to Limb** rule from the **Combat** chapter, p. 401, is used, a mount may also suffer a broken limb in the normal course of combat.

A lame mount cannot walk or fly until it heals, and even then it will never again be able to move at more than half its former rate. For this reason, most riders simply put down lame mounts rather than spend the effort needed to heal them. Cavalrymen whose mounts go lame often perform the Rite of the Hero for their suffering mounts rather than condemn them to crippled lives (see **The Daring and Dauntless Cavalryman** chapter, p. 85).

Mount Descriptions

Dyre: Ork cavalrymen prize the dyre as a mount because of its huge size, quick brain, and irritable temper. Most ork cavalries have at least one or two in their ranks, if not several. Standing 12 feet tall at the shoulder, the dyre is covered in long, matted brown fur. Its back rises sharply in the middle as if humped, and it resembles a cross between a bear and bull. Like a bear, the dyre has squat, stubby legs and a short tail. Its head looks like a bull's, only wider, with sharply curving horns. The beast has hardly any neck, holding its head so low to the ground that only its back shows over the top of the high plains grass.

Elephant: In some regions elephants are used to haul heavy carts and wagons overland along the trade routes that link the coastal cities.

Goat, Riding: Windlings who cannot afford a more specialized creature often ride goats because they're easy to train, can carry a proportionally huge amount of weight, and eat nearly anything.

Granlain: Granlain are unusually large, strong horses that often serve as draft animals. They stand 7 feet tall at the shoulder and commonly reach 10 feet in length. Granlain are stubborn animals (increase the required training result level by one level), and trolls are often the only Name-givers strong enough to deal with these massive, willful beasts. Granlain are not common. Wild granlain live only in the plains and foothills near mountainous regions.

Griffin: These strange, four-legged creatures combine a lion's body with the head, legs, and wings of a large eagle. Like an eagle, a griffin's front legs are covered in feathers and end in sharp talons; its hind legs resemble those of a lion, covered in soft fur and ending in paws. Typically, griffins stand 4 feet tall at the shoulder, and are 5 to 6 feet long with an average wingspan of 7 to 9 feet. The head of a griffin resembles that of an eagle, with large, keen eyes and a sharp beak. Its wings are covered with bright feathers, usually yellow and white, but sometimes red and orange. Humanoids of average human size and smaller, except for windlings, can use griffins as aerial mounts. Before a griffin can be used in this way, however, it must undergo extensive training, which keeps the cost of these animals high. Though difficult to train (increase the required training result level by one level), once broken in, tame griffins make excellent and loyal steeds.

Horse, Draft: Draft horses are used as pack animals and to pull carts and wagons. They are generally stronger than riding horses,

MOUNTS TABLE

Mount	Feed Cost	Stable Cost	Carrying Capacity	Speed	Weight	Lifespan	Cost	Availability
Dyre	5	2	1,760	38/76	2 tons	25	4,500!	Rare
Elephant	30	NA	1,190	30/60	3.5 tons	70	3,000	Very Rare
Goat, riding	1 cp	NA	180	26/52	150	15	10	Average
Granlain	1	3 cp	740	30/60	1.5 tons	20	115	Rare
Griffin	10	5	260*	34/68✦	600	45	7,500!	Very Rare
Horse:								
Draft	5 cp	3 cp	410	30/60	1,800	30	150	Average
Pony	5 cp	3 cp	160	40/80	700	25	110	Average
Riding	5 cp	3 cp	260	52/104	1,000	25	125	Average
War	5 cp	3 cp	560	43/86	1,800	25	1,500!	Unusual
Huttawa	8 cp	3 cp	410	30/60	600	15	95	Unusual
Kue	2 cp	1 cp	80	40/80	25	10	100	Unusual
Mule, pack	2 cp	2 cp	290	28/56	900	20	100	Average
Stajian	3	1	740	55/110	1 ton	25	3,500!	Rare
Thundra Beast	5	2	950	40/80	2.5 tons	45	4,000!	Rare
Troajin	2	3 cp	200	32/64	400	20	100	Unusual
Zoak	1 cp	NA	70*	14/28 (40/80)✦	25	15	115	Rare

✦ The values in parentheses are the creature's flying Movement rates (the flying and ground Movement rates for griffins are the same).

! These mounts are combat trained. The price reflects the training these mounts have received to allow them to act in combat situations. At the gamemaster's discretion, other mounts may also be purchased as combat-ready—multiply the Cost by ×10 or more to reflect this.

* These creatures are used to carrying burdens while flying. When in flight, their Carrying Capacity remains the same as on land.

NA: Stabling is not normally available for that type of animal, or simply not applicable.

Feed Cost: The cost per day of feed for the animal.

Stable Cost: The cost per day of stabling the animal, in addition to feed.

Carrying Capacity: The animal's unencumbered (by rider, barding, or equipment) Carrying Capacity, in pounds. This is based on the mount's Knockdown step (usually STR+1, but sometimes more), which takes into account additional legs (and support).

Lifespan: The animal's normal life span, in years.

but are also slower.

Horse, Pony: A smaller breed of horse used mainly by dwarfs for transportation and war. Many ork, elf, and human children train their horse riding skills on ponies as they grow up.

Horse, Riding: The most common type of horses used, riding horses make strong mounts, but cannot wear barding or armor.

Horse, War: Larger and stronger than riding horses, war horses are bred to carry heavy loads while remaining able to canter and gallop. War horses can wear barding, and are often used by armies and cavalry units, particularly ork scorcher tribes.

Huttawa: The huttawa's body resembles that of a lion or tiger, but it has an eagle-like head with a large beak and bird-like eyes. Standing 4 feet tall at the shoulder and 6 feet long, huttawa are a favored mount for dwarf cavalrymen, and often help pull caravan wagons belonging to dwarf trading companies. Though not overly bright, huttawa are easy to train (reduce the required training result level by one level).

Kue: The kue resembles a cross between a lizard and a cat, with a reptilian body and feline mannerisms and facial features. Like cats, kue possess excellent night vision, and sometimes serve windling communities as watch animals. A kue has long, slender legs rather than the short squat legs typical of most lizards. They are about 2 feet tall at the shoulder, three to four feet long, and have horns on their heads and tails. Kues are native to jungles and forests, and make ideal mounts for the windling Cavalryman and Warrior adepts who protect windling communities and villages. Kues are generally sold only in larger cities and those towns located near jungles.

Mule, Pack: Pack mules pull carts and wagons. Slow but strong, these animals can travel through terrain that horses and other larger pack animals cannot.

Stajian: Stajian are large, bison-like animals often used as mounts by ork cavalry. They stand 6 feet tall at the shoulder and are less massive than a thundra beast, but faster and stronger than a horse. Their broad hooves make them good navigators in both swamp and mountains.

Thundra Beast: This large, four-legged animal looks like a cross between a rhinoceros and a dinosaur, with a tough, rock-like skin covering its entire body. Thundra beasts stand 7 feet tall at the shoulder, are 10 to 12 feet long, and weigh about 5,000 pounds. Each thundra beast has a large horn in the center of its forehead, which it uses to attack opponents. Ork scorcher groups frequently ride thundra beasts.

Troajin: Troajin are tiger-like animals native to jungle and mountain country. The average troajin stands approximately 4 feet tall at the shoulder and is 8 feet long—a combination of a 5 foot body and a 3 foot tail. Wild troajin are fiercely territorial and defend themselves with sharp claws and teeth. Troajin often become animal companions for Beastmasters.

Zoak: The zoak looks like a cross between a large bird and a bat, with feathers on its body and head and a leathery neck, wings, and tail. The creature's feathered legs each end in four eagle-like talons. Zoaks measure roughly 4 feet from beak to tail-tip. The zoak's neck is long and flexible, similar in appearance to that of the crakbill, but with vertebrae instead of pure muscle. These jungle and forest animals are favored by windling Cavalrymen, and also often serve as companions for Beastmasters. Because they usually prove difficult to train (increase the required training result level by one level), zoaks are rarely offered for sale. Merchants in cities are known to trade and sell zoaks.

TACK AND HARNESS TABLE

Item	Cost	Weight	Availability
Bit, Bridle and Harness	15	8	Average
Howdah	120	200	Very Rare
Saddle, Stirrups, Blanket:			
Riding Horse	30	20	Average
War Horse	50	25	Unusual
Saddlebags:			
Large	10	6	Average
Small	6	4	Average
Yoke:			
Draft Horse	25	8	Average
Ox	15	10	Average

OTHER ANIMALS TABLE

Animal	Cost	Availability
Chicken	3 cp	Everyday
Cow	35	Average
Dog:		
Hunting *or* Guard	30	Average
War Hound	500	Unusual
Falcon *or* Hawk	700	Rare
Goat	5	Everyday
Ox	50	Average
Pig	20	Everyday
Pigeon	1	Average
Sheep	8	Average
Songbird	2	Unusual

OTHER ANIMALS

Other Animal Descriptions

Chicken, Cow, Goat, Ox, Pig, Sheep: These animals are usually kept as livestock, kept fed and later killed for meat.

Dog: Dogs generally serve as guard and hunting animals. Some are trained specifically for use in war, but only ork raider tribes and slavers commonly use these animals (often referred to as war hounds). The price shown for war hounds reflects their combat training, allowing them to attack on command.

Falcon or hawk: Falcons and hawks are used as hunting birds in many different areas (the price shown is for a properly trained bird). Elven and human hunters commonly use falcons; others use hawks. Beastmasters often favor these bird above other animals as pets.

Pigeon: These birds have a keen homing sense which makes them perfect for delivering messages.

Songbird: Usually canaries, but sometimes other types of birds as well. Songbirds are kept caged, where they provide musical entertainment for their owners.

TACK AND HARNESS

Item Descriptions

Bit, Bridle, Saddle, Stirrups, Blanket: Essential items for those wanting to ride a mount. The bit and bridle (and reins) for guiding the animal; the saddle and stirrups for sitting on it.

Howdah: Shaped more like a platform, a howdah is a customized saddle for elephants and other similar-sized animals, allowing room for both a rider and a passenger to travel in relative comfort. Some howdahs are highly ornate constructions, often including an umbrella or tent for protection from the elements. The cost shown here is for the most basic type of howdah—effectively nothing more than an over-sized saddle. Elaborate howdahs cost at least two to three times as much, at the gamemaster's discretion.

CLOTHING TABLE			
Item	**Cost**	**Weight**	**Availability**
Belt	5 cp	Neg.	Everyday
Boots:			
Soft	1	1	Everyday
Riding	4	2	Average
Mountain	8	2	Average
Breeches:			
Peasant's	4 cp	1	Everyday
Merchant's	1	1	Average
Guild Member's	7	1	Unusual
Brooch:			
Plain Brass	2	1	Everyday
Ornamental	12	1	Average
Silver	15	1	Average
Gold	120	2	Average
Cloak:			
Wool	5	1	Average
Satin- or Silk-lined	14	1	Average
Traveler's	8	1	Average
Fur-trimmed	50	1	Average
Theran	380	2	Unusual
Dress:			
Plain	2	1	Everyday
Patterned	7	1	Average
Embroidered	22	2	Average
Satin	100	2	Unusual
Ballroom Gown	250	4	Unusual
Theran	560	6	Unusual
Gloves	2	Neg.	Average
Hat:			
Felt	4 cp	Neg.	Everyday
Woolen	12 cp	Neg.	Average
Fine Quality	9	Neg.	Average
Courtier Quality	18	1	Unusual
Hooded Mask	3	Neg.	Average
Hosiery:			
Plain	5 cp	Neg.	Everyday
Silk	20	Neg.	Average
Jacket:			
Wool	12	1	Average
Silk	90	1	Average
Courtier's	170	2	Unusual
Peasant's Garb:			
Shirt, belt, sandals and breeches	12 cp	1	Everyday
With robe or dress instead of breeches	3	1	Everyday
Pin or Clasp	1	Neg.	Average
Robe:			
Linen	15 cp	1	Average
Embroidered	15	1	Average
Sandals	2 cp	Neg.	Everyday
Shirt:			
Plain	2 cp	1	Everyday
Patterned	1	1	Average
Silk	45	1	Average
Shoes:			
Merchant's	2	1	Average
Courtier's	40	1	Unusual
Scabbard (blade)	5	1	Average
Scarf	5	Neg.	Average
Toga	6 cp	1	Average
Traveler's Garb:			
Soft boots, belt, shirt, breeches and cloak	8	3	Average
With robe *or* dress instead of breeches	9	3	Average
Tunic	4 cp	1	Everyday
Wealthy Traveler's Garb:			
Riding boots, belt, shoes, three patterned shirts and guild breeches or patterned dress, fine hat, satin-lined cloak and an ornamental brooch	40	5	Unusual
With embroidered robe instead of breeches	50	5	Unusual

Neg.: Negligible weight for encumbrance purposes. At the gamemaster's discretion, approximately 10 such items weigh 1 pound.

Weight: The clothing weights listed here are used for encumbrance purposes and do not reflect the true weight of the item. If the gamemaster wants to better reflect the encumbrance of clothing that is carried (not worn), double the weights shown.

Saddlebags: Made from leather or burlap, each large saddlebag can hold approximately 50 pounds, and a small saddlebag about 30 pounds, of goods.

Yoke: A special harness attached to an animal to allow it to drag heavy weights, like ploughs or wagons.

Clothing

Each Name-giver race wears its own style of clothing, and individual clothing choices can vary greatly.

The Clothing Table lists the most common types of clothing available in Barsaive, including package deals for entire outfits.

Windling Clothing

Windling clothing, like equipment and other items, is custom-made to fit their small stature and physiology. The small size does not reduce the cost of this equipment; although using less raw material, it requires far more exacting labor. Human-sized tailors find it difficult to make small clothing and charge more their efforts. Troll and obsidimen-sized tailors lack the ability to make windling-sized clothing.

Clothing made by windling tailors costs approximately 25 percent less, but has an Availability Rating one level higher than normal. Multiply the standard weight by .2 to determine the weight of clothing sized for windlings.

Passions and Questors

The Passions lie between Name-givers and the universe. They are all the emotions that dwell within us and all the emotions we share with the world.

• Forthian, Questor of Floranuus •

The following is an extract from Men and the Passions: What Lies Between. *Written in 1500 TH by Daron Highwater, dwarf Troubadour and questor of Mynbruje, this text explains the complex relationships between the people of Barsaive and the Passions.*

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

The Passions shape the spiritual beliefs and customs of Barsaive's people. According to many of Barsaive's finest scholars, the Passions are living embodiments of the life force of the universe, giving shape and form to the collective emotions and ideals of the world such as Love, Wealth, or Growth. As the universe nurtures an adept to keep the energies of life alive in the world, so the Passions nourish the many people who cannot find the strength or patience to become adepts or magicians. The Passions serve as intermediaries between these common folk and the awesome power of the universe.

Those who channel the power of the Passions are called questors. These men and women draw their extraordinary powers from the Passions, rather than directly from the universal life force. The life force of the universe flows through the Passions, who transmit this power to their questors. These questors, in turn, bring the Passions to the common folk across the world. Following a Passion gives a questor the same kind of focus an adept receives by following the tenets of his Discipline. The questor's life becomes a living metaphor for the ideals embodied by his chosen Passion; throughout his life, he expresses those ideals in his every word and action. Most questors fervently and vividly live out this commitment, adding as much color and energy to the world as magicians and adepts.

Most observers assume that what we know of the Passions holds true for the world outside Barsaive. It would be odd indeed if the universe interacted with our world in different ways from place to place. Yet ours is an odd world, and perhaps the universe's connection to it does change. The Passions we know in Barsaive may not exist on the other side of the globe; other Passions as yet unknown may take their place. More likely, men and women in distant lands know the same Passions but call them by different names. Whatever the truth, the reader will find in these pages all that we know of the Passions of Barsaive.

The Nature of Passions

Potent beings, the Passions have powers that dwarf the magical talents of adepts and the spells of magicians. Though they exist on the physical plane, the Passions possess abilities that enable them to travel at incredible speeds, sometimes by traveling as winds, sometimes by taking the forms of eagles or hawks. Some can even transport themselves by simple thought.

The Passions physically exist in our world and sometimes interact with it directly as well as through their questors. For example, many adventurers tell stories of meeting the Passion

Thystonius while traveling along the road. Sometimes a group of explorers wandering through a forest or across a dusty plain stumbles across a humble hut or a huge fortress that houses a member of Barsaive's pantheon. The Passions move these homes around with them, setting up residence for a period of time that may last anywhere from a day to a year or more. On occasion, a Passion welcomes a polite knock at his door. Other times, visitors had best keep well away.

Stories and legends hold that the Passions care nothing for Barsaive's political alliances and rivalries, and most of their documented behavior supports this belief. They champion neither the dwarf kingdom of Throal nor the magical empire of Thera because they believe the conflict between these two mighty states generates the passions and adventures of life that the universe craves. Though they do not intercede in worldly conflicts on their own, they will eagerly support any side that calls to them for help. The Passions bring their powers to these conflicts through the questors, their human agents. If a questor sides with you, his Passion supports your cause, and the power the questor brings can make the difference between victory and defeat. If the situation demands it, the Passions are known to send more powerful servants than their questors. Despite their appearance, these servants aren't Name-givers—no one knows what type of creature they are, but they are generally referred to as the Passions' avatars. Avatars can take many forms, including that of a harbinger (see **Harbingers**, below).

For years scholars and historians have debated the true appearance of the Passions. If one travels throughout Barsaive and asks people to describe the Passion Thystonius, one will receive a variety of answers. Humans describe a tall man with a flowing black beard and piercing blue eyes. Trolls tell of a troll carrying a warhammer as heavy as a boulder. Dwarfs speak of a massive dwarf, standing 50 feet tall, who makes his home in the Throal mountains. These differences in appearance are not confined to race, but encompass gender and other aspects of physical appearance. For example, many people think of the Passion Garlen as a woman, because she is depicted as female in the many statues gracing kaers and villages across Barsaive. But if Garlen comes to them in dreams, often during the deepest crises of their lives, they see the Passion as a man.

Most observers believe these varied appearances occur because a Passion tailors its physical form to the individual who sees it, so that the individual can easily recognize the ideals and forces embodied by the Passion and will be receptive to its message. However, all the manifestations of a Passion contain certain identifiable, common elements, described later in this chapter.

Scholars continue to debate whether or not the Passions have a "true" appearance. So far no one has formulated a definitive answer, and many believe the mystery may never be solved. Most people do not care to know, believing that the true forms of the Passions remain hidden for good reason.

The Passions in Conflict

Before the Scourge, the Passions appear to have wasted little energy fighting among themselves. They did not compete for followers, nor did they exhibit jealousy of each other. Instead, they focused their vast power on bringing their particular ideals to the people of the world. The variety of human nature ensured that none lacked followers, and the Passions seem to have existed in mutual harmony.

The Scourge changed this, as it altered or destroyed so much else good and beautiful in Barsaive. Those dark times apparently drove three of the twelve Passions mad, and these three now work toward the destruction of the other Passions. No longer content with inspiring fervor and embodying ideals for mortals, these Mad Passions selfishly desire power and influence as mortals might. Fortunately for the world, the Mad Passions also share the mortal characteristic of distrust. Though sometimes the Mad Passions work together to accomplish their goals, more often they work alone or against each other.

The remaining Passions, unaccustomed to either cooperation or competition, have only just begun to respond to the threat posed by the Mad Passions. As far as we know, these beings seldom fight their crazed counterparts directly. Instead, they throw their questors and followers against those who follow the Mad Passions. The conflict among the Passions has sown strife among their mortal followers; though they seldom fought over their differences in the past, the presence of the Mad Passions has triggered ideological skirmishes across the land that may yet lead to a full-scale war.

The danger the Mad Passions pose to the world remains uncertain. Some contend the Passions will meet in final battle and wreak destruction across the earth that will dwarf the devastation of the Scourge. Others claim the insanity that possesses the Mad Passions will render them impotent in the long run, and expect them to fade away like the many arrogant, mortal dictators before them. Only time can tell whether the Mad Passions will destroy the world, or simply depart from it.

Worship of the Passions

The people of Barsaive hold spiritual beliefs based on their faith in the Passions, but no Barsaivian race or community has established a formal religious institution. The Passions apparently have chosen to propagate their ideals through their questors rather than through institutions or written laws that are vulnerable to error and misinterpretation. As a result, none of the Passions has any organized following, though questors of a particular Passion often meet to discuss their experiences or even form small bands to achieve a common purpose. Both practices are fairly common in the Kingdom of Throal.

Though the people of Barsaive do not form organized religions centered on the Passions, they do worship the Passions. Most believe in all the Passions, appealing to whatever Passion best meets their current needs.

Some people, including the questors, worship one Passion over the others. Though they recognize the existence of other Passions, they believe the ideals of their chosen Passion are superior. These worshippers often express their beliefs by stating that they follow the ideals of their chosen Passion. For example, a farmer who worships Jaspree might say, "I follow the ideals of Jaspree." Many questors make such statements, the most common method of declaring worship.

Name-givers rarely declare a belief in only one of the Passions. Most people accept the entire pantheon of Passions and would fear losing a Passion's protection by proclaiming that they did not believe in it. Most people invoke different Passions depending on their current circumstances. For example, a family hiding in their shuttered home while a pack of hungry wolves howls outside might seek the protection of Garlen, the Passion of the Hearth and Healing. If a family member ventures outside with sword in hand to slay the predators, the family might invoke Thystonius, the Passion of Physical Conflict and Valor.

Harbingers

Countless legends tell of the Passions visiting Name-givers in times of great need or rewarding those faithful individuals who live with a particular Passion's ideals in their hearts. However, legends rarely speak of the dire consequences that befall those who anger the Passions. Only a few people have seen what happens; the angered Passions deal with such miscreants by sending a special kind of avatar: a fearsome creature known as a harbinger (see the **Creatures** chapter on p. 309 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information and game statistics).

One of the best-known tales of a Name-giver who angered the Passions is the legend of Naka. Naka farmed a small plot of

land in the ancient Kingdom of Landis, long before the Scourge. For years Naka worked his field. The Name-giver never enjoyed the profits that some of his fellow farmers earned, but neither did he ever go hungry. He largely kept to himself and never spoke ill of others. Over time, however, Naka grew resentful of his neighbors' successes. Slowly his resentment grew, like a black tumor in his heart. Then one day a terrible storm darkened the skies over Landis. Naka went out into the fields of his neighbors, and invoking the Name of Garlen, Passion of the Hearth, he offered his fellow farmers shelter in his large house. He offered them warm food and wine, and soon all of them had fallen asleep. Then Naka massacred them and stole their valuables. Only days later, Naka met his end at the feet of an unknown giant; an ethereal-looking, armored knight. Nothing is known about this knight, but people whisper that he was sent by Garlen herself.

Passion Descriptions

The following descriptions reflect the common understanding of the Passions. However, our knowledge of these mysterious and powerful beings is almost certainly neither complete nor entirely correct.

Each entry offers a brief description of each Passion's nature and personality, followed by a list of the ideals, typical appearance, and common elements associated with each Passion. **Ideals** represent the universal concepts and emotions the Passion embodies; the Passion's questors focus on these qualities. **Typical Appearance** describes the Passion's usual manifestation. **Common Elements** include sights, sounds, textures, and other phenomena that usually accompany any manifestation of the Passion. These common elements often appear in the dreams of an individual thinking about the Passion or the ideals it embodies, and the presence of such common elements may also indicate that the Passion is nearby or easily summoned. **Powers** refers to the unique, personal abilities each Passion possesses.

The **Questors** section describes the typical appearance and behavior of each Passion's questors. **Acts of Devotion** shows example acts of devotion that embody the ideals of a Questor's patron Passion. Lastly, **Questor Powers** lists the three primary powers this Passion offers to its questors.

Astendar

Astendar is the living muse of romance and the arts. Tales abound of artists paid a visit by Astendar who spent a feverish night alternately working at the easel and making love with the Passion. Such a gift of inspiration is not lightly given, and a visit from Astendar usually marks an individual for greatness.

Astendar also takes an interest in lovers, both young and old. One well-known incident involved a widow and widower who wanted to marry. Their children, however, believed their respective parents too old for romance and discouraged the courtship. Kept locked in their houses by their children, the couple appealed to Astendar for help. The Passion heard their pleas and agreed to aid them if they created a painting together. At first, the couple had no idea how they might do this, for they could not meet or see each other. Driven by their longing to marry, they finally came up with a plan.

The couple hired a thief adept they knew to carry a canvas back and forth between their two houses. Every night for many weeks, one of them added to the painting, and the thief carried it off to the other house just before dawn. As the painting neared completion, the lovers found themselves waiting more and more anxiously every night to see the other's handiwork. Slowly but surely, Astendar's painting turned a solid friendship and gentle affection into excitement, anticipation, and deepening love. At long last they finished the picture, astounded by the beauty of their work. The exquisite painting so pleased Astendar that she

made the couple young once more. Bolstered by their renewed strength, they broke free of their imprisoning homes and ran away together. As for the thief, he was rewarded with the painting, which he sold for a handsome price.

Ideals: Love, Art, Music

Typical Appearance: Astendar commonly manifests as a powerfully built male or female of any race, wearing few garments and carrying a musical instrument.

Common Elements: Light rain, music, beautiful clothing of intricate textures

Powers: Astendar can entrance listeners with music, instill lust or love, restore youth, and transform into the sound of a song and float through the air, leaving the melody in her wake.

Astendar's Questors

Artists make up the largest percentage of questors of Astendar. These questors find sensual pleasures such as gourmet food, luxurious clothing, or a lingering kiss fascinating. Their determination to imitate Astendar by indulging their desires often leads them into trouble. Because they know their actions are inspired by their Passion, they naively believe everyone else will see their actions in the same light. Sadly, others usually view the indulgences of questors of Astendar as decadence unchecked by self-control or common sense.

Acts of Devotion: Create a work of art that requires one to four weeks of work (Minor). Deliver a love letter across a distance no less than five days' journey (Major). Become involved in a romantic affair that might end in bodily harm to the questor (Zealous). Find the perfect bride for the king or queen (Quest).

Questor Powers: Enchanted Gift, Instill Love, Return Youthful Spirit

Chorrolis

Chorrolis wanders the world, aiding those who want to strike a clever bargain or long for more wealth than they have. He inspires people to rise at dawn and work to improve their lot, and leaves them despairing if they go to bed at night without having succeeded.

Despite his status as a Passion and the extraordinary powers he possesses, Chorrolis brims over with jealousy and avarice. He covets anything of value or beauty that someone else owns, and

his desire to possess such items often drives him to distraction. Because he scorns simple stealing as the act of a coward, Chorrolis must resort to other methods of acquisition. Bargaining is his method of choice. He has been known to hound the owner of a desired piece of merchandise for weeks at a time, turning up and offering a deal when the owner least expects it. Because he subtly disguises his appearance, most people do not recognize Chorrolis and eventually take the price he offers, desperate to be rid of the obsessive merchant following them around. Those who do recognize Chorrolis bide their time before selling, knowing that he will drive up his price to ridiculous heights. The patient trader can make a staggering profit by playing on Chorrolis' desperate desire.

Ideals: Wealth, Trade, Jealousy, Desire

Typical Appearance: Chorrolis often appears as a corpulent male of any race, either jovial or bitter and depressed. He wears fine clothes, and often carries silver and gold or beautiful and expensive objects around with him.

Common Elements: Bags of treasure, caravans, goods for sale, food

Powers: Chorrolis can incite greed, encourage cooperation in matters of trade, and travel instantaneously along any road or waterway used as a trade route.

Chorrolis' Questors

Questors of Chorrolis rise from the ranks of capable, usually greedy merchants. Some ply their trade from market stalls in Bartertown, while others satisfy their desire to imitate Chorrolis by traveling across Barsaive in trade caravans.

Chorrolis frequently inspires his questors to acquire specific objects that he treasures. Widely known for their unbeatable bargaining skills, the questors of Chorrolis usually conceal their devotion to the Passion in order to negotiate favorable deals with the unwary.

Acts of Devotion: Conduct trade involving goods valued at 50 silver pieces or more. The questor need not deal with every merchant he sees, but must negotiate at least one notable transaction every time he passes through a marketplace (Minor). Spend considerable time pursuing a rumor describing potential profit (Major). Secure a loan with outrageous interest rates and serious late-payment penalties in an attempt to make an extraordinary profit (Zealous). Obtain a rare and legendary object (Quest).

Questor Powers: Encourage Trade, Incite Greed, Locate Valuables

DIS (MAD PASSION)

Known as Erendis before the Scourge, this Passion once stood for the ideals of Order, Bureaucracy and Work. Now, even with her warped ideals, Dis is a popular Passion among those who make their living from the Theran slave trade. Unlike the other Passions, Dis takes her greatest pleasure in destroying people's passion for life, rather than inspiring it. She bleeds away her worshippers' zest for living and they in turn demoralize those they subjugate. Eventually, the slaves and bureaucrats influenced by this Mad Passion become empty husks, devoid of dreams and feelings. Dis wants to extend this death of the soul throughout the world.

In addition to the slavers, Dis also inspires bureaucrats who create paperwork merely to look busy, rather than out of a need for the records or fondness for their work. Few activities spread boredom more effectively than generating useless records and information, and Dis spends a great deal of her time encouraging people to do just that.

Ideals: Confusion, Unnecessary Work, Complex Bureaucratic Hierarchies, Slavery and Mastery

Typical Appearance: Dis manifests as a thin, sickly male or female of any race, who seems to have been deprived of sunlight and exercise for far too long.

Common Elements: Papers, papers and more papers, contracts, tomes of ritual, slaves, chains

Powers: Dis can remove fervor from those around her and cause confusion in their minds, make people obey her will, and teleport instantaneously to any place she has visited before.

Dis' Questors

The questors of Dis imitate their Passion's desire for unimaginative uniformity by dressing in gray and making themselves look pale. Some questors of Dis seize or otherwise control mercantile bureaucracies or slaver operations in order to embody their Passion's ideals, living comfortably off the fruits of others' labors. Other questors of Dis seek nothing less than complete detachment from their fellow man and the human condition, thus exemplifying the disdain with which Dis views all living beings.

Acts of Devotion: Impose one's will on another sentient being

(Minor). Create an obscure method of controlling information and work flow that offers no practical value (Major). Force a worthy opponent into slavery (Zealous). Set up a slave-trading network (Quest).

Questor Powers: Confusion, Enslave, Living Death

Floranuus

Floranuus is the perpetual optimist and the motivator of all Name-givers. He burns in the hearts of all who rise eagerly from their beds each morn to meet the new day. He inspires all people toward victory, and stands at the center of all celebrations.

As the embodiment of joy, mirth, and excitement, he lacks understanding of despair. He sends his questors to help the deeply depressed, knowing that they may empathize with such feelings in a way that he cannot.

Ideals: Revelry, Energy, Victory, Motion

Typical Appearance: Floranuus usually manifests as a humanoid shape composed of fire. However, the manifestation neither gives off heat nor burns any objects it touches.

Common Elements: Fire, parties, cheers, swift ships of both air and sea, wine, roads

Powers: Floranuus increases stamina, alters moods from depression to exhilaration, and can travel at breathtaking speed anywhere in the world as a ball of fire.

Floranuus' Questors

Because they feel a renewed optimism at the beginning of each new day, the questors of Floranuus actively encourage everyone around them to share their enthusiasm for living. These men and women find a silver lining in every cloud and recognize a positive aspect in even the most dire or depressing situations. The questors of Floranuus provide an instantly recognizable emblem of their Passion's ideals by wearing bold, bright colors that invariably cheer people up and inspire them to action of some sort. These questors spend their lives traveling across Barsaive seeking those who have lost hope, then doing all they can to revive a spark of joy in those souls.

Questors of Floranuus willingly go to whatever lengths seem necessary to light up the world around them as brightly as the flames of their Passion. Though many people grumble that questors of Floranuus are nothing but glorified busy-bodies, none question their benevolent motives or absolutely sincere desire to change people's lives for the better.

Acts of Devotion: Participate in or organize a race or other physical competition (Minor). Organize a celebration with at least 100 or more guests to require at least one week of work (Major). Raise your side's flag within enemy territory at the turning point of a battle (Zealous). End a war between two enemy communities or nations (Quest).

Questor Powers: Increase Speed, Increase Stamina, Speed Ship

Garlen

During the Scourge, all the kaers and citadels called on Garlen for protection, and she remains one of the most widely revered Passions in Barsaive. People of all races call her the mother who cares for all, and Garlen considers all of Barsaive's Name-givers her children. Garlen and her questors offer healing to the sick and injured, and comfort to the dying. In a world filled with violence and danger, Garlen watches over those who shun adventuring for the comfort and safety of home, particularly families and children.

Ideals: Hearth and Healing

Typical Appearance: Garlen usually manifests as a voluptuous woman, her arms spread wide in acceptance and invitation. On occasion, Garlen appears as a kindly, comfortable-looking man.

Common Elements: Homes, children, kaers, enclosed spaces, water

Powers: Garlen can heal the wounded, comfort the frightened, and travel instantly to any home.

Garlen's Questors

Many ordinary citizens and even some questors of other Passions mistakenly believe that Garlen's questors seek the refuge of the hearth and embrace healing because they fear conflict. Anyone who has watched someone they love die while doing everything in their power to prevent it knows that this act of caring requires a far greater courage and strength than that required to defeat any enemy.

Most questors of Garlen are female. Some believe that Garlen attracts women questors because she so often appears as one. Others speculate that because they carry new lives within their

bodies, women possess a greater understanding and appreciation for life and greater compassion for other living beings.

Garlen's questors can be stern, but show unfailing generosity and understanding. Those who mistake Garlen's compassion for weakness sometimes do not live to regret their misunderstanding. For example, a famous story tells of five questors of Garlen who were visiting a village near Skypoint when Theran slavers raided the village. Garlen's questors cut down the Therans to the last man, staining their white robes with the slavers' blood.

Acts of Devotion: Heal someone suffering from a physical injury (Minor). Provide extended care for someone suffering from a serious illness (Major). Protect a home from attackers (Zealous). Find the cure for a terminal illness (Quest).

Questor Powers: Comfort, Heal, Seal Home

Jaspree

Countless Name-givers have invoked Jaspree's name during the past hundred years as people across Barsaive have revived farmlands and forests devastated during the Scourge.

Moved by his deep love of all growing things, Jaspree has answered the call of his followers. He wanders under the deep shadows cast by towering trees and stops to smell the smallest wildflowers that line Barsaive's well-traveled roads. Thanks to his aid, the world has grown green and rich with life in the years since the end of the Scourge.

Ideals: Growth, Care of the Land, Love of the Wilderness

Typical Appearance: Jaspree usually manifests as a male or female creature, half animal and half any Name-giver race.

Common Elements: Trees, farms, forests, seeds

Powers: Jaspree encourages growth in plants, animals and Name-givers; animates plants; speaks with animals; and travels through dirt as if swimming through water.

Jaspree's Questors

A majority of Jaspree's questors devote their Passion-given powers to nurturing small patches of Barsaive where plant life survived the Scourge, and to coaxing seemingly barren areas back to life. Questors of Jaspree recognize the intrinsic, basic value of plant life as the building block for all other life. They make a point of teaching this lesson to careless travelers and those who deliberately destroy their work, sometimes going so far as to trade a life for a life.

Other questors of Jaspree seek to protect the lives of animals and Name-givers as well as plant life. These questors defend the communities in which they live against marauders who would destroy any living thing, but understand that Name-givers need to sow fields in order to eat, and that some forests must die to support other life. They see life as an endless cycle of death and rebirth, and accept both as having equal worth.

Questors of Jaspree also embrace opportunities to travel to the far reaches of Barsaive and beyond to learn more about the plant life of the world, sow life in barren lands, and to protect endangered species of plant life.

Acts of Devotion: Plant seeds over a one-acre area (Minor). Nurture a farm or forest area for one week or more (Major). Protect a farm, forest area, or herd of animals from casual or deliberate harm (Zealous). Undo the effects of the Scourge to a considerable patch of land (Quest).

Questor Powers: Animate Plant, Command Animal, Plant Growth

Lochost

Lochost is the patron Passion of slaves, rebels, and scholars. The truly educated mind seeks the inspiration to break free from the beliefs of the past and make new discoveries, and so merits the protection of Lochost as surely as any freedom fighter.

The slow spread of Theran slavery across Barsaive has stretched Lochost's attention thinner and thinner, and he depends upon increasing numbers of questors to do his work. At the sight of the slavery she desires, the Mad Passion Dis often confronts Lochost, and she currently wields greater power than he. The two last fought at a slave camp near the citadel of Tirthon, killing every slave and slaver in their savage combat. Wishing to avoid a repeat of the massacre, Lochost spends a great deal of time distracting Dis as his questors work to free the enslaved.

Ideals: Rebellion, Change, Freedom

Typical Appearance: Lochost usually manifests as a male or female child of any race, whose body and features constantly change.

Common Elements: Strong wind, uprooted trees, open gates

Powers: Lochost inspires rebellion, comforts the imprisoned, unlocks doors and prisons, and can fly through the air by transforming into wind.

Lochost's Questors

Lochost's questors can be found anywhere in Barsaive that oppression or inequity rules. Many questors of Lochost agitate for change in pursuit of equality and Name-giver dignity, opposing Theran rule and slavery. Others propose political reforms in established communities and within the Kingdom of Throal, acting as devil's advocates in an effort to ensure that those in power continue to govern responsibly. Still others foment rebellion for the sake of change, imitating their Passion by constantly challenging the status quo.

As long as Thera practices slavery, questors of Lochost will actively oppose Thera's rule, sowing and nurturing rebellion in slave camps and mining operations throughout Barsaive and all over the world. All Therans accept the edict that questors of Lochost must be exposed and eradicated in order to preserve their lifestyle, and the Mad Passion Dis hunts Lochost relentlessly, determined to extinguish the light of his inspiration.

Acts of Devotion: Comfort a person enslaved against his will (Minor). Help someone who has escaped slavery (Major). Free an entire camp of slaves (Zealous). Convince a nation's leader to outlaw slavery (Quest).

Questor Powers: Break Shackles, Change Thoughts, Inspire Rebellion

Mynbruje

Mynbruje stands by the unjustly accused, those the law has passed over, and those misunderstood by their society. He is a busy Passion, for though the Name-givers occupy a special place in the universe, mere mortals are often blind to truth and understanding.

Ideals: Justice, Compassion, Empathy, Truth

Typical Appearance: Mynbruje usually appears as an old man or woman of any race.

Common Elements: Balanced scales, executioner's axe, stars, a comfortable place to rest

Powers: Mynbruje can read minds, ease the suffering of others, perceive obscure clues, and travel through the thoughts of Name-givers, leaping from the mind of one to any other within fifty miles.

Mynbruje's Questors

The questors of Mynbruje wear simple garments, sometimes peasant garb, to show that they care little for status or prestige. They imitate their Passion by devoting their lives to seeking truth and justice. They dedicate all their efforts to restoring balance to lives and communities, laboring to show criminals the error of their ways, helping society administer justice compassionately, and clearing the names of those wrongly accused.

Mynbruje's questors serve their Passion in many ways. Some act as official judges in citadels, towns, and villages. Others travel throughout Barsaive randomly or along a prescribed route, adjudicating disputes and righting injustices. Everyone accepts the word of a questor of Mynbruje as law, though such questors often travel with other adepts and magicians as protection against those who would seek to evade judgment.

Acts of Devotion: Ease an accused person's suffering (Minor). Reveal a falsehood (Major). Prove a criminal's guilt or a suspect's innocence (Zealous). Uncover and expose a conspiracy to murder a king or other high-ranking official (Quest).

Questor Powers: Ease Suffering, Increase Perception, Perceive Emotion

Raggok (Mad Passion)

Raggok was known as Rashomon before the Scourge, and his ideals then were Leadership, Endurance, Tolerance, and Perseverance. Today, Raggok is the most terrible of the Mad Passions, and embodies all that is corrupted in the world.

He causes the dead to walk the earth, he sows the baseless hatreds that erupt between once-loving husbands and wives, and he tortures the insane with disembodied voices. People say he has made countless pacts with Horrors, aiding them in their evil endeavors and receiving their assistance in kind. Like the Horrors he allegedly serves, Raggok loves to inflict pain and strives to satisfy this perverse desire.

Ideals: Vengeance, Bitterness, Jealousy

Typical Appearance: Raggok usually manifests as a large man with the head of a ram. Scores of open wounds continuously appear, heal, and reappear on the incarnation's bloody flesh.

Common Elements: Skeletons, the undead, swords, wounds, insects, snow and ice

Powers: Raggok can call forth painful memories, raise undead,

inspire hatred, and travel through the thoughts of Name-givers, leaping from the mind of one Name-giver to any other within fifty miles. As he travels, he evokes painful memories in the minds of those he passes through.

Raggok's Questors

Because the ideals Raggok personifies can be found in the hearts of members of every race, this Mad Passion never lacks questors. People who enjoy inflicting mental and physical pain gladly imitate Raggok and accept his gifts in return.

Questors of Raggok divide themselves into two main groups based on their interpretation of how best to embody their Passion's ideals. One group believes that ostentatious displays of wealth cause mental pain in others less fortunate and so wallows in all the pleasures of the flesh that money can buy. Their constant search for even more money and treasure provides the resources needed to pay others to glorify Raggok, consciously or unconsciously, through their actions.

The second group lives ascetic lives. These questors feel compelled to imitate Raggok personally to the best of their abilities, and believe that bringing pain to the world should take precedence over their own comfort. Any wealth they accumulate is used to buy poisons, hire mercenaries to raze villages, and accomplish other acts that cause pain and suffering.

Acts of Devotion: Cause someone pain in combat—this act of devotion is rewarded for one battle against one opponent, not each successful attack (Minor). Torture a victim with expert deliberation (Major). Kill someone in the name of revenge. The revenge may satisfy the questor's need for vengeance or simply fulfil a contract paid for by someone else (Zealous). Make an entire community suffer for the deeds of their ancestors (Quest).

Questor Powers: Cause Pain, Inspire Rage, Raise Undead

THYSTONIUS

Thystonius is the Passion of physical conflict and valor. Most soldiers mistakenly believe him a Passion of war and try to claim him for their own, but Thystonius cares little for killing. He resides in living bones and muscles, not in the corpses of the fallen. He loves the flexing and exertion of bodies competing against the odds—a foot race, an arm wrestle, or a man swimming for his life against the impossible currents of the Serpent River give him infinitely more pleasure than the carnage of battle.

In addition to those who embrace him wholeheartedly, Thystonius rushes to aid those who feel daunted by a physical challenge. The epic poem "The War of Tears," recounts two camps of opposing warriors, both fearful of taking the battlefield the next day. Thystonius entered both camps during the night and spoke to each army, extolling the glories of war and promising the warriors they would all emerge heroes. Inspired by the Passion's words, both sides joined in vigorous combat the following morning. The Passion kept his promise—the warriors' heroic deeds were immortalized in the "The War of Tears." Nevertheless, Thystonius' habit of encouraging people to throw themselves at each other makes many people uncomfortable.

Ideals: Physical Conflict, Valor

Typical Appearance: Thystonius usually appears as a tall, muscular man or woman of any race.

Common Elements: Weapons, banners and pennants, armor, battlefields

Powers: Thystonius can increase martial abilities and strength, overcome pain, and travel instantaneously within a mile of any physical conflict.

Thystonius' Questors

Questors of Thystonius believe that diving headfirst into physical danger is the only way to fully experience life. Their primary

motivation each day is to seek challenges and opponents to test their skills and valor. According to their vision of their Passion's ideals, they must encourage others to do the same and so engage willing opponents as often as unwilling ones.

Questors of Thystonius make valiant, tireless warriors, and leap to defend entire communities single-handedly, if necessary. While this quality makes these men and women valuable allies, they cannot be counted on to consider the effects of their actions before they join battle, and so rarely learn to lead troops.

Certain people, who are willing to do almost anything to avoid conflict, accuse questors of Thystonius of using their superior strength to force people to fight against their will, thus acting like overgrown bullies.

Acts of Devotion: Engage in a test of physical prowess; combat, leaping over a particularly wide chasm, and so on (Minor). Lead soldiers into battle (Major). Fight a powerful opponent until one or both combatants cannot continue (Zealous). Bring victory to a nation involved in a full-scale war (Quest).

Questor Powers: Absorb Damage, Increase Strength, Increase Initiative

UPANDAL

Upandal is the Passion of Construction. He reinforces the need to build shared by all the Name-giver races of Barsaive, helping them to create order and beauty by building structures as well as giving names.

Upandal gives aid where he can, inspiring architects and craftsmen and protecting beautiful cities and towers. On occasion, he presents enchanted tools to craftsmen he deems particularly worthy of his patronage.

Ideals: Building, Construction, Planning

Typical Appearance: Upandal generally manifests as a craftsman of any race, clad in dirty work clothes.

Common Elements: Hammer, building plans, compass, smith's forge

Powers: Upandal can make tools quickly; fortify buildings, fortresses and city walls; create temporary bridges and towers; and travel instantaneously between cities or any other large, ornate constructions.

Upandal's Questors

Questors of Upandal find their greatest joy in building, or collecting money for a construction project. They offer everything they build to the glory of Upandal, eagerly embracing each new structure as a way to enrich the world and win more questors for their Passion.

Not all their devotion is expressed on such a grand scale. Questors of Upandal find equal satisfaction in tinkering with, repairing, and reproducing small objects. They use every opportunity to express their devotion to their Passion and encourage others to join them in their quest. Whether helping a farmer repair a fence or fixing a child's toy, Upandal's questors do their best to imitate their patron Passion. Their analytical minds give Upandal's questors a penchant for devising war plans and other such designs. Unfortunately, their love of the complex and ornate tends to produce aesthetically pleasing but impractical strategies.

Acts of Devotion: Spend a week creating a new tool, weapon, or design (Minor). Help build a building, castle, or other structure that requires two to four weeks of work (Major). Protect a beautiful object—a mechanical jewelry box, an ornate tower, and so on—from those who would destroy it (Zealous). Create a legendary item (Quest).

Questor Powers: Create Structure, Create Weapon, Fortify Structure

Vestrial (Mad Passion)

Before the Scourge, Vestrial was the prankster Passion, blending good humor with trickery to puncture the overblown egos of the arrogant. Insanity took hold of him during the Scourge, however, making him as arrogant as the former victims of his jokes.

Seeing himself as the sole inheritor of all the world's Passion worshipers, he creates elaborate plans for world conquest that his questors enthusiastically carry out. He uses his vast intelligence to spin webs of intrigue that no one save himself can understand. Some believe that Vestrial has woven so many plots and deceits that even he has lost track of the ends he originally desired.

Ideals: Manipulation, Deceit

Typical Appearance: Vestrial usually manifests as a humanoid form, wearing a dark hood and cloak.

Common Elements: An assassin's dagger, blood, ambush

Powers: Vestrial can confuse listeners, beguile people with lies, discover a person's true desire, and travel instantaneously within a mile of any place where someone has just uttered a lie.

Vestrial's Questors

The questors of Vestrial scurry about the world dressed in the black cloaks of their Passion, carrying out the Mad Passion's schemes. Though questors of Vestrial apparently regularly sacrifice their real goals to the goal of fostering deceit in the name of their Passion's ideals, they should not be underestimated. For every ten questors that devote all their efforts to manipulating fellow Name-givers and events, one questor can be found guiding his fellows through brilliant, effective, diabolical plans.

The precision, subtlety, and effectiveness of some Vestrial-inspired plots suggests that the apparent incompetence of the most visible questors provides a cover for countless unrecognized questors of Vestrial hidden within all levels of society.

Acts of Devotion: Lie to someone about a matter that is important to the person and has an effect on his life (Minor). Manipulate someone into doing something illegal, immoral, or otherwise wrong that they would not willingly do (Major). Create a lie that leads to someone's death, though the questor need not be present when the death occurs. The person who dies must have allies that will seek to avenge his death (Zealous). Create a conspiracy to murder a king or other high-ranking official (Quest).

Questor Powers: Deceit, Discover Desire, Manipulate Desire

Questors

Questors pledge themselves to one Passion. They dedicate their lives to it, trying to foster its ideals in the lives of all people. The characteristics of questors vary from Passion to Passion. Some general traits exist among most or all questors, as discussed below.

With the exception of those who follow the Mad Passions, questors with different patron Passions do not bear each other ill will. Each Passion embodies different ideals and emotions, and their questors understand that they are all equally significant parts of a whole that comprises the life of Name-givers.

Though the Passions do not directly support political factions or causes, questors can and often do. For example, many dwarf questors in Throal call Thystonius their patron Passion.

Their questor order has a military nature, and they use gifts from Thystonius to give the Kingdom of Throal military protection. If other questors of Thystonius chose to attack Throal, such an act would bring questors of the same Passion into direct conflict with each other. Such a development would gladden Thystonius. Though he would mourn those killed in the conflict, the bravery of his questors on both sides would bring him great joy.

Patron Passions also bestow abilities on their questors. Like adepts, questors cultivate these abilities by focusing their lives around a certain behavior—in this case, spreading their Passion's ideals across Barsaive. Some of these abilities, such as Healing, are shared by the questors of several Passions. Others are unique to one Passion. As opposed to adepts, questors are generally respected and trusted throughout the land. Because adepts draw the immense power of the universe to themselves directly, most common folk are suspicious of them. Many view adepts, especially magicians, as presumptuous and arrogant. Questors, on the other hand, receive their power by working through the Passions, in whom nearly every inhabitant of Barsaive places trust. The people's warm regard for the Passions includes the questors, and they therefore enjoy the trust of most people. An old Barsaivian saying perfectly expresses these sentiments: "Hide from magicians, hire adepts, and say 'hello' to questors."

The name questor refers to someone who has devoted himself or herself to a spiritual quest. This quest usually begins late in life; after an adept becomes experienced in his Discipline, he is sometimes drawn to devote his life to mimicking one of the universe's twelve Passions. The life of a questor does not earn him a living. Only the followers of Dis maintain a bureaucratic structure, and small, loosely organized groups sometimes form to discuss the creed of the Passion to which they have devoted their lives, but no formal institution exists to support questors' day-to-day needs. For example, two dozen questors of Thystonius in the Kingdom of Throal have organized themselves into an elite military unit called the Primus Guard. These questors support and strengthen each others' devotion to their chosen Passion, and often lend their considerable strength and experience to battles, but each of these adepts must make his own way in the world.

Questors sometimes live off the generosity of communities willing to support a strong questor in their midst, but most questors continue to practice the trade they learned in the early years of their lives. Adepts who become questors must try to reconcile the lifestyle and mindset of their Discipline and the actions required of a faithful questor. For some, this is easy. Many swordmaster adepts have assumed a quest to be like Thystonius. If the two ways of thinking conflict, however, the adept questor must choose which to follow. For example, this conflict could arise for a Thief who is also a questor of Thystonius. The Thief mindset typically demands that he avoid open confrontation, while the ideals of Thystonius drive him to seek physical conflict. The questor mindset demands that he seek physical conflict. The more he relies on the Thief Discipline, the less he behaves like Thystonius, and so receives fewer rewards from the Passion. However, the more he tries to be like Thystonius, the less successful he will be as a Thief.

It might seem odd for adepts to devote their lives to a Passion so different in nature from their Discipline. However, because the Discipline of an adept in many ways limits how the adept sees the world and how he interacts with it, becoming a questor of a Passion of a different nature allows the adept to interact with the world in a way previously unknown.

Becoming a Questor

Every Name-giver can become a questor, adept and non-adept alike. Adhering to a Passion's ideals is the only thing all questors have in common—being a questor is a specific, directed quest a character undertakes at a later stage in his life.

To become a questor, the character simply declares his intention (which must be approved by the gamemaster), and starts devoting his life to a single Passion, living that Passion's ideals and helping spread the influence of their patron Passion across Barsaive. In return, he gains access to the Questor talent. The rank of the Questor talent serves as a measure of devotion, and supports the use of the powers granted to the questor by his patron Passion (see **Acts of Devotion**, p. 470).

Player characters should not begin the game as questors because being a questor does not constitute a profession or Discipline in and of itself. Most adepts who become questors do so only after achieving a certain amount of experience in their chosen Discipline, usually after they reach the Fifth Circle or higher.

Choosing a Patron Passion

Strictly speaking, characters can choose to become questors of any of the twelve Passions. A questor never follows more than one Passion. Gamemasters should consider the potential problems inherent in following any of the three Mad Passions—Dis, Raggok, or Vestrial. While being a questor of one of these Passions offers excellent roleplaying challenges, it is important to remember that most Barsaivians fear and revile the Mad Passions and anyone associated with them. Even the Theran Empire only tolerates those who worship Dis, Passion of bureaucracy and slavery. Questors of these Passions would find even ordinary tasks such as buying supplies difficult, for most people will be unwilling to deal with them on any level.

A second issue is that those who devote their lives and energy to the Mad Passions usually oppose the ideals and goals of the heroes of **Earthdawn**. A questor of the Mad Passions could not easily join an adventuring group, and neither could the player who created him. The gamemaster should consider limiting questors of the Mad Passions to the role of antagonists, gamemaster characters who will work against the players' characters. The questor powers and Acts of Devotion described for the Mad Passions are provided so that gamemasters can create these questors as villains and other opposition.

Rather than accepting the ideals of the Mad Passions, questor characters may instead decide to attempt to heal one or more of the Mad Passions, an appropriate goal for a questor of the Passion Mynbruje, for instance. Such a goal would require years of adventuring to gain the talents and abilities needed to accomplish this task, for only the most powerful questor adepts would dare to directly involve themselves in the affairs of the Passions. Such a quest lends itself well to extended campaigns.

The Questor Talent

The Questor talent alone does not give the character any special abilities, but is used as a measure of the questor's abilities as granted by his patron Passion. As the character increases the rank of the Questor talent, the strength of his Passion-granted powers also increases. The Questor rank simply provides a gauge by which both the player and gamemaster can describe how much power the Passion grants the questor.

In game terms, as the questor performs acts of devotion worthy of his patron Passion, he can increase the rank of his Questor talent (see **Acts of Devotion**, below). In the world of **Earthdawn**, as a questor performs acts worthy of his patron Passion, the Passion rewards him with greater power.

Accumulating a certain number of Devotion Points does not automatically increase the Questor rank. The Devotion Point total only indicates the current maximum Questor rank possible. Player characters purchase ranks in the Questor talent in the same manner as they purchase ranks of other Fifth Circle talents. See the **Talents** chapter, p. 196, for a description of the **Questor** talent.

Devotion-based Ranks

Optional Rule: If you want to emphasize that a questor's powers are bestowed on him by his patron Passion in return for living out the Passion's ideals, use this optional rule.

Rather than paying Legend Points for increasing the Questor talent rank, the character automatically gains the maximum rank available for his Devotion Point total. This ties a questor's abilities more closely to his way of life and prevents players from getting frustrated when losing Legend Points if they fail to act (see **Failing to Act**, p. 471), since they don't have to repay the required number of Legend Points if they lose a rank.

Questor Powers

When a character purchases the Questor talent at Rank 1, he receives the three basic questor powers listed with his patron Passion (see **Questor Powers**, p. 472, and **Passion Descriptions** p. 462). All powers are based on the questor's Questor rank; purchasing a new rank in the Questor talent increases all of the character's questor powers.

Acts of Devotion

In order to live out the ideals of their patron Passion, questors must act in ways that reflect their chosen path. That is, they are expected to take actions that support the ideals of their patron Passion. For example, a questor of Garlen is expected to heal those in need, while a questor of Upandal should be a builder of some sort, or regularly aid those whose goal is to construct something.

DEVOTION POINT AWARD TABLE

Type of Act	Devotion Points
Minor Act	0–50
Major Act	50–100
Zealous Act	100+
Quest	Special

By acting in a way that embodies the ideals of his patron Passion, a questor helps keep those ideals, and so the Passion, alive and real in the minds and hearts of the people of Barsaive. Players should feel free to create acts of devotion other than those listed for each Passion. Any act that demonstrates the ideals of a questor's patron Passion is appropriate, but the gamemaster must approve any new acts of devotion the player creates.

The gamemaster should feel free to control how powerful the questors in his game become by limiting or expanding the number of opportunities questors receive to perform acts of devotion. The total number available in any given adventure or campaign should include those opportunities the players create for their characters. The gamemaster is the final judge of how many Devotion Points any act of devotion is worth.

To help gamemasters determine the scale of an act of devotion, we suggest the following four categories: **Minor Acts**, **Major Acts**, **Zealous Acts** and **Quests**. Examples of typical acts of devotion appear below, and examples of acts appropriate to each Passion appear in the descriptions of each Passion.

Devotion Point Awards

Acts of devotion are defined as actions that the character performs that imitate the spirit and ideals of the questor's Passion. Questors who perform acts of devotion are rewarded with Devotion Points. The gamemaster determines the scale of the character's act of devotion based on the examples given in the **Passion Descriptions** earlier in this chapter, awarding Devotion Points accordingly.

Minor Act: The gamemaster should award the character any time the questor uses his talents, questor powers, skills, or other abilities to further the cause of the Passion in any way. Though this reward may seem small, a questor who regularly performs minor acts of devotion in accordance with the Passion's ideals and powers will accumulate Devotion Points quickly.

A questor of Garlen finds a wounded man lying next to the road. She stops and heals the man, restoring enough of his strength that he can continue his journey. He has enough supplies to reach his destination, and so the man and the questor go their separate ways.

DEVOTION POINT TABLE

Devotion Point Total	Maximum Questor Rank
200	2
300	3
500	4
800	5
1,300	6
2,100	7
3,400	8
5,500	9
8,900	10
14,400	11
23,300	12
37,700	13
61,000	14
98,700	15

Major Act: The gamemaster should award the questor each time he performs an act of devotion that involves time or effort, but does not actually put him in any danger.

A questor of Garlen discovers a man who has been severely wounded and left to die in the road. She stops and heals the man as best she can, but his wounds are serious, and he must rest in order to recover fully. The man lost all his possessions to the bandits who beat him. The questor brings the wounded man to an inn and pays the innkeeper for a room and enough food for a week. Having done all she can for this victim, the questor continues on her way.

Zealous Act: The gamemaster should award the questor for performing an act of devotion that puts him at risk while personifying his patron Passion. This risk does not need to be physical. For example, a questor of Chorrolis, the Passion of trade, might risk a large sum of capital in a deal. If the risk could potentially break the questor's influence and power, Chorrolis would take notice and reward the character. Questors of the Passion Thystonius, whose ideals embody the virtue of physical risk, must face almost certain death to receive this reward.

The questor of Garlen who rescues the wounded man discovers that the bandits who attacked him now seek to finish their work and kill him, though she does not know why. Rather than settling him at the inn and leaving, she stays and fights to defend both the man and the inn.

Quest: As opposed to the other acts of devotion above, a quest is almost always imposed on the questor—a sacred task he needs to carry out for his patron Passion. There are no hard and fast rules on how long a quest is—some are completed within a few days, others take an entire lifetime to complete. A quest may include any number of devotional acts, which are awarded separately from the final award for completing the quest. For example, most of the people living in the settlement of Trosk are questors of Jaspree. They have a sacred duty to perform in the name of their patron Passion, which is to find a way to stop the growth of the Badlands.

After helping defeat the bandits, the questor of Garlen speaks with her wounded ward. He explains that he too is a questor of Garlen, but is currently on an urgent quest to deliver a message to King Neden of Throal. Too badly hurt to continue, he implores the character to take his quest on herself, traveling as swiftly as she can to Throal. Recognizing Garlen's need in the man's face, the questor nods, and accepts the sealed letter. Having ensured the wounded questor is settled, she dons her robes and backpack and sets out on the long journey to Throal.

Accumulating Devotion Points

Like Legend Points, all Devotion Point awards a questor earns are cumulative.

If the questor from the previous example had healed the man, brought him to the tavern, and then defended him, a gamemaster might award her 170 points.

The questor need only attempt the act of devotion: he need not necessarily succeed in order to receive the Devotion Point award. What matters is that the questor throws his heart and soul into the act. The Passions ask only that their questors model their behavior on the Passions' ideals. They do not require the behavior to result in victory.

A questor's Devotion Points accumulate to create a Devotion Point total. This total offers a quick way to estimate how many acts of devotion the questor has performed, and so judge the questor's devotion to his chosen Passion. A questor's Devotion Point total also determines the maximum rank he can have in the Questor talent, as shown on the Devotion Point table. For example, a questor with a Devotion Point total of 500 has a maximum Questor rank of 4, and a questor who has accumulated at least 2,100 Devotion Points has a maximum Questor rank of 7.

Failing to Act

Questors must accept every opportunity to act like their patron Passion. If a questor fails to imitate the nature of his patron Passion when he has the chance, he loses Devotion Points. The scale of the ignored opportunity helps the gamemaster to determine how many points the questor loses.

A questor of Garlen that ignores a man in need of healing could lose up to 50 Devotion Points, at the gamemasters discretion. If he passes by a castle that needs to be fortified against an invading force and ignores the inhabitants' pleas for help, he could lose 100 points or more.

When the questor loses Devotion Points, the player must subtract these points from the character's Devotion Point total. If the questor's Devotion Point total falls below the number required for his current Questor rank, the questor loses one rank in the Questor talent.

A questor with 200 Devotion Points who ignores just one opportunity to perform an act of devotion for his Passion would drop back to Rank 1. A questor with 2,900 Devotion Points, however, could ignore many opportunities, losing as many as 800 Devotion Points before his powers drop to those of Rank 6.

If a questor loses a rank in his talent, he loses all the Legend Points spent to purchase that rank. A questor who wants to regain a lost rank must pay the required number of Legend Points a second time. Every time the questor has an opportunity to imitate his Passion, the gamemaster must tell the questor's player that a test is at hand. If the player chooses to ignore the test, the questor loses the appropriate number of points. If the questor accepts the challenge and fails, he receives the appropriate Devotion Points and suffers no ill effect.

A questor of Garlen knows the Questor talent at Rank 3 and has a Devotion Point total of 300. While

Involuntary Devotion

Optional Rule: Sometimes a character will gain a Passion's favor without knowing it by repeatedly performing acts of devotion important to the Passion. He might unwillingly support a Passion's ideals or even live in a manner befitting a questor of that Passion.

Caedrus, an obsidiman Warrior, has lived through several adventures in which he purposefully initiated attacks on Theran encampments to free their slaves. These repeated acts of devotion may attract, and possibly gain him the favor of, Lochost.

Once a player character unknowingly behaves in a fashion that could attract the attention of a passion, the gamemaster should secretly start keeping track of the Devotion Points the character accumulates. If the character falls out of favor during this time, his Devotion Point total drops to zero. If the character's Devotion Point total continually grows and reaches 200 points, the Passion may choose to bestow a questor power on him in difficult situations.

The character may not be aware which Passion is trying to help him, but he certainly feels that he might succeed in the task at hand. Although the character has no learned knowledge of the Questor talent, he is always considered to possess the Questor talent at Rank 1 for the purpose of determining the effect of the power bestowed on him. Depending on the character's Devotion Point total, however, the gamemaster may decide that the Passion bestows the questor power on the character at a higher equivalent Questor rank, however.

Rokku, an elven Cavalryman, has gained the favor of Dis by behaving in an extremely bureaucratic fashion on many occasions. Rokku likes to suppress other people's will and often bullies others to make them do what he wants. The gamemaster has secretly kept a total of the Devotion Points Rokku would have accumulated if he was a questor: 275 points so far! Rokku has certainly gained the attention of Dis, although his player is not yet aware of that.

During the next game session, Rokku spends some time in the town of Ardanyan, seeking access to the Hall of Records to find the birth certificate of a murdered merchant. The scribe, however, is not willing to let him enter the vaults. He haughtily informs the cavalryman that only the town's council members are allowed inside the Hall. Rokku is furious at the scribe; he desperately needs to find the certificate!

Because Dis is at home in complex bureaucratic hierarchies, the Passion decides to help Rokku and bestows the Enslave power on him. Rokku is not aware of his relationship to the Mad Passion, but gets the strong feeling that, if he gives the right order, the scribe will do what he wants. With a loud voice, Rokku demands that the certificate is brought to him now*! The gamemaster asks Rokku's player to make a Willpower Test against the scribe's Spell Defense. Rokku has no learned knowledge of the Questor talent, but is allowed to use it this one time at Rank 1 for the temporary power bestowed on him by Dis. Filled with the power of the Passion, his test result is a success—suddenly cowed and servile to Rokku's demands, the scribe hurries to fetch the certificate for him.*

Over time, the character might learn of his relationship with his patron Passion. Until he makes a decision to become a questor, and learns the Questor talent, he can only use the questor powers his Passion allows.

Rokku stands in line to get a mug of ale at the local tavern. He has had a long day and is feeling more than a little impatient at the moment. Recalling what happened with the scribe at the Hall of Records, and the empowerment he felt at the time, he loudly demands to be served now*! This time Dis is not interested. Nothing happens, except that the folks at the tavern shake their heads at the snooty elf. Rokku, feeling somewhat embarrassed, takes his place in the queue and tries to avoid the eyes of the people staring at him.*

traveling through a small village, the questor encounters a wounded man in need of healing. The player asks what would happen if his questor decided to ignore the wounded man; and the gamemaster tells him that he would lose 20 Devotion Points. This would reduce his total to 280 Devotion Points, which is below the minimum required for the Questor talent at Rank 3. His Questor talent rank would drop to Rank 2, decreasing his powers accordingly. If the questor wanted to repurchase Rank 3 for his Questor talent, he would have to spend the required number of Legend Points again.

Falling Out of Favor

If a Rank 1 questor ignores one opportunity to perform an act of devotion, he falls out of favor with his Passion and loses his questor powers. The character no longer has access to the powers of the Passion. He can only regain these powers by performing a Zealous act of devotion: he cannot accumulate 100 points through a series of Minor and Major acts of devotion—instead, he must seek out danger and put himself at risk to imitate his Passion's ideals.

By performing this act of devotion, whether successful or not, the questor regains the Questor talent at rank 1, but now has zero Devotion Points. The Devotion Points earned to regain his Questor talent do not accumulate toward a new Devotion Point total. The questor must begin again to accumulate Devotion Points by performing further acts of devotion, and can then increase his Questor rank as normal.

Although it is very rare, a fallen questor might choose to follow a different Passion instead. In this case, the restrictions above do not apply. The Mad Passions are known to court questors who have fallen into disgrace with their patron Passion.

Questor Powers

The following list describes the common questor powers known by questors of the different Passions. Each entry lists the **Passion** granting this power to its questors.

Questor powers generally add the character's Questor rank to an Attribute step to determine the power's step number. Most powers require the questor to take an Action in order to activate them. These are noted by the word "Yes" in the "Action:" notation. Powers which do not require an action are noted by the word "No" in the "Action:" notation.

The Duration of a power is the length of time it remains in effect once activated. References to "Rank" in the "Duration:" notation are to the character's Questor rank.

Using Questor Powers

Any questor who possesses and can use Karma is allowed to spend a Karma Point on a Questor Power Test.

Unless noted otherwise in the power's description, a questor can attempt to use a questor power a number of times each day equal to his Questor rank. For this purpose, a day is defined as the period from sunrise to sunrise.

Any time a questor uses a power on himself, or invokes a power against a questor for the same Passion, he gains a +3 bonus to his Questor Power Test.

Absorb Damage

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Duration: Rank rounds
Action: Yes **Passion**: Thystonius

The Absorb Damage power allows a questor to add the armor of inspiration to a target character. The questor talks to the character for 3 rounds, attempting to inspire him by vividly describing the thrill of taking physical risks, then makes an Absorb Damage Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the target adds the questor's Absorb Damage rank to his Physical Armor. In addition to this effect, increase the result level required to inflict an Armor-Defeating Hit against the the target's Physical Armor by one level (from Excellent to Extraordinary, for example).

Animate Plant

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Duration: Special (see text)
Action: Yes **Passion**: Jaspree

The Animate Plant power allows a questor to control a plant or tree, commanding it to do his bidding. The questor focuses his attention on a single plant or tree and makes an Animate Plant Test. The power summons a wood spirit which animates the plant for a number of minutes equal to the test result. The wood spirit has a maximum Strength Rating equal to the questor's Questor rank (see the **Spirits** chapter on p. 375 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for details and game statistics).

The wood spirit grants the questor one service, which it attempts to carry out to the best of its ability. While under the effect of this power, the plant or tree can uproot itself and use its leaves, branches, and roots as limbs to move, grasp objects, or even fight. When the power's duration expires, the plant or tree takes root again where it is currently standing. If circumstances prevent it from taking root, the plant or tree falls down instead and will soon die unless replanted.

Break Shackles

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Duration: 1 round
Action: Yes **Passion**: Lochost

The Break Shackles power allows an imprisoned questor to snap chains, open locks, burst ropes, and break free of other bonds preventing him personally from escaping captivity. This power works by destroying a portion of the rope, wood, or metal, keeping the questor imprisoned. The target of the power must be wrapped around, or able to grasped, by the questor. For example, the Break Shackles power can be used against ropes restraining the questor, or a padlock securing his cell door. It cannot be used against an internal lock mechanism, built into a door or recessed into a wall section, as this cannot be held by the questor.

The questor meditates for 3 rounds. During this time he may be distracted from his meditation by other characters. Each time an attempt is made to distract him while he is meditating, the questor makes a Willpower Test against the distracting character's Spell Defense. If the test fails, the questor loses his concentration and the Break Shackles power fails.

If he completes his meditation without interruption, he makes a Break Shackles Test against the higher of the Spell Defense of the material used to prevent his escape or a Difficulty Number of 6. If the test succeeds, the binding material—lock, chain, rope, or whatever—begins to stretch and weaken, then finally breaks or shatters, freeing the questor.

Cause Pain

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Duration: Rank rounds
Action: Yes **Passion**: Raggok

The Cause Pain power allows a questor to inflict horrible, physical pain on a target character with the sound of his voice. The questor speaks to the character for 3 rounds, then makes a Cause Pain Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the questor's voice, enhanced by Raggok's foul strength, wracks the target with excruciating pain.

While under the effect of the Cause Pain power, the character feels as though someone or something is repeatedly driving countless sharp needles into his flesh, even though he can see no physical source that might cause such pain. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the Cause Pain Test result to suppress the pain. If the test succeeds, he works past the worst of the pain and can act that round, although he is considered Harried when doing so (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 408). If the test fails, the target is overcome by the pain, doubled-over and screaming in agony, and cannot perform any actions that round; he is considered Knocked Down while so immobilized (see **Situation Modifiers** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 409).

Like the Pain spell (see the **Nethermancy Spells** chapter, p. 345), the Cause Pain power has no effect on creatures that neither feel pain, or are otherwise inured against or used to it. This includes undead, most Horrors or Horror constructs, and blood elves. Unlike the Pain spell, the questor need not concentrate to maintain the power's effect; he is free to act normally after he has invoked this power against a target.

Change Thoughts

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Duration: Rank hours
Action: Yes **Passion**: Lochost

The Change Thoughts power allows a questor to encourage a target character to contemplate and act on new ideas. The questor makes a Change Thoughts Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the questor adds his Questor rank as a bonus to any Interaction Tests he makes to influence the target character's thinking.

The questor may attempt a number of such Interaction Tests equal to his Questor rank. Regardless of success, the questor may make only a single Interaction Test each hour against the same character. Additionally, if the questor fails two consecutive Interaction Tests when influencing the target, then the character becomes aware that something is wrong and the power's effect ends.

Command Animal

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Duration: Special (see text)
Action: Yes **Passion**: Jaspree

The Command Animal power allows a questor to give verbal instructions to a target animal. The instructions must be given verbally to the animal in a single, simple sentence.

The questor makes a Command Animal Test against the animal's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the animal will carry out the questor's instructions to the best of its ability for a number of minutes equal to the Command Animal Test result. Although the animal is able to understand the instructions, the Command Animal power does not allow the animal to communicate with the questor in return.

Comfort

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Duration: Rank minutes
Action: Yes **Passion**: Garlen

The Comfort power allows a questor to dispel dark thoughts and emotions, both natural and magical. The power also counteracts emotional manipulation that produces fear or agitation; it can rally people who want to flee, or restore the spirits of people who believe they have nothing to live for. The questor makes a Comfort Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, those affected by the power immediately become calm, allowing them to make decisions from a level-headed, emotionally sound point of view. Any effect affecting the character that inspires fear or terror in its victims (such as the Frighten talent or the Death's Head spell, for example) ends immediately for that character.

Confusion

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Duration: Rank rounds
Action: Yes **Passion**: Dis

The Confusion power allows a questor to confuse a group of people, making it difficult for them to focus on the task at hand. The questor makes a Confusion Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, those affected by the power become confused.

Each round, a confused character may make a Willpower Test against the Confusion Test result. If the test fails, the character remains confused and unable to take actions that round; he stands and looks around, trying to understand what is going on. If the test succeeds, the Confusion power does not affect him that round, and he can act normally. A character that makes a successful Willpower Test on the first round after the power is used against him, escapes the ongoing effect of the power; he need not make any further Willpower Tests, and may act normally.

Create Structure

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Duration: Rank hours
Action: Yes **Passion**: Upandal

The Create Structure power allows a questor to create a temporary bridge or tower. The questor meditates for 3 rounds, then makes a Create Structure (8) Test. If the test succeeds, the questor generates a number of Structure Points equal to the Create Structure Test result.

Each Structure Point creates up to 2 horizontal yards of bridge or 2 vertical yards of tower. The questor can use these Structure Points as he likes, making the bridge or tower longer or shorter, as desired. Regardless of their length or height, bridges created by this power are always no more than 10 yards wide and towers no greater than 10 yards in diameter. Each structure has a Physical Armor rating of 15 and a Damage Rating of 50 (see **Barriers and Structures** in the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 106 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). Unused Structure Points add +2 to the Physical Armor or +5 to the Damage Rating of the bridge or tower. For example, a questor makes a Create Structure Test with a result of 18. This gives him 18 Structure Points to use to build his bridge or tower. The questor spends 8 Structure Points to create a tower 16 yards high and 10 yards in diameter. The remaining 10 Structure Points are used to increase the tower's Physical Armor to 25 and its Damage Rating to 75.

Bridges created using this power are constructed from gray stones, with low stone railings on either side. They can span any type of obstacle, including rivers, chasms, and pits. If the

questor's Create Structure Test fails to generate sufficient Structure Points to create a bridge long enough to span the complete distance, nothing appears. Towers created using this power are also made of gray stone. A floor appears in the tower for every 6 yards of height, connected by a spiral staircase that winds up through the interior wall of the tower, passing through each floor. A door on the first floor provides access to the tower, and each floor has two windows.

The questor may dispel his own structure at any time by making a successful Willpower Test against the Create Structure Test result. Otherwise, the bridge or tower remains in place for the entire duration of the power.

Create Weapon

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Duration: Rank hours
Action: Yes **Passion**: Upandal

The Create Weapon power allows a questor to fashion a weapon of any type—a melee, missile, or throwing weapon—from sheer will. The questor meditates for 3 rounds, then makes a Create Weapon Test against the Damage step of the type of weapon he is trying to create (see **Weapons** in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 434). If the test succeeds, the weapon materializes at the questor's feet. At the end of the power's duration, the weapon vanishes.

Deceit

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Duration: Rank hours
Action: Yes **Passion**: Vestrial

The Deceit power allows a questor to make a target character more susceptible to a lie. The questor makes a Deceit Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the questor adds his Questor rank as a bonus to any Interaction Tests he makes when lying to the target character.

The questor may attempt a maximum number of such Interaction Tests equal to his Questor rank. Regardless of success, the questor may only make a single Interaction Test against the same character each hour. Additionally, if the questor fails two consecutive Interaction Tests when lying to the target, then the character becomes aware that something is wrong and the effect of the power ends.

Discover Desire

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Duration: Rank minutes
Action: Yes **Passion**: Vestrial

The Discover Desire power allows a questor to learn a target character's strongest desires. The questor makes a Discover Desire Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the gamemaster tells the questor's player the target's greatest desires at the moment, up to a maximum number equal to the questor's Questor rank.

Not all desires hold equal importance; the gamemaster should list them in order of importance.

Ease Suffering

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Duration: Rank hours
Action: Yes **Passion**: Mynbruje

The Ease Suffering power allows a questor to ease emotional and physical suffering. The power cannot heal or permanently remove damage, but it stops pain. The Ease Suffering power is useful against the pain of Wounds taken during battle, emotional terror caused by Horrors, and emotional attacks such as fear spells. The questor spends 3 rounds speaking to those whose suffering he wishes to ease, then makes an Ease Suffering Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, those characters affected by the Ease Suffering power feel comforted and stop feeling any pain. Characters don't suffer any negative effects from Wounds while under the effect of this power (see **Effects of Injury** in the **Combat** chapter). Any magical effect that induces pain in its victims, such as the Cause Pain questor power or the Pain spell, ends immediately for characters comforted by the Ease Suffering power.

Enchanted Gift

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Duration: Rank days
Action: Yes **Passion**: Astendar

The Enchanted Gift power allows a questor to create a gift of a work of art that will evoke a specific, basic emotion in the gift's recipient. Questors usually use this power to influence a target to feel a certain emotion toward a third party. The gift may represent any art form, including songs, paintings, poems, and so on, as dictated by the questor's talents and skills. The recipient (the target of the power) must accept the gift willingly, whether or not he knows of the gift's magical charm. For example, a questor could not simply sing a song powered by Enchanted Gift while in the target character's presence and have it affect the target. The singer would have to ask, "Might I give you the gift of a song?" Once the target accepts the gift, the questor power leaves the gift and affects the recipient and the object or verse is no longer magical. The beauty of the gift may make it inherently valuable, however.

The questor enchants the gift with a basic emotion, such as fear, love, hate, happiness, anger, or joy. The emotion must be directed at a specific subject, such as a ruler, the young woman down the street, a nearby citadel, and so on. The recipient of the gift feels the designated emotion for the specific subject. For example, if a small statue enchanted with love for a specific girl is given to her unmarried neighbor, he falls in love with the girl. As soon as the character accepts the gift, the questor makes an Enchanted Gift Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the target becomes more receptive to suggestions involving the emotion and subject enchanted into the gift. Characters add the questor's Questor rank as a bonus to all Interaction Tests in which they make a positive suggestion related to the emotion and subject of the enchanted gift. Interaction Tests suggesting thoughts and ideas opposed to the gift's emotion and subject incur a penalty equal to the questor's Questor rank.

Nedra, a Rank 5 questor of Astendar, must leave her native village. Worried that the local warrior, who fancies himself in love with her, will abandon his task of protecting the village to follow her, she has created a cloak brooch in the shape of a shield as a parting gift. Using her Enchanted Gift power, she enchants the brooch with the basic emotion of joy and directs that emotion toward the village. She presents the brooch to the warrior as a farewell gift, which he accepts. Nedra makes a successful Enchanted Gift Test against the warrior's Social Defense of 9. For the next five days, anyone attempting to convince the warrior to stay in his now-beloved village gains a +5 bonus to his Interaction Test. Anyone encouraging the warrior to leave his precious village and follow his one true love suffers a –5 penalty to his Interaction Test.

Note that an enchanted gift can be offered by anyone to anyone else. For example, a child might pick up an enchanted statuette from a questor's workbench and offer it to his mother. If

the mother accepts the gift, the gamemaster must ask the questor's player to make an Enchanted Gift Test against the mother's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the gift's power affects the mother, whether or not the questor knows that the gift was given, or if it was meant for the mother.

Encourage Trade

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Duration: Rank minutes
Action: Yes **Passion**: Chorrolis

The Encourage Trade power allows a questor to persuade other people to negotiate with him. For example, this power would help a questor who wants to buy a sword from a warrior who refuses to part with his favorite blade, or who needs to generate some quick cash from a wealthy miser who usually refuses to spend money on anything but food, or who needs to convince someone who has no intention of leaving home to journey with him as a bodyguard. The questor makes an Encourage Trade Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, the targets are willing to negotiate while under the power's influence, although they may not easily part with whatever the questor wants.

Negotiations usually begin at 150–200 percent of the actual value of the object or service. Both questor and targets can use talents and skills such as Haggle to affect the price in their favor. If the questor fails to achieve his goal, the affected characters wander away, wondering what possessed them to consider selling their prized possessions.

Enslave

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Duration: Rank rounds
Action: Yes **Passion**: Dis

The Enslave power allows a questor to issue a command that must be obeyed. The target characters must belong to one of the Name-giver races, but do not have to understand the language used by the questor. The questor makes an Enslave Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, the questor may command those affected, who must obey him. The command must be phrased as a single, simple sentence. For example, "Find the knife and bring it here," or "Attack your friends," represent valid commands. A command such as "Kill them!" is too vague, though "Kill everyone" would be understood and obeyed. Those affected will attempt to carry out the questor's command as long as they remain under the influence of the power.

Questors can use the Enslave power to make people do things they would not normally do, even harm loved ones. If the questor commands a target to directly harm himself, however, he must achieve a Good result with a Charisma Test against the target's Social Defense to convince the character to do so. If this test fails, the command has no effect on the target.

Fortify Structure

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Duration: Special (see text)
Action: Yes **Passion**: Upandal

The Fortify Structure power allows a questor to fortify the walls of any structure built by Name-givers, including ships, castles, bridges, and so on. To use this power, the questor meditates for 3 rounds, then makes a Fortify Structure Test. The structure is reinforced for a number of minutes equal to the Fortify Structure Test result. Each of the questor's Questor ranks adds +2 to the Physical Armor or +5 to the Damage Rating of the structure.

While the power is in effect, the result level required to defeat the structure's Physical Armor is increased by one level (from Excellent to Extraordinary, for example).

Heal

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Duration: 1 round
Action: Yes **Passion**: Garlen

The Heal power allows a questor to heal any damage a target character may have taken. The questor spends 3 rounds examining the character's injuries, then makes a Heal Test. The target immediately recovers a number of Damage Points equal to the Heal Test result.

Alternatively, the questor can heal the character of a single Wound by making a successful Heal Test against the target's Spell Defense. The questor may only use this power once on the same person each day.

Incite Greed

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Duration: Rank hours
Action: Yes **Passion**: Chorrolis

The Incite Greed power allows a questor describing a scheme or offer to intensify the natural greediness of his listeners. An overwhelming desire to get a piece of the action makes the targets of this power susceptible to bad risks, as long as a potential for profit exists. The questor makes an Incite Greed Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, a character who suggests schemes for acquiring money to someone under the influence of the Incite Greed power adds the questor's Questor rank as a bonus to his Interaction Test. Conversely, a character trying to point out the folly of scrambling after money subtracts the questor's Questor rank as a penalty to his Interaction Test.

The questor can make additional Incite Greed Tests to make more and more people succumb to their greedy impulses. As soon as he fails one test, his audience realizes that they have been considering ideas that contradict their own sense of proportion of risk versus wealth, and wander away from the questor.

The effect of the Incite Greed power lasts for a number of hours equal to the questor's Questor rank. This may place the affected characters in an unfavorable situation when the effects of the power wear off—they may find themselves halfway to the destination of a wild goose chase, or involved in a particularly nasty transaction. They might decide to honor the promises they made while under the influence of the power, or reject agreements as being made under false pretences.

Increase Initiative

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Duration: Rank rounds
Action: Yes **Passion**: Thystonius

The Increase Initiative power allows a questor to increase a target character's Initiative step. The questor speaks inspirational words to the character for 3 rounds, then makes an Increase Initiative Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the target gains a +1 bonus to his Initiative Tests for every 3 Questor ranks the questor possesses, as shown in the Increase Initiative Table.

INCREASE INITIATIVE TABLE

Questor Rank	Initiative Bonus
1–3	+1
4–6	+2
7–9	+3
10–12	+4
13–15	+5

Increase Perception

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Duration: Rank rounds
Action: Yes **Passion**: Mynbruje

The Increase Perception power allows a questor to increase a target character's Perception step, also improving the target's Perception-based abilities, talents, and skills. The questor speaks inspirational words to the character for 3 rounds, then makes an Increase Perception Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the target gains a +1 bonus to his Perception Tests for every 3 Questor ranks the questor possesses, as shown in the Increase Perception Table.

INCREASE PERCEPTION TABLE

Questor Rank	Perception Bonus
1–3	+1
4–6	+2
7–9	+3
10–12	+4
13–15	+5

Increase Speed

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Duration: Rank rounds
Action: Yes **Passion**: Floranuus

The Increase Speed power allows a questor to improve the Movement rate of one person or animal, including the questor. The questor speaks inspirational words to the target for 3 rounds, then makes an Increase Speed Test.

The target may add a maximum number of yards equal to the test result to his Combat Movement rate, and up to twice that distance to his Full Movement rate.

Increase Stamina

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Duration: Rank rounds
Action: Yes **Passion**: Floranuus

The Increase Stamina power allows a questor to encourage and inspire companions to continue on and endure physical hardship. The IncreaseStamina power increases a target character's Toughness step, also improving the target's Toughness-based abilities, talents and skills.

The questor speaks inspirational words to the target group for 3 rounds, encouraging his listeners to live like Floranuus and revel in motion, then makes an Increase Stamina Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, all those affected gain a +1 bonus to their Toughness-based Tests for every 3 Questor ranks the questor possesses, as shown in the Increase Stamina Table.

INCREASE STAMINA TABLE

Questor Rank	Toughness Bonus
1–3	+1
4–6	+2
7–9	+3
10–12	+4
13–15	+5

Increase Strength

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Duration: Rank rounds
Action: Yes **Passion**: Thystonius

The Increase Strength power allows a questor to increase a target character's Strength step, also improving the target's Strength-based abilities, talents and skills, including Damage Tests. The questor speaks inspirational words to the character for 3 rounds, then makes an Increase Strength Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the target gains a +1 bonus to his Strength-based Tests for every 3 Questor ranks the questor possesses, as shown in the Increase Strength Table.

INCREASE STRENGTH TABLE

Questor Rank	Strength Bonus
1–3	+1
4–6	+2
7–9	+3
10–12	+4
13–15	+5

Inspire Rage

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Duration: Rank rounds
Action: Yes **Passion**: Raggok

The Inspire Rage power allows a questor to send a target character into a blind, violent rage. The questor speaks insidious words of evil to the character for 3 rounds, then makes an Inspire Rage Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test succeeds, the power fills the target's mind with a desperate need to cause carnage. The target attacks whatever animal or person is closest to him, fighting to the death. The creature he attacks may have been a friend moments earlier, but Raggok's rage blocks this from the target's mind.

As soon as he kills this creature, the target attacks the next nearest animal or Name-giver, repeatedly seeking new victims for his rage until he is killed or the effect of the power wears off. Victims of this power will generally use the Aggressive Attack combat option on all of their attacks (see **Combat Options** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 403).

Inspire Rebellion

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Duration: Rank rounds
Action: Yes **Passion**: Lochost

The Inspire Rebellion power allows a questor to attempt to foster rebellion among the downtrodden and enslaved. The questor spends 3 rounds talking to those he wishes to inspire of Lochost's desire for them to be free, then makes an Inspire Rebellion Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, the former slaves gain a +1 bonus to any Action Tests that help them gain freedom for every 3 ranks of the questor's Questor rank, as shown in the Inspire Rebellion Table.

INSPIRE REBELLION TABLE

Questor Rank	Action Test Bonus
1–3	+1
4–6	+2
7–9	+3
10–12	+4
13–15	+5

Instill Love

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Duration: Rank days
Action: Yes **Passion**: Astendar

The Instill Love power allows a questor to make a target character romantically inclined toward him. The questor spends 3 rounds flirting or speaking in a friendly and encouraging manner with the character, then makes an Instill Love Test against the target's Social Defense.

If the test succeeds, the target's Attitude towards the questor improves by a number of degrees according to the Instill Love Table (see the **Gamemastering** chapter on p. 90 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**). For example, if a questor achieves a Good result against a Neutral character, the character's Attitude is increased by 1 degree to Loyal.

The target affected by the Instill Love power may feel anything from puppy love to intense lust. The questor's attitude toward the target and the gamemaster's discretion determine how the target reacts to the Instill Love power. If the questor treats the target as someone to be dealt with patiently, then the target might show only puppy love, afraid of being rejected if he makes his true feelings known. If the questor openly invites physical attention, then the target might arrange to always be near the questor, holding his hand and suggesting they slip off alone.

INSTILL LOVE TABLE

Result Level	Attitude Improvement
Average	1 degree
Good	2 degrees
Excellent	3 degrees
Extraordinary	4 degrees

If the gamemaster chooses to rely less on roleplaying, he may assign a degree or type of love to each result level and determine the target's feelings that way. The gamemaster should feel free to add complications to this budding relationship. Love is tricky, and Astendar's questors well know that when they dabble with romance, they often invite more than they bargained for.

Living Death

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Duration: Rank hours
Action: Yes **Passion**: Dis

The Living Death power allows a questor to force others to perform a task tirelessly for hours on end. The questor makes a Living Death Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, the questor gives a one word command such as "fight," "march," "dig," "row," and so on, to the group. Those affected by the power must carry out the command tirelessly for the duration of the power. Only when the power ends or if the questor commands them to stop, can the affected group cease their endless activity.

Those targeted by this power are simply compelled to obey someone else. They are not mindless in their response. If commanded to fight, they may choose their opponents; if commanded to dig, they can choose their ground. Because of this, the questor may use any means at his disposal to direct the efforts of those under the influence of the Living Death power. For example, armed guards might confine people commanded to dig only to work in a certain area.

Though targets of the Living Death power suffer no ill effects while performing what they have been commanded to do, they may suffer terrible damage from overexertion, fighting, and so on, once the questor ceases to influence them. When the power's duration expires, each person affected makes a Damage Test with a step number equal to the number of hours he was under the effect of the power. The character takes Wounds and other damage normally. No armor protects against this damage.

Locate Valuables

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Duration: Rank minutes
Action: Yes **Passion**: Chorrolis

The Locate Valuables power allows a questor to sense the location of the single most valuable deposit of treasure nearby. The questor makes a Locate Valuables Test. The range of the power is equal to the test result × 30 yards.

As soon as the questor chooses to use this power, the gamemaster tells the questor's player in which direction the greatest source of wealth lies. The gamemaster may give directions such as "North," or "Toward the sun," but should not indicate the precise distance between the questor and the treasure.

The Locate Valuables power focuses the questor on one treasure only; he will not notice a larger treasure even if it comes into range as he moves toward the first treasure found. For the duration of the power, the questor is guided toward the treasure he first sensed. If he travels until the duration of the power ends and fails to find the treasure, then immediately uses the power again, he will sense the most valuable treasure within range of his current location, not necessarily the original treasure. If the questor is determined to reach the first treasure, he must move out of range of the second treasure and use the power again to locate the first treasure. Chorrolis is always distracted by the largest wealth he senses, and so sometimes has trouble keeping his mind on the task at hand.

What determines the most valuable treasure is defined in terms of the cash value the questor would expect to receive for acquiring the treasure. For example, a chest containing 100 silver pieces is obviously more valuable than a chest containing 1 gold piece, but a feather that the questor could sell to a collector of rare feathers for 1,000 silver pieces would be the most valuable treasure of all.

Manipulate Desire

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Duration: Rank hours
Action: Yes **Passion**: Vestrial

The Manipulate Desire power allows a questor to influence the desire of one person. The questor makes a Manipulate Desire Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, he firmly plants in the target's mind one item, person, or goal that becomes the target's consuming desire for the duration of the power. Add the questor's Questor Rank as a bonus to all Interaction Tests made against the target that suggest acquiring or keeping the planted desire. Conversely, subtract the questor's Questor rank as a penalty from all Interaction Tests made against the target that suggest ignoring or abandoning that same desire.

Perceive Emotion

Step Number: Rank + Perception
Duration: Rank minutes
Action: Yes **Passion**: Mynbruje

The Perceive Emotion power allows a questor to detect a person's strongest emotion and the focus of that emotion. The questor makes a Perceive Emotion Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the gamemaster informs the questor's player of the strongest emotion felt by the target from moment to moment while the power is in effect. The gamemaster also tells the player the target of that emotion.

The questor may learn specific information about the target's emotions by asking leading questions.

Rabine, a Rank 5 questor of Mynbruje, seeks to discover if a Warrior murdered a young boy. The questor makes a successful Perceive Emotion Test against the Warrior, and casually asks him if he has ever been forced to kill children in his work. The gamemaster tells the questor that the Warrior replies, "No. Never." The gamemaster adds that the Warrior feels afraid of the questor. The questor then mentions that the corpse of a boy was recently unearthed in a nearby ravine. The gamemaster informs the questor's player that the Warrior is now feeling hatred, directed toward a boy. Because the questor chose his conversation carefully to avoid alerting the warrior, five minutes have passed and the power wears off. Did the Warrior kill the boy? Perhaps not, but he is definitely a suspect.

Plant Growth

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Duration: Permanent
Action: Yes **Passion**: Jaspree

The Plant Growth power allows a questor to make plants grow at an unnatural rate. While this power is particularly useful for farmers, questors can also use it to quickly create a wall of plant life as sturdy as a fortress wall. The questor makes a Plant Growth Test. The radius of plant life affected is equal to the test result × 3 yards.

To determine the amount of growth the power produces, the gamemaster determines which of three broad categories best describes the environment in which the questor is using the power: Sparse Plant Life or Rocky Terrain, Light Foliage or Well-tended Farmlands, or Thick Vegetation or Forests. Each type has a growth multiplier, as shown in the Plant Growth Table. This number, multiplied by the questor's Questor rank, represents the enhanced foliage's Physical Armor. The Damage Rating of the foliage is equal to the Physical Armor multiplied by the growth multiplier. For example, if a Rank 3 questor uses the Plant Growth power in the jungle, which has a growth multiplier of × 3, the vegetation grows to a thickness that serves as a barrier with Physical Armor of 9 and a Damage Rating of 27 (see **Barriers and Structures** in the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 106 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**).

Farmland affected by the Plant Growth power does not serve as a barrier. Instead, it produces an extra yield for every 3 ranks of the questor's Questor rank. For example, if a Rank 6 questor uses the Plant Growth power on a piece of farmland, it would produce two extra yields in the coming harvest.

PLANT GROWTH TABLE

Environment	Growth Multiplier
Sparse Plant Life or Rocky Terrain	× 1
Light Foliage or Well-tended Farmlands	× 2
Thick Vegetation or Forests	× 3

Raise Undead

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Duration: Rank hours
Action: Yes **Passion**: Raggok

The Raise Undead power allows a questor to place an undead spirit into a corpse, resulting in the creation of a cadaver man. The questor touches a portion of the deceased body and makes a Raise Undead Test against its Spell Defense as if the target was alive. If the test succeeds, the corpse is raised from the dead as a cadaver man under the questor's control.

The questor can control the undead target verbally. The cadaver man always attempts to carry out the questor's instructions to the best of its ability.

Return Youthful Spirit

Step Number: Rank + Charisma
Duration: Rank minutes
Action: Yes **Passion**: Astendar

The Return Youthful Spirit power allows a questor to draw on the vibrant energy of youthful passion in the darkest of times, finding the strength and personal fortitude to speak words of comfort and inspiration to those suffering injuries, and revive hope for a better future. The questor speaks inspirational words for 3 rounds, then makes a Return Youthful Spirit Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If the test succeeds, the questor distracts his companions from the grim reality of their present situation by painting a vivid verbal picture of a fantastic world where everything is possible and nothing can stand in their way.

While affected by the power, characters ignore their injuries. They ignore the effects of Wounds and do not pass out when their Current Damage equals or exceeds their Unconsciousness Rating. Pain does not affect them. If they continue in battle they can take further damage and might even die, but their passions will carry them forward and they will neither feel pain nor drop unconscious until Death takes them.

Seal Home

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Duration: Rank hours
Action: Yes **Passion**: Garlen

The Seal Home power allows a questor to seal windows and doors with a mystic force that hinders the entry of intruders. The questor must be inside the structure to use this power. He can seal a maximum number of doors and windows equal to his Questor rank. The Seal Home power can be used to block any size opening, and works as well on openings physically blocked by windows or doors as on holes in walls. The questor makes a Seal Home Test and adds the test result to the Death Rating of those windows, doors, and other openings the questor designates as sealed (see **Barriers and Structures** in the **Adventuring** chapter on p. 106 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium**).

Questors may use this power multiple times on the same openings. In this case, the effects stack, further increasing the Damage Rating of the barrier and the result level required for Armor-Defeating Hits (result levels increased above Extraordinary mean it is impossible to inflict an Armor-Defeating Hit against the barrier).

Speed Ship

Step Number: Rank + Willpower
Duration: Special (see text)
Action: Yes **Passion**: Floranuus

The Speed Ship power allows a questor to increase the speed of a waterborne or aerial vessel, allowing it to travel faster and more smoothly. The questor can influence airships, riverboats, and watergoing vessels, including those whose power is assisted by sailors using oars. He cannot influence a horse-drawn wagon, however, because the movement of the wagon depends entirely on the animals pulling it.

The questor makes a Speed Ship Test, the result of which determines the duration of the power in hours. While the power is in effect, the questor distributes a number of steps equal to his Questor rank among the target ship's Speed and Maneuverability steps. For example, a Rank 4 questor of Floranuus can add +2 to an airship's Speed and Maneuverability steps, or +4 to Speed or Maneuverability, or +3 to one and +1 to the other.

See the **Airships and Riverboats** chapter on p. 141 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information.

BARSAIVE PROVINCE

The trolls raid the dwarfs; the dwarfs dislike the elves. The elves have no patience with humans, and the humans war with each other. But everyone *hates the Therans.*

• Old Barsaivian Proverb •

The following information is excerpted from the Throalic Encyclopedia, 1509 TH, *compiled by the Great Library of Throal from 1415–1509 TH.*

Barsaive is our land as well as the land of our ancestors. Wondrous discoveries and perilous dangers abound in its vast expanses, which stretch from the Death's Sea to the Blood Wood, from the Aras Sea to the Wastes. Countless legends speak of Barsaive, yet much of our province remains unexplored and unexplained.

Our ancestors call to us across a gulf of centuries, from the time before the Scourge. They tell us that the time has come for the heroes of Barsaive to rediscover the land, for us to rediscover ourselves. Our time is a time of legends, a time of courage, a time of heroes.

OVERVIEW

The province of Barsaive covers a huge expanse of land. Traveling from its southern boundary to its northern boundary would take a man 40 days on foot, or 25 days on horseback. Traveling from Barsaive's eastern edge to its western boundary would take him 60 days on foot, or 38 days on horseback.

Though the exact borders of the province are not clearly defined, most Barsaivians accept the following landmarks as Barsaive's boundary markers. The northern border ends at the Blood Wood, formerly called Wyrm Wood, where the Elven Queen Alachia presides over the Elven Court. The ocean of lava known as the Death's Sea, where legend says that Death himself lies imprisoned, bounds Barsaive on the south. A blighted area known as the Wastes marks Barsaive's western border. It includes the Poison Forest, a once-lush woodland blasted and corrupted by Horrors during the Scourge. The Aras Sea bounds Barsaive on the east, a saltwater ocean that connects Barsaive to other lands beyond the Kingdom of Throal and the Theran Empire.

The Scourge wrought terrible changes in the land of Barsaive, leeching forests and farmland of life and destroying cities, towns, and villages. Though most of Barsaive has recovered from the Scourge, many small mountain ravines and patches of land in the plains and jungles remain barren. Thriving towns and fertile farmland often surround these blighted spots, making their presence all the more peculiar.

THE LAND

The landscape of Barsaive contains forests and jungles, plains, and hilly and mountainous regions. The plains and the hills and mountains each cover roughly a quarter of Barsaive, and jungles and forests cover the remaining half. The few roads that cross this rugged terrain wind up and down hills and around the province's plateaus and mountains, making travel by even these established routes a difficult prospect. Traveling cross-country, off the main roads, poses a multitude of dangers to the unwary.

CLIMATE

The Scourge caused Barsaive's temperatures and rainfall to shift drastically and frequently, leaving the landscape devoid of living vegetation. Once the Scourge ended, the land's flora began regenerating at a phenomenal rate, and the climate stabilized to its current temperate state. The average annual temperature in the province remains moderate, rising to somewhat uncomfortable levels during the warm season and dropping only slightly during the cool season. The higher mountain regions experience cooler temperatures than the rest of the land, though the lower hill areas experience temperatures much like those in the plains and forests.

This stable climate has caused concern and speculation among Barsaive's scholars. The lack of a true "winter" season remains a mystery, and many believe it is the last vestige of the Scourge. However, the present climate has its benefits, as it enables farmers to grow crops year-round. The first six months of the year comprise Barsaive's rainy season. Most of the province receives moderate rainfall of 40 to 60 inches per year, though southern Barsaive receives heavy rains. Most regions experience some precipitation throughout the year, except for areas along the Death's Sea that suffer from constant drought.

POPULATION

The Name-giver races are scattered across Barsaive, with some members of each race gathered in enclaves and others living in areas of mixed racial populations. The table below lists the approximate distribution of the races throughout Barsaive, based on estimates garnered through years of traveling. As yet, no complete census of Barsaive exists.

Population Distribution

In terms of population distribution, the province of Barsaive comprises three broad areas.

BARSAIVE RACIAL COMPOSITION TABLE

Race	Population
Dwarf	32%
Elf	10%
Human	16%
Obsidiman	1%
Ork	19%
T'skrang	8%
Troll	13%
Windling	1%

The first, the Kingdom of Throal in the Throal Mountains, includes that kingdom's recently constructed cities and contains roughly one third of Barsaive's population. On the slopes of the Throal Mountains, outside the gates of Throal, nomadic tribes eke out a living hunting game. Legends contend that some of these primitive peoples worship Mad Passions and Horrors.

The lowlands, which include most of the province's jungles and plains as well as the Serpent River valley, provide a home to about half the population. The highlands include all of Barsaive's mountains and plateaus, except for the Throal Mountains that make up part of the Kingdom of Throal. The mountain regions shelter approximately one sixth of Barsaive's people, including the troll crystal raiders of the Twilight Peaks who pilot magically crafted airships through Barsaive's skies in search of villages to raid and Theran airships to plunder.

Of the people living in the lowlands, about a quarter live in the cities of Haven, Kratas, Iopos, Jerris, Urupa, and Travar. Outside the cities, the great lowland jungles and plains of Barsaive contain only one fourth of the province's population. Ork scorchers, nomadic riders who travel the land on massive beasts, roam across the plains in primitive hunting bands and in organized, mercenary ork cavalries who sell their talents and strength to the highest bidder.

Although the Scourge ended nearly one hundred years ago and people may now freely travel the land, most prefer to gather in large population centers. As a result, the population distribution of Barsaive remains fairly static.

Travel and Trade

Though many self-sufficient villages remain scattered throughout Barsaive's remote regions, trade has once again began to generate wealth in most of the province. While the largest amount of trade is done using airships and the t'skrang riverboats, there is still need for overland trade routes and caravans.

Old Theran Road

A long, fortified road from pre-Scourge times runs all the way from Parlainth to the new-found city of Urupa. The white stones of this road reflect the moonlight during the night, glowing in a milky white. Trade has sprung up again, mostly between the settlements close to the road. Caravans from many merchants are a frequent sight, along with messengers and other travelers.

The Pilgrimage Route

Although not exactly a trade route, the pilgrimage is sacred for the t'skrang of Barsaive. The Pilgrimage route stretches from Ayodhya to the Cliff City of House Syrtis and resembles a small footpath running close along the shores of the Serpent River, passing some of the most revered t'skrang sacred sites. The Pilgrimage Route ends at the Pinnacle Gate of the Cliff City, where the pilgrims who have completed the fifteen day journey receive a personal audience with the Shivalahala Syrtis—also known as the Prophetess. She is the leader of House Syrtis and a revered figure by every race in Barsaive for her incredible insight into the future. The pilgrim is allowed to ask one question, which the Shivalahala will answer if she can divine a true reply.

Due to the landing of the Theran behemoth *Triumph* on the liferock, Ayodhya is currently not accessible to travelers, meaning pilgrims have to start their pilgrimage in an untraditional way.

Trade Routes

Other trade routes have sprung up in the past decades, connecting the great cities with trading ports along the Serpent River. King Varulus III saw the wisdom of providing them with distance markers—small milestones that help people navigate and guide them to his kingdom. The trade routes are usually not fortified or guarded, which makes travel along them slow and dangerous.

Plains

The plains of Barsaive stretch between the mountain ranges and jungles that cover most of the province. Low brush and small hills dot this vast expanse of land. Cities and towns have sprung up on the plains since the Scourge, and the countryside between the cities and mountains contains countless peoples, villages, and citadels.

While the settlements on the plains are prone to raids by ork scorcher tribes, other areas have turned into true places of peril, proving dangerous to travelers. The most notable of these regions are the Badlands and the Wastes.

The Badlands

East of the molten Death's Sea lies the blighted area known as the Badlands. Before the Scourge, this area contained some of Barsaive's richest farmlands. The Scourge turned the fertile fields into rocky hills and blasted heaths. The rugged terrain precludes all means of transportation save walking. Virtually uninhabited, the area is rumored to be the home of countless Horrors and other terrible creatures. Of the great number of heroes who enter the Badlands, few return alive.

The Wastes

Along Barsaive's western border lie the Wastes, an area inhabited by little more than monsters, Horrors, small plants and animals. Scholars believe the Horrors breached a higher percentage of kaers and citadels here than in any other region of Barsaive during the Scourge, and the area's former population never recovered. Many believe the Wastes contain more undiscovered kaers and citadels than any other region of Barsaive because of this lack of population. This would also seem to explain the reason for the numerous bands of adventurers who enter the Wastes in search of ancient treasures and magical artifacts, despite the fact that few groups ever return.

Low clouds of gray dust and ash continually swirl over the Wastes, carried westward by the wind to extend over the Poison Forest and the city of Jerris.

Hills and Mountains

The hilly uplands of Barsaive stand well above the plains and forests. Smaller mountains rise from the uplands, to be dwarfed in turn by plateaus ranging from two to four times the mountains' height.

More massive mountain ranges, most notably the Throal Mountains and the Twilight Peaks, tower over the plateaus. These mountains penetrate the clouds and command an imposing view of the surrounding countryside.

Caucavic Mountains

Between the Kingdom of Throal and Parlainth lies the most treacherous mountains of Barsaive, known for their steep cliffs, deep valleys and plunging gullies. The terrain is unstable and prone to rockslides and earthquakes. Rumors tell of all kinds of creatures and Horrors—even savage tribes of Name-givers—hiding here, preying on travelers and surviving among the barren rocks.

Delaris Mountains

The beautiful Delaris Mountains lie in the western part of Barsaive and are rumored to shelter the ancient monastery of Elianar Messias (see the **How It Came To Pass** chapter, p. 21, for more information). Breathtaking in their beauty, the Delaris Mountains possess the eerie quality of dampening sound—a seemingly peaceful stillness which can prove a hazard to travelers. Two major trollmoots call these mountains home: the Rockhorns to the east and the Skyseekers to the west.

Dragon Mountains

The Dragon Mountains rise in the southeastern corner, between the Aras and Death's Seas. They received their Name because the great dragon Mountainshadow calls them home, lairing in the tallest peak of this mountain range. There are rumors of a Name-giver community which survived the Scourge by taking refuge in Mountainshadow's lair, living under his wing to this day.

Scol Mountains

The high and forbidding peaks of the Scol Mountains to the north of Barsaive are hazardous to travelers. Only the lowlands seem to boast life, but remain harsh and bleak. The greatest danger, however, is not the extraordinarily rough and barren terrain—it is the presence of the brutal and unforgiving Firescale trollmoot, known for killing strangers on sight.

Troll folklore and legends tell that the trolls from these mountains once built and ruled the fallen Kingdom of Ustrect. The current situation, however, suggests that the tribes of the Scol Mountains now intend to remain apart from Barsaivian society.

Scytha Mountains

The land between the Kingdom of Throal and the Blood Wood is occupied by the Scytha Mountains. A long time ago, the dwarfs of Barsaive built their first kingdom in these mountains, predating the founding of Throal by many years. The Kingdom of Scytha was forced to swear allegiance to the Theran Empire during the Orichalcum Wars and suffered heavily under their oppression. Creatures now thought to be the first of the Horrors began to infest the caverns and passageways of Scytha a century before the Scourge, forcing the dwarfs to abandon their home. The Scytha Mountains are the domain of the great dragon Vasdenjas, who has been known to give audiences on Mount Wyrmspire.

Thunder Mountains

Just north of the Dragon Mountains, the Thunder Mountains meet the eastern edge of the Badlands. No widely accepted explanation exists for the booming rumbles and thunderous sounds that roll through the valleys and peaks during certain months of the year, but their presence gives birth to all kinds of legends and rumors. Some people say that they stem from a giant creature trapped underneath—most likely a great dragon or even the Horror Verjigorm, also known as the Hunter of Great Dragons. Others say it's Death himself, calling out to remind the world of his imprisonment beneath Death's Sea.

Throal Mountains

Home of the most influential kingdom of the province, the Throal Mountains rise impossibly high into the sky. The dwarf kingdom is buried deep beneath the untamed surface and the cold, blue-tinted soil (see **Government**, p. 485, for more information). Traveling the mountains is dangerous due to the extremely low temperatures and myriads of cobblestones covering the ground. Beyond a few mountain settlements and several tribes of savage Name-givers, the great dragon Icewing lairs on top of Mount Vapor, high above the clouds. Icewing is one of the few great dragons known to give audiences.

Twilight Peaks

The stunning Twilight Peaks in southwestern Barsaive were named for the unique view these mountains pose during the twilight hours. Rich deposits of crystal reflect the glow of the Death's Sea, creating a warm aura around the mountains that can be seen for miles. The crystal growing here is not only the largest source of living crystal in Barsaive, it is also vastly superior to that found in other mountain ranges. Unsurprisingly, the Twilight Peaks are home to Barsaive's crystal raider trollmoots, who use the living crystal to forge armor, shields and weapons when they don't embark on raids in the lowlands or prey on other airships that come too close to their domain.

The major trollmoots are the Stoneclaws and the Swiftwinds to the east, the Blood Lores and Blackfangs to the west, and the Ironmongers and Thundersky trollmoots in the central peaks. The crystal raiders are known to battle among themselves, as ancient feuds exist between the tribes.

Tylon Mountains

Twelve improbably tall spires reach to the skies from the twelve peaks of the Tylon Mountains in central Barsaive. These spires rival the mighty Throal Mountains in height, piercing the

clouds beyond the sight of travelers standing at their foot. Some slopes and glens of the Tylon Mountains are barren, while others are covered with thick forests and brush.

According to ork folklore, the spires are the twelve Passions themselves, frozen in time as they reached out into the universe to stop the Horrors from ravaging the world.

Jungles and Forests

According to ancient texts, tall, broad-leafed trees covered Barsaive before the Scourge, blocking sunlight from reaching the ground and keeping the forest floors clear of underbrush. The Scourge devastated Barsaive's woodlands, but natural growth enhanced by magic since the opening of the kaers and citadels has restored many of Barsaive's forests. The land teems with tall trees and thick underbrush, whether nourished by sunlight or not. Magicians and questors have endlessly debated the precise cause of this magical growth, but no one has yet found an answer as to how it occurs.

Today, Barsaive's jungles and forests contain a diverse range of trees. The tallest reach a height of 100 yards, rarely growing close enough together for their crowns to touch. Other trees stand 30 to 60 yards high and grow much closer together. These two tallest groups of trees form a canopy that blocks most of the province's forested regions from the view of airships. Trees that stand 20 to 30 yards high form the most dense layer of Barsaivian forests, their trunks, branches, and foliage creating an almost solid canopy. The shortest trees, growing no higher than 15 yards from the ground, range from thin stands to impenetrable thickets.

In areas with sparser growth a person can spot someone up to 50 yards away; in other locales, the foliage grows thickly enough to render an object invisible only a yard or two away from the observer. Woody-stemmed vines, many with brilliantly colored flowers that bloom year-round, twine around the trees and cover the jungle floors. Countless mosses also thrive in the forests, growing on trees and dead plants.

The forests and jungles also contain clearings, many the sites of ruined cities dating from before the Scourge. The largest and most renowned of these ruins is Parlainth, the former provincial capital of Barsaive, but legends tell of other similarly ruined cities and towns.

Blood Wood

Once known as Wyrm Wood before the Scourge, Barsaive's most prominent forest stretches along six hundred miles, nearly the entire width of the province's northern border. At first glance, Blood Wood is a place of fantastic beauty, with thick red and green undergrowth and towering trees that only allow narrow shafts of sunlight to pierce the forest gloom. However, the use of blood magic has twisted the growth of Blood Wood, creating a terrible mockery of the grace and beauty for which Wyrm Wood had been known before the Scourge. The Blood Wood holds the dubious honor of being the only place in Barsaive corrupted by its inhabitants, rather than by the Horrors.

Those who journey to the Blood Wood face dangers and difficulties unlike those anywhere else in Barsaive. Because of the self-isolation Queen Alachia has imposed over Blood Wood (see **Government**, p. 485, for more information), very few uninvited travelers pass beyond the outermost fringes and live to tell the tale. Deadly defenses—both natural and elf-made—ensure that no one enters Blood Wood undetected by the Blood Warders and Wardens serving as border guards.

Once renowned the world over as the center of elven culture and tradition, the Ritual of Thorns and the transformation it wrought on the Blood Wood has reduced the influence of the Elven Court and Queen Alachia to the Wood's confines. Blood Wood is home to the Great Ranelles of Talshara, Jae'Healstri, Carithasca, Daevenar and Escalanas; extended elven families exerting a high degree of influence over the Elven Court.

Glenwood Deep

About two hundred miles west of Lake Vors, the Serpent River curves south around the wooded hills of Glenwood Deep. More than thirty windling clans make their homes in the trees of the Deep, forming the largest concentration of windlings in Barsaive. Fierce inter-clan rivalries occasionally erupt into open warfare, but like most windling endeavors, these disputes are quickly resolved and then forgotten.

The windlings of the Deep are known for their wanderlust and their extensive travels allow them to spread their open and intense dislike of the House Ishkarat t'skrang throughout Barsaive.

Liaj Jungle

The Liaj Jungle lies in the vast basin between the Delaris and Tylon Mountains. Far from any major waterways and trade routes, this vast green land is rarely traveled. The Liaj has grown considerably since the Scourge, and the jungle teems with life. Strange beasts roam the jungle floor, including giant spiders whose silk fetches a high price from merchants across Barsaive.

But all the creatures that roam the jungle are no match for the most fearsome inhabitant of the Liaj—the great dragon Usun, who brooks no trespassers into his domain. Despite the dragon's presence, several tribes and villages are scattered on the outskirts of the jungle, and the mysterious Tamers, who live without clothing, weapons, or tools of any kind, inhabit the deeper reaches of the Liaj.

Poison Forest

Stretching from the northern foothills of the Delaris Mountains, the Poison Forest forms a barrier between Barsaive and the Wastes beyond. Once lush and green, the Poison Forest is a casualty of the Scourge—a terrible reminder of the harm done to our land by the Horrors. The Poison Forest is not dead, however, but eternally caught in the process of dying.

The entire wood reeks of decay, with the wind sometimes carrying the stench all the way to Jerris. The trees are twisted and blackened, their leaves brown and brittle. Grasses, vines, and other plants look like dead things left to wither in the pitiless sun. The few animals that live in this blighted place are also caught in a perpetual state of decay, with their flesh rotting off their bones.

The Poison Forest is eerily silent—no bird calls, no animals cry. Only the sound of the wind blowing in from the Wastes disturbs the haunting quiet. This wind also brings with it dark clouds that drop fine dust and ash, coating everything in black soot as if a fire had just swept through the Forest.

Servos Jungle

The Servos Jungle in the heart of Barsaive is very isolated from the South Reach of the Serpent River. Several swamps and lakes, such as Lake Pyros, tend to lie at the outskirts of the Servos, but its interior contains only few swamplands.

Everything in the jungle grows to immense size—vines as thick as a troll's arm, shrubs the size of small trees and blossoms the size of stewpot-lids barely scratch the surface of the jungle's marvels. There is virtually no undergrowth in the deeper parts of the jungle—the thick canopy is almost impenetrable to rainfall and sunlight.

The Servos is the home of the Cathan tribes: tough, olive-skinned humans who survived the Scourge without Theran aid.

The Serpent River

The Serpent River passes through all of Barsaive, winding its way from the far north to the Death's Sea in the south. Four miles wide at most points, the Serpent can only be crossed by magical means or in a well-designed ship. The Serpent River's banks contain the most fertile soil in Barsaive, and many villages and towns dot the long, wide river valley. Countless tributaries, such as the Alidar, Byrose and Caucavic Rivers, feed the Serpent along its course, forming a network of waterways that travelers and traders have used for thousands of years.

The Serpent River is dominated by the reptilian t'skrang, whose communities—personified by the *aropagoi*, the t'skrangs great trading houses—dictate the conditions traders and travelers on the Serpent River must face. Many t'skrang have trade agreements with the Kingdom of Throal and work to promote unity among the people along the Serpent (see **Government**, p. 485, for more information). Other t'skrang captains turn pirate, using their ships for raiding.

Coil River

The Coil River is one of most prosperous stretches of the entire Serpent River system. From its source in the Throal Mountains to the Aras Sea, the Coil runs as swiftly and strongly as the Serpent and is home to more people than the rest of Barsaive's mightiest waterway. North of the intimidating Adipae Rapids lies the town of Darranis, which has become a vital link between Throal and the Serpent River system since the end of the Theran War. Only riverboats with express permission by King Neden of Throal have the rights to traverse the underground rivers to reach the dwarf kingdom to the north.

The southern part of the Coil River, which runs from Lake Ban to the Aras sea is also known as the Silverspring, partly because of the high volume of lucrative trade with the seaport city Urupa. The southern part of the river also passes the so-called Swinging City of Axalalail, built entirely on platforms suspended in a grove of massive trees growing close to the river. The town's t'skrang residents, who built Axalacail with the aid of a windling clan, use rope swings to move from platform to platform.

Mothingale River

The River Mothingale has connected the elven civilization with the Serpent River since the dawn of Name-giver history. In ancient times, elven trading ships plied the Mothingale and Serpent Rivers and even ventured out into the Aras Sea. Today, only ruins speak of the shipyards and settlements that were destroyed when Queen Alachia ordered the destruction of the elven fleet as part of Blood Wood's isolation.

Servos River

Those who wish to travel into the heart of the Servos Jungle must embark north on the Servos River. The Servos is nearly as wide as the Serpent, but its banks are firm and steep. The banks of the Servos and its tributaries are dotted with the villages of primitive t'skrang and human tribes of Cathan heritage. Originally, these tribes also inhabited the lower courses of the Servos and Galanga Rivers, but they abandoned these settlements as Theran and K'tenshin slavers slowly advanced up these rivers.

Tylon River

Running swiftly from the Tylon Mountains, the Tylon River is the largest tributary in the Serpent River's south reach. The upper reach of the Tylon, which stretches from the river's source to the four-hundred foot falls at Daiche Canyon, flows through densely forested hillsides and verdant valleys that are considered some of the most beautiful wilderness in Barsaive. The Tylon's lower reach meanders through the rugged plains where the Dinganni wander—a nomadic tribe of humans. At the southern end of Daiche Canyon, the city of Kratas has built the colony called Daiche, which like its patron city has become a locus of trade and controversy.

Notable Settlements

Countless towns and villages dot the shores of the Serpent River, trading with the t'skrang and other Name-givers. The following settlements are the most influential ones; their Names are known in every port along the Serpent.

Denlikiyan

Denlikiyan is the wealthiest of all of the river villages, as it boasts the finest shipyards of the Serpent River. The village's engineers are responsible for the innovations of the renowned *shimoram* riverboat design, and Denlikiyan is one of a handful of yards which can build a fire engine—and therefore, a complete riverboat—from scratch. Rumor has it that after nearly a century of shipbuilding, Denlikiyan now sits on top of one of the largest stashes of gold coins in all of Barsaive. Denlikiyan lies close to the settlements of the Vorst, a race of humans who suffered badly during the Scourge.

Eidolon

At the confluence of the Mothingale and Serpent Rivers lies Kaer Eidolon, a site of great historical and strategic importance in northern Barsaive. Eidolon is a fortress manned by elven and t'skrang soldiers who fight hard to keep the oppressive t'skrang House Ishkarat in check. Although the elves stationed at Eidolon are usually not from Blood Wood, they still operate under the command of Queen Alachia. This situation has led to an active black market trade between Blood Wood and the t'skrang of House Syrtis.

Marrek

The city of Marrek lies on the patch of land between the Caucavic and the Serpent Rivers, marking all that is left from this once-proud human kingdom. Marrek prospered after the Orichalcum Wars, explored lands, fought wars, and gained a reputation for assassinating nobles from other kingdoms. When Marrek became involved in the assassination of a Theran councilor, they lost the support of the Theran Empire. Thera's feelings remained hurt for centuries, and they eventually decided Marrek could do without their magical protections from the Horrors. Today, scholars say the Kingdom of Marrek exists in Name only, having been completely ripped apart during the Scourge.

Lalai Gorge

A few miles south of the confluence of the Caucavic and Serpent Rivers, the Throal Mountains collide with the Caucavic Mountains to form the Lalai Gorge, one of Barsaive's unique natural wonders. The Cliff City of House Syrtis is built into the southern wall of the gorge, which rises nearly 1,000 yards on each side of the river. The Cliff City was built before the Scourge and served as a citadel for the largest of the t'skrang *aropagoi* (see the **Government** section, p. 485, for more information).

Tansiarda

Just south of the confluence of the Onman and Serpent Rivers lies the town of Tansiarda, home to a consortium of dwarf engineers and magicians embarked on one of the most ambitious endeavors in Barsaive's history—to bridge the Serpent River. The dwarf engineers are following a plan developed before the Scourge, which if successful would provide an overland connection to the old Theran road which runs along the other side of the

river. Needless to say, because of the possible threat to their business interests, tensions between the dwarfs and the riverfaring t'skrang frequently run high.

Ardanyan

On the trading route between Tansiarda and the Kingdom of Throal, the trading town of Ardanyan flourishes from the traffic. Founded by a group of wealthy merchants, the town boasts above-average defenses and provides travelers with a safe haven from the ork scorchers threatening the area.

Trosk

The small town of Trosk is the last major settlement on the shores of the Serpent River before it merges into the Mist Swamps. Built on the ruins of a pre-Scourge port city, Trosk is called home by many questors of Jaspree and their servants, who occasionally trade with the Scavians and the t'skrang. The Troskians believe that they have a sacred duty to stop the growth of the Badlands, regularly making forays into the Horror-infested region. So far, no one can tell if their efforts have met with success.

Servalen

Located on the shore of Lake Pyros, Servalen is a bustling, brawling community. As a village which outgrew itself, criminals always held the upper hand in Servalen. Before the Therans returned to Barsaive, many of the inhabitants of Servalen were transients: ork scorchers and riverboat crews on liberty, mercenaries waiting to be hired, and explorers staging expeditions into the nearby jungle. The t'skrang of House K'tenshin and the Therans took control shortly after the landing of *Triumph*, and turned Servalen into a slave market.

The Serpent Lakes

At three points along its length, the frantic rush of the Serpent River slows and winds into the calm and clear Serpent Lakes. Each lake hosts settlements of many sizes, both along the shores and underwater.

Lake Ban

As the largest freshwater lake in Barsaive, Lake Ban is home to the Floating City of the t'skrang House V'strimon (see **Government**, p. 485). The city is built entirely on platforms made of woven reeds growing upward from the lake bottom. Lake Ban's location—midway between Throal and Urupa, at the junction of the Coil and Serpent Rivers—has made it a major economic and cultural crossroad. The Floating City, along with the bustling towns and villages along the lake's shores, makes Lake Ban the undisputed heart of the Coil River Valley, as well as one of Barsaive's most civilized regions.

The landing of the Theran fortress of *Triumph* at Ayodhya (see the **How It Came To Pass** chapter, p. 31, for more information) has had a strong impact on the region, as the V'strimon have marshaled their warships to protect their city from attacks by the Therans and their allies, House K'tenshin. The K'tenshin seized control of the Serpent River between Lake Pyros and Lake Ban during the Theran's arrival, which in turn led to open hostilities between the two houses.

Lake Pyros

West of Ayodhya and *Triumph*, the Serpent River enters a densely forested region that gradually gives way to impenetrable jungle. The Serpent River empties into the smallest of the Serpent Lakes: Lake Pyros, whose name stems from the precious, thick layer of phosphorescent algae that covers the bottom of the lake. The land around the eastern shores of Lake Pyros contains some of the most fertile soil of the province.

Several waves of settlers have erected quickly growing boomtowns along the shores, which attract deserters and exiles of all kinds, despite frequent raids by the t'skrang pirates of House Henghyoke. Tensions between the various immigrant and native groups have risen high from time to time, but House K'tenshin has recently managed to seize control of the unruly towns, turning Lake Pyros into a staging area for Theran slaving raids into the Servos Jungle.

Lake Vors

More than a thousand feet deep, the cold waters of Lake Vors foster some unusual species of fish and freshwater mollusks. The north bank of the lake consists of high bluffs rising up to 100 yards above the water's edge. Ruled by the oppressive t'skrang House Ishkarat, the Lake boasts two major settlements: the recently constructed town of Axalekso, on top of the northern bluffs, and the Fortress Isle of Maratha, jutting out of the water like a rough-hewn pillar in the western parts of the lake.

Long considered a minor power by the Elven Court of Blood Wood and the former King of Throal, House Ishkarat is allied with the Denairastas Clan of Iopos

The Mist Swamps

As the Serpent River approaches Death's Sea, it divides into countless streams, creating a huge marsh. The knee-deep water maintains a scalding hot (and at times, boiling) temperature, and thick steam rises up from the area. Though the Mist Swamps are not as instantly deadly as the Death's Sea, they still pose considerable danger to unwary travelers. The thick moisture of the air combined with the high temperature leeches energy from foolhardy adventurers not properly equipped for the journey. In addition, the mists are so thick that one can barely see more than a few yards ahead.

Rumors and vague hints on ancient maps suggest that a city Named Yrns Morgath once stood on the site covered by the Mist Swamps—a city that predates all other known Barsaivian cities. While there are records of some ruins and ancient structures that have been discovered by people surviving expeditions into the Mist Swamps, most scholars believe that no one has found the city because it serves as the lair of Aban—the great dragon, who claims the Mist Swamps as her own territory. Other people believe that the "lost city" has no more substance than the Castle of Assassins—another piece of common folklore rumored to lie hidden in the mists, and the source of tales told to scare children.

Scavia

Not much is left of the mighty city of Scavia that once arose between the Mist Swamps and the Scarlet Sea. Built on the ruins of an even older civilization, the Scavian kingdom fell during the Scourge due to a serious flaw in the construction of their kaer. Although descendants of the Scavian kingdom survived the Scourge, their numbers are dwindling. Mostly human, these families sail the lower part of the Serpent River on their barge-towns—floating villages that serve as home for the Scavians.

For a long time, the Scavians felt the t'skrang with whom they share the river were a threat to their own existence, and fought many battles against them. Recently, they have joined forces with the emerging t'skrang House T'kambras, fighting against the Theran-allied House K'tenshin. In return for their protection, the Scavians frequently provide House T'kambras with elemental fire and ancient engineering secrets. The most popular port for making such exchanges is the trading town of Farram, where the Iontos River enters the Serpent.

Seas and Oceans

Although it may seem odd to refer to seas and oceans when only one of them actually holds water, Barsaive has three main seas that affect trade and influence the province's weather.

Aras Sea

Marking the eastern border of Barsaive, the Aras Sea is a large saltwater ocean that reaches to unexplored lands. The Aras Sea is home to abundant wildlife, including magical creatures and a few water-dwelling Horrors. Violent storms occasionally spring up without warning and eventually travel to shore, causing great damage. Rumors exist that the storms are magical in nature.

The Coil River meets the Aras Sea in the Coil Delta, where Urupa—the only city on Barsaive's shoreline—is located. Urupa boasts a fortress-like embassy belonging to the people from across the Aras Sea, who frequent Urupa for trade. Only a handful of the wealthier citizens of Urupa have ever been invited inside this building.

Death's Sea

The Death's Sea, an ocean of molten stone, forms Barsaive's southern border. Sand dunes line the shore, and the sea's intense heat prevents anyone except elementals, Horrors, and the magically-protected from traveling over it.

According to legend, Death himself resides in the sea, where the Passions imprisoned him ages ago. These same stories warn that Death's terrible thirst will one day be quenched; when enough blood has been spilled on the earth, the ocean of fire will become water, and Death will be free to roam the land.

Scarlet Sea

The Scarlet Sea, linked to the Death's Sea by the Pryon Strait (also known as Dead Man's Gullet), is the home of exiles, outcasts and other pirates. Using stolen airships, these brigands raid mining ships and merchant vessels hoping to avoid the crystal raider's drakkars by traveling over the Scarlet Sea.

The sight of the *Firespawn*—a ravaged Theran vedette—sends shivers down the spine of every airship captain. The pirates hole up in caves and lava vents along the shores, often aided by outcast trolls who help to repair the pirate airships in exchange for needed supplies. They are not connected to the trollmoots of the Twilight Peaks, and have exchanged bloody blows with crystal raiders on several occasions.

Government

Formerly a province of the Theran Empire, Barsaive comprises several self-governing cities and towns, many of which have increasingly come under the influence of the dwarf kingdom of Throal. Perceived as benevolent because the *Council Compact* by which they govern renounces slavery and espouses individual rights, the growing dwarf influence does not trouble most Barsaivians, though some question the dwarf kingdom's motive for gathering power in the province. Despite having lost in their first attempt to take over since the Scourge ended, the Therans insist that Barsaive still belongs to their empire. Throal provides Barsaive's strongest counterweight to renewed domination by the hated Therans—a façade which now seems brittle after the Battle of Prajjor's Field.

Though the individual practices of governments in Barsaive's cities, towns and villages may vary, many follow the guidelines of the Throalic *Council Compact*. Written in 1270 TH at the height of the Scourge, the *Compact* set out guidelines for a just and orderly post-Scourge society in which all races could conduct fair and peaceful trade.

The widespread use of Throalic currency in Barsaive also illustrates the powerful influence of the kingdom, whose traders spearheaded the recovery of Barsaive when they reopened trade routes following the Scourge. Few Barsaivian municipalities continue to use Theran currency.

The Kingdom of Throal

The dwarf kingdom of Throal lies in the massive Throal Mountains, Barsaive's largest mountain range. The kingdom consists of two main parts. The Halls of Throal were built centuries ago and

sheltered the kingdom during the Scourge. Since the Scourge, the kingdom has constructed the Inner Cities of Bethabal, Oshane, Tirtaga, Wishon, and Yistane. The cities of Hustane and Valvria have only recently been opened to settlement, and plans for two more cities, Raithabal and Thurdane, are in the works.

Nearly a third of Barsaive's population has accepted the dwarf kingdom's invitation to live in Throal, with about 30,000 Namegivers living in the Halls, and another 25,000 living in each of the Inner Cities (although the newest cities are more sparsely populated at present). All of the multi-level cities boast large bazaars, as well as some of the finest inns and taverns in Barsaive. They are ruled by noble houses that have sworn fealty to King Neden. While the houses have spearheaded the Barsaivian resistance to Theran occupation, they also control trade in the kingdom. The major noble houses are Chaozun, Garsun, Ludi, Mikul, Pa'vas, Ueraven, Byril'ya, Elcomi, Neumani, Sarafica, and Yilwaz.

Though most Barsaivians remain strongly allied to Throal, as they did during the Theran War, some have become suspicious of Throal's current politics. Since the assassination of his father, King Neden is close to fighting a war on two fronts. The question of Throal's role in the future of Barsaive is slowly dividing the old guard and the reformists in the kingdom, and some fear it will lead Throalic society into a civil war.

Mountain Settlements

The sovereignty of Throal extends beyond the underground kaer and the Inner Cities. King Neden also rules over roughly twenty thousand people living in small settlements scattered throughout the Throal Mountains. Most of these communities are mining towns financed by Throal's noble houses.

Cara Fahd

The ork nation of Cara Fahd lies in southwest Barsaive, between the Delaris Mountains, the Twilight Peaks, and Theran-occupied Vivane. The territory claimed by Cara Fahd hosts a variety of terrain, from inhospitable and unforgiving jungle to open plains. On the southeastern slopes of the Delaris Mountains sits Claw Ridge, the capital of Cara Fahd. Surrounded by the granite fortress of Wurchaz, the city is still being constructed—only a quarter of its residents live in finished buildings, the rest living in tents or makeshift shacks. Many settlers in the area have begun farming the soil-rich flood plains of the Delaris River.

The T'skrang Aropagoi

Six great trading houses dominate trade on the Serpent River. With the exception of House Henghyoke, each *aropagoi* controls a section of the river system, but riverboats from all houses travel the entire length of the river. Although not all villages and settlements along the Serpent River are affiliated with the *aropagoi*, all of them operate under their system of trade—written down in the *Free Trade Compact*.

House Ishkarat dominates the North reach of the Serpent River, and is based on the Fortress Isle of Maratha. Its thirst for conquest has left them with few allies—the Denairastas clan of Iopos being the most prominent.

House Syrtis is based in the Cliff City of Lalai Gorge, and has allied with the elves of Blood Wood to keep the expansion of House Ishkarat in check.

House V'strimon controls the Coil River and is based on the Floating City of Lake Ban. House V'strimon is closely allied with Throal, the city state of Urupa, and House Syrtis. Recent events have led to open warfare with House K'tenshin.

Due to the arrival of the Theran behemoth, the southern reach of the Serpent River is controlled almost exclusively by House **K'tenshin**, who have allied with the Therans and seized control of the river from the Mist Swamps to Lake Ban.

The recently revived **House T'kambras** vies with House K'tenshin for control of the Tylon River. Their influence is strongest in the northern reaches of the Tylon, but their central settlement remains unknown.

The mysterious **House Henghyoke** is a pirate confederation whose riverboats raid the entire length of the Serpent River. Eerily silent, their warriors never cry out, even when injured in battle, and have never broken under interrogation. The location of their base remains unknown, and they have no known allies.

Blood Wood

The massive forest called the Blood Wood lies along Barsaive's northern boundary. Known as the Wyrm Wood before the Scourge, this forest holds the Elven Court ruled by the Elven Queen Alachia. Though the Elven Court was once the center of elven culture, the horrible mutilation to which the elves of the Wood subjected themselves to in order to survive the Horrors caused many elves living outside the Blood Wood to forsake Alachia. They see her and her ilk as abominations, as monstrous as the Horrors themselves, and many scholars share this sentiment.

Travelers who have visited the Blood Wood, however, often contend that the elves of the Wood remain a beautiful people, despite the horrible mutilation they inflicted to their bodies in order to survive the Scourge. The inhabitants of the Blood Wood remain capable of intricate magic; the Elven Queen's castle, built on a foundation of eight enormous oak trees, is still universally recognized as a wonder to behold.

The Theran Empire

In the Selestrean Sea, far southwest of Barsaive, lies the isle of Thera, seat of the Theran Empire that held sway over Barsaive in the years before the Scourge. Though the Scourge cost the Therans control of Barsaive, they regained a small area of the province in the years that followed. The Theran-controlled lands in Barsaive include the city of Vivane, and the surrounding vicinity, which is called Vivane Province. Theran territory extends to the southern edges of Cara Fahd, and border conflicts in the area are common. Adventurers often encounter Theran patrols and airships in these regions. Even though the Therans have established the military installation *Triumph* in Barsaive's heartland, the Therans rarely venture beyond the Twilight Peaks, preferring to consolidate their hold on the territories they already control.

Rumors place Theran spies in virtually every major Barsaivian city, as well as several of the larger towns and villages. The Therans at *Triumph* pose a threat to Barsaive; few people doubt the Therans' intention to one day reclaim Barsaive as part of their Empire.

Sky Point

One of the few remaining Theran outposts in Barsaive, Sky Point lies southwest of the city of Vivane. The Eighth Theran Legion quarters at Sky Point, giving the outpost the strongest Theran presence of any Barsaivian settlement. The outpost consists of a large platform supported by several huge pillars, and many small villages beneath the massive platform supply the Therans with necessities and slave labor. Sky Point also serves as the home port of the Theran Armada, comprising more than 25 airships, including three kilas and two dozen vedettes. Half the vedettes are outfitted for elemental mining and unsuitable for combat; the remaining craft boast fire cannons and can each carry up to 100 troops. General Crotias commands the Eighth Legion's soldiers and cavalry, although half of them have recently been sent to guard *Triumph*. The area around Sky Point is heavily guarded against intruders.

Triumph

Clearly visible from the Serpent River, the grounded behemoth *Triumph* towers over the nearby landscape. Commanded

by General Nikar Carinci, a t'skrang related to House K'tenshin, the fortress has a great influence on the region. Slave trade has increased along the southern reach of the Serpent River to provide the Therans with a suitable workforce. In addition to the Fifth Legion and half of Sky Point's Eight Legion, *Triumph* boasts a considerable fleet of airships and kilas which remains detached from the main Armada stationed at Sky Point.

Vivane

Once one of Barsaive's most beautiful cities, Vivane now stands as a testament to Theran power. As the city nearest to the seat of the Theran Empire, Vivane fell to the Therans when they returned to reconquer Barsaive almost 60 years ago. With many of its buildings still in ruins, this southwestern city remains a shadow of its former self. Though the Barsaivian magistrate Quarique Oathstone nominally rules the city, all of Barsaive recognizes his true status as a puppet ruler controlled by the Theran Overgovernor Kypros. Kypros often docks his massive airship, *Ascendancy*, at Vivane to remind the city's residents of Theran power. A support base for the Theran outpost at Sky Point, Vivane is also the only city near Barsaive with a sizable slave population.

Lankarden

Lankarden is a small garrison town, strongly built and well-armed. It boasts two impressive airship towers inside the walls and a number of defenses to keep enemy forces away. The Therans use Lankarden as a waystation between Vivane and northeastern Barsaive, as well as a staging area for raids into Cara Fahd and Landis. Well-maintained roads link this small town to both Vivane and to the city of Parland in the south. Visitors other than the usual merchants who sell provisions are regarded with suspicion, and the town guards write down the names and places of residence for all outsiders entering the place. The town grew up only a few hundred yards from the Longbone River, named for the huge bones (said to be troll limbs) found by the first Therans to explore the river. Local people rarely fish for themselves, instead relying on Vivane for provisions, and devote their own efforts to capturing and selling slaves. Little trading or business goes on in Lankarden; the town exists primarily to serve Thera's military needs.

The City States

The great cities of Barsaive are home to many thousands of Name-givers. While almost all of them have developed customs and laws that closely resemble the *Council Compact* of Throal, each city is still culturally unique, and each remains politically independent of the Kingdom of Throal.

Bartertown

Originally a bazaar, Bartertown has become a sprawling city sitting outside the gates of Throal. Bartertown was founded by merchants who wished to take advantage of Throalic trade policies without becoming a part of the dwarf kingdom. Lacking formal city government to oversee planning, these traders built shops and homes wherever they saw fit, giving the city a haphazard layout. Barsaivians claim that travelers can buy any goods or services in Bartertown, if they look long and haggle hard enough.

Iopos

Located in the northwest corner of Barsaive, the city of Iopos is ruled by a powerful family of magicians called the Denairastas, who have held power since before the Scourge. Though their success at bringing the city through the Scourge earned the Denairastas the loyalty of most of Iopos' population, the magicians continue to rule with an iron hand, arresting and often executing dissidents. The Denairastas subject outsiders to the same drastic measures as city residents; visitors to Iopos are advised to keep any comments about the city's rulers to themselves. In the years since the opening of the kaers that followed the Scourge, the Denairastas have repeatedly vowed to defeat both Thera and Throal and claim control of Barsaive. With the recent assassination of King Varulus III, it appears they have put their plans into motion.

Jerris

The wealthy trading city of Jerris lies on Barsaive's western edge, between the Liaj Jungle and the Poison Forest. A perpetual cloud of gray-black ash and dust hangs over Jerris, blown in from the Wastes that lie west of Barsaive. Rumors claim this pollution has cursed the city. A fiercely competitive group of trading houses act as the de facto rulers of Jerris. Only issues vital to the city's livelihood motivate these traders to suspend their otherwise continuous infighting and treachery.

Kratas

Located almost exactly in the geographical center of Barsaive, Kratas is commonly known as the Thieves' City. Almost all mercenary and illegal activities in Barsaive take place in Kratas, and some of Barsaive's most notable thieves and informants make their homes there. Garlthik One-Eye, the legendary ork Thief, controls the city through his gang, the Force of the Eye. A veritable crossroad of information and stolen goods, adventurers can find almost any type of equipment or service in Kratas, though at a higher price than in any other Barsaivian city.

Travar

Among all of Barsaive's ancient cities, Travar alone has maintained its pre-Scourge splendor and grace. Its white marble towers and spires overlook the banks of a tributary of the Serpent River in southeast Barsaive. Travar's location provides excellent trade access to both the t'skrang and the Kingdom of Throal, and ensures the city's prosperity. Three magistrates rule Travar, each serving a three-year term. If a magistrate wishes to serve another term, he must win his position in the Founding—a tournament in which champions representing the magistrate and his would-be successors compete. Those patrons whose champions win the Founding become magistrates.

Parlainth and Haven

The ancient ruins of Parlainth, the Theran Empire's provincial capital before the Scourge, lie in Barsaive's far northeast corner. Knowledge of the city's existence mysteriously disappeared from the minds of Barsaive's population during the Scourge, and the city has only recently been rediscovered. Parlainth is often called "the Forgotten City", a reference to the many splendors lost to time and the Scourge. The Forgotten City has become a mecca for adventurers, who seek the mysteries and priceless treasures hidden within its ruins. Even tales of the Horrors and other dreadful creatures that dwell in the city's catacombs have done little to dissuade these treasure seekers.

The small town of Haven lies at the southwestern corner of Parlainth. Ostensibly a trading village, Haven has become a staging area for explorers seeking Parlainth's treasures, and boasts a variety of goods that almost rivals the selection available in Bartertown. Haven's shops also occasionally offer goods from the nearby Blood Wood, though such items are usually difficult to obtain.

Urupa

Situated on the shores of the Aras Sea, Urupa was founded after the Scourge by the residents of seven small kaers, believing that safety lay in numbers. The city lies at the base of a high, sheer cliff on a peninsula in the Coil Delta. The 500 yard high cliff discourages attacks on the city from above, and a well fortified port helps defend against attacks from the sea. Urupa has considerable military resources—including troll drakkars and a large militia—commanded by a Leadership Council made up of the councilors of Urupa's different districts.

Barsaive
Province
City State
City
Town/Village
Place of importance
Seven days walking
Four days riding
Poison Forest
Blood Wood
Elf Queens Palace
Scytha Mountains
Caucavic Mountains
Caucavic River
Haven
Barsaive
Lake Vors
Serpent River
Mountains
Twilight Peaks
Death's Sea
Scarlet Sea
Swamps
Badlands
Servos Jungle
Dragon Mountains
Thunder Mountains
Aras Sea
Urupa
Omnord River
Skip Point
Vivane
Travar
Kratas
Surtis
Barrtown
Throal
Lake Ban
Lake Servos
Lake Issalkesso
Lake Lisikarat
Liaj Jungle
Liaj River
Claw Ridge
Caran Fahd Lands
Longbow River
Greenheart River
Thunderpeak River
Delaris Mountains
Jerris
Canol
Toppo
Glenwood Depths
Mothingale River
Tylon
Mountains
Ustrect
Tylon River
Servos River
Galanga River
Serpent River
Tentshin
Barrow River
Tontos River
Coil River
Darrans
Alachar River
Arrathmayen
Cara-Conis Road
Vivane
Vivane Rapids
Triumph
Vivane
Vivane Rapids
Vivane
Vivane Rapids
Vivane
Vivane Rapids

MASTER TALENT TABLE

Talent Name	Step Number	Action	Requires Karma	Strain
Abate Curse (p.167)	Rank + WIL	Yes	No	1
Acrobatic Strike (p.168)	Rank + DEX	No	No	1
Air Dance (p.168)	Rank + DEX	No	No	1
Air Sailing (p.168)	Rank + WIL	Yes	No	0
Air Speaking (p.168)	Rank + PER	No	No	1 (see text)
Animal Bond (p.168)	Rank + CHA	Yes	No	0
Animal Leadership (p.169)	Rank + CHA	Yes	Yes	0
Animal Possession (p.169)	Rank + WIL	Yes	No	2
Animal Training (p.169)	Rank + CHA	Yes	No	0
Animate Object (p.169)	Rank + WIL	Yes	Yes	0
Anticipate Blow (p.169)	Rank + PER	No	No	1
Arcane Mutterings (p.170)	Rank + CHA	Yes	Yes	0
Armored Matrix (p.170)	Rank	NA	No	0
Armor Mount (p.170)	Rank + WIL	No	No	1
Astral Pocket (p.170)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	1 (see text)
Astral Sight (p.170)	Rank + PER	No	No	1
Astral Web (p.171)	Rank + STR	No	No	1
Attribute Pattern (p.171)	Rank + PER	Yes	Yes	1
Aura Armor (p.171)	Rank + WIL	Yes	No	2
Avoid Blow (p.171)	Rank + DEX	No	No	1
Bank Shot (p.171)	Rank + DEX	Yes	No	1
Bardic Voice (p.171)	Rank + CHA	Yes	No	1
Bargain With Summoned Creature (p.172)	Rank + CHA	Yes	No	1
Battle Bellow (p.172)	Rank + CHA	No	No	1
Battle Shout (p.172)	Rank + CHA	No	No	1
Bestial Resilience (p.172)	Rank + TOU	Yes	No	0
Bestial Toughness (p.172)	Rank + TOU	No	Yes	0
Blade Juggle (p.172)	Rank + DEX	Yes	No	1 (see text)
Blind Fire (p.173)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	0
Blood Guilt Weapon (p.173)	Rank + PER	Yes	Yes	0
Blood Share (p.173)	Rank + TOU	Yes	No (Yes, see text)	0
Body Blade (p.173)	Rank + STR	No	Yes	0
Book Memory (p.174)	Rank + WIL	Yes	Yes	0
Book Recall (p.174)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	1
Borrow Sense (p.174)	Rank + WIL	Yes	No	0
Call Arrow (p.175)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	1
Call Mount (p.175)	Rank + WIL	Yes	No	1
Casting Pattern (p.175)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	1
Cat's Paw (p.175)	Rank + DEX	No	No	1
Chameleon (p.175)	Rank + WIL	No	Yes	1
Champion Challenge (p.175)	Rank + CHA	Yes	Yes	0
Charge (p.175)	Rank + STR	No	No	0
Claw Frenzy (p.176)	Rank + DEX	Yes	Yes	1 per attack (see text)
Claw Shape (p.176)	Rank + STR	No	Yes	0
Climbing (p.176)	Rank + DEX	Yes	No	0
Cobra Strike (p.176)	Rank + DEX	No	No	1
Cold Purify (p.176)	Rank + WIL	Yes	No	0
Conceal Weapon (p.176)	Rank + DEX	Yes	No	1
Confront Horror (p.177)	Rank + CHA	Yes	Yes	5
Create Arrow (p.177)	Rank + WIL	Yes	Yes	0
Creature Analysis (p.177)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	1
Critical Hit (p.177)	Rank	No	Yes	0
Crushing Blow (p.177)	Rank + STR	No	Yes	1
Dead Fall (p.177)	Rank + WIL	No	No	1
Defense (p.178)	Rank + DEX	Yes	Yes	1
Detect Falsehood (p.178)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	1
Detect Influence (p.178)	Rank + PER	Yes	Yes	0
Detect Trap (p.178)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	1
Detect Weapon (p.178)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	1
Develop Animal Sense (p.178)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	1
Direction Arrow (p.178)	Rank + PER	Yes	Yes	2
Disarm (p.179)	Rank + DEX	Yes	No	1

MASTER TALENT TABLE

Talent Name	Step Number	Action	Requires Karma	Strain
Disarm Trap (p.179)	Rank + DEX	Yes	No (Yes, see text)	1
Disguise Self (p.179)	Rank + PER	Yes	Yes	0
Dominate Arrow (p.179)	Rank + WIL	Yes	No	1
Dominate Beast (p.179)	Rank + WIL	Yes	No	1
Down Strike (p.179)	Rank + STR	No	No	1
Durability (p.179)	Rank	NA	No	0
Eagle Eye (p.180)	Rank + PER	No	No	0
Earth Armor (p.180)	Rank + WIL	Yes	Yes	0
Earth Skin (p.180)	Rank + TOU	Yes	Yes	0 (see text)
Echo Location (p.180)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	1
Effect Pattern (p.180)	Rank + PER	No	No	1
Elemental Hold (p.180)	Rank + WIL	Yes	No	1
Elemental Tongues (p.181)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	1
Emotion Song (p.181)	Rank + CHA	Yes	No	0
Empathic Command (p.181)	Rank + WIL	No	No	0
Empathic Sense (p.182)	Rank + CHA	No	No	1 (see text)
Endure Cold (p.182)	Rank + TOU	No	No	0
Enduring Art (p.182)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	0
Engaging Banter (p.182)	Rank + CHA	Yes	No	1
Enhanced Matrix (p.182)	Rank	NA	No	0
Ethereal Weapon (p.183)	Rank + DEX	Yes	No	2
Evidence Analysis (p.183)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	1
False Sight (p.183)	Rank	No	No	1
Fast Hand (p.183)	Rank + DEX	Yes	Yes	0
Fearsome Charge (p.183)	Rank + WIL	No	No	2
Fence (p.184)	Rank + CHA	Yes	No	0
Fireblood (p.184)	Rank + TOU	Yes	No	0 (see text)
Fire Heal (p.184)	Rank + WIL	Yes	No	0
First Impression (p.184)	Rank + CHA	Yes	No	0
First Ring of Perfection (p.184)	Rank	No	Yes	0
Flame Arrow (p.184)	Rank + WIL	No	Yes	2
Forge Armor (p.185)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	2
Forge Blade (p.185)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	1
Frighten (p.186)	Rank + WIL	Yes	Yes	0
Frighten Animals (p.186)	Rank + CHA	Yes	Yes	0
Gain Surprise (p.186)	Rank + WIL	No	Yes	0
Gliding Stride (p.186)	Rank + DEX	No	No	1 (see text)
Gold Sense (p.187)	Rank + PER	Yes	Yes	0
Graceful Exit (p.187)	Rank + CHA	Yes	No	0
Great Leap (p.187)	Rank + DEX	No	No	1
Haggle (p.187)	Rank + CHA	Yes	No	0
Heal Animal Servant (p.187)	Rank + TOU	Yes	No	0 (see text)
Heartening Laugh (p.187)	Rank + CHA	Yes	Yes	0
Hold Thread (p.187)	Rank + WIL	No	No	1
Howl (p.188)	Rank + CHA	Yes	No	1
Hypnotize (p.188)	Rank + CHA	Yes	No	1
Impressive Shot (p.188)	Rank + DEX	Yes	No	1
Impressive Strike (p.188)	Rank + DEX	Yes	No	1
Improve Armor (p.188)	Rank + PER	Yes	Yes	0
Improve Blade (p.189)	Rank + PER	Yes	Yes	0
Incite Mob (p.189)	Rank + WIL	Yes	No	1
Incite Stampede (p.189)	Rank + WIL	Yes	No	1
Item History (p.189)	Rank + PER	Yes	Yes	0
Karma Ritual (p.189)	Rank	NA	No	0
Lasting Impression (p.190)	Rank + CHA	No	Yes	0
Leadership (p.190)	Rank + CHA	Yes	Yes	0
Life Check (p.190)	Rank + TOU	No	No	0 (see text)
Lifesight (p.190)	Rank + PER	No	No	1
Lion Heart (p.190)	Rank + WIL	No	No	0
Lion Spirit (p.191)	Rank	NA	No	0
Lip Reading (p.191)	Rank + CHA	Yes	Yes	1
Lizard Leap (p.191)	Rank + STR	No	Yes	0
Lock Picking (p.191)	Rank + DEX	Yes	No	0
Lock Sense (p.191)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	1

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TALENTS

MASTER TALENT TABLE

Talent Name	Step Number	Action	Requires Karma	Strain
Maneuver (p.191)	Rank + DEX	Yes	No	0
Matrix Strike (p.191)	Rank + WIL	No	No	1
Melee Weapons (p.191)	Rank + DEX	Yes	No	0
Memorize Image (p.192)	Rank + PER	Yes	Yes	0
Metal Ward (p.192)	Rank + PER	Yes	Yes	0
Mimic Voice (p.192)	Rank + PER	No	No	0
Mind Wave (p.192)	Rank + WIL	Yes	Yes	0
Missile Twister (p.192)	Rank + WIL	Yes	Yes	0
Missile Weapons (p.192)	Rank + DEX	Yes	No	0
Momentum Attack (p.192)	Rank + DEX	No	No	1
Mount Attack (p.193)	Rank	No	No	1
Mount Durability (p.193)	Rank	NA	No	0
Moving Earth (p.193)	Rank + WIL	Yes	Yes	0
Multi-Charge (p.193)	Rank + DEX	Yes	Yes	1 per attack (see text)
Multi-Shot (p.193)	Rank + DEX	Yes	No	1 per attack (see text)
Multi-Strike (p.193)	Rank + DEX	Yes	Yes	1 per attack (see text)
Multi-Tongue (p.193)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	1 per min.
Multi-Weaving (p.193)	Rank + PER	No	No	1
Mystic Aim (p.194)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	1
Netherwalk (p.194)	Rank + WIL	Yes	Yes	0
Orbiting Spy (p.195)	Rank + PER	Yes	Yes	0
Picking Pockets (p.195)	Rank + DEX	Yes	No	0
Pin (p.195)	Rank + DEX	Yes	No	0
Plant Shelter (p.195)	Rank + CHA	Yes	No	1
Poison Resistance (p.195)	Rank + TOU	No	No	0
Questor (p.195)	Rank	NA	No	0
Quickblade (p.195)	Rank + DEX	No	No	2
Quick Shot (p.196)	Rank + DEX	No	No	1 per attack (see text)
Rally (p.196)	Rank + CHA	Yes	Yes	0 (1, see text)
Range Pattern (p.196)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	1
Read and Write Language (p.196)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	1 (see text)
Read and Write Magic (p.197)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	0 (see text)
Reshape Object (p.197)	Rank + WIL	Yes	No	2
Resist Taunt (p.197)	Rank + WIL	No	No	1
Riposte (p.197)	Rank + DEX	No	No	2
Ritual of the Ghost Master (p.198)	Rank + PER	Yes	Yes	2
Rushing Attack (p.198)	Rank + DEX	Yes	No (see text)	0 (see text)
Safe Path (p.198)	Rank + PER	Yes	Yes	0
Safe Thought (p.198)	Rank + WIL	Yes	Yes	0
Screaming Arrow (p.199)	Rank + CHA	Yes	No	1
Second Attack (p.199)	Rank + DEX	No	Yes	1
Second Chance (p.199)	Rank + WIL	No	Yes	1
Second Weapon (p.199)	Rank + DEX	No	No	1
Sense Magic Weapon (p.199)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	1
Sense Poison (p.200)	Rank + PER	No	No	1
Shared Matrix (p.200)	Rank	NA	No	0
Shield Beater (p.200)	Rank	No	Yes	1
Shield Charge (p.200)	Rank + STR	No	No	1
Show Armor Flaw (p.200)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	2
Silent Walk (p.201)	Rank + DEX	No	No	0
Slough Blame (p.201)	Rank + CHA	Yes	Yes	1
Soften Blade (p.201)	Rank + WIL	Yes	Yes	0
Song of Deflection (p.201)	Rank + WIL	No	Yes	1
Soul Shatter (p.201)	Rank + WIL	No	Yes	1
Speak Language (p.201)	Rank + PER	No	No	1 (see text)
Spell Crystal Lock (p.202)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	0 (see text)

MASTER TALENT TABLE

Talent Name	Step Number	Action	Requires Karma	Strain
Spell Matrix (p.202)	Rank	NA	No	0
Spellcasting (p.202)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	0
Spirit Dodge (p.202)	Rank + PER	No (Yes, see text)	No	1 (see text)
Spirit Hold (p.203)	Rank + WIL	Yes	No	1
Spirit Mount (p.203)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	1
Spirit Strike (p.203)	Rank + WIL	Yes	No	1
Spirit Talk (p.203)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	1
Spot Armor Flaw (p.203)	Rank + PER	No	No	0
Sprint (p.204)	Rank + DEX	No	No	1
Steel Thought (p.204)	Rank + WIL	No	No	1
Steely Stare (p.204)	Rank + CHA	Yes	No	1
Stone Skin (p.204)	Rank + TOU	Yes	Yes	0 (see text)
Stopping Aim (p.204)	Rank + CHA	Yes	No	1
Summon (p.204)	Rank + PER	Yes	Yes	0
Summoning Circle (p.205)	Rank + WIL	Yes	Yes	0
Sure Mount (p.205)	Rank + STR	No	No	0
Surprise Strike (p.205)	Rank + STR	No	No	1
Swift Kick (p.205)	Rank + DEX	No	No	1
Swing Attack (p.205)	Rank + DEX	Yes	No	1
Talent Pattern (p.206)	Rank + PER	Yes	Yes	3
Tame Mount (p.206)	Rank + CHA	Yes	Yes	0
Taunt (p.206)	Rank + CHA	No	No	1
Temper Other (p.206)	Rank + WIL	Yes	No	0
Temper Self (p.206)	Rank + WIL	Yes	No	0
Temperature (p.206)	Rank + WIL	Yes	No	1
Thought Link (p.206)	Rank + PER	Yes (No, see text)	No	1
Thoughtful Expression (p.207)	Rank + PER	No	No	0
Thread Weaving (p.207)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	0
Throwing Weapons (p.207)	Rank + DEX	Yes	No	0
Thunder Axe (p.207)	Rank + STR	No	No	1
Tiger Spring (p.207)	Rank	No	No	1
Trace Missile (p.207)	Rank + PER	No	No	1
Tracking (p.208)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	1
Trample (p.208)	Rank	No	No	1
Trap Initiative (p.208)	Rank + DEX	No (see text)	No	1
Trick Riding (p.208)	Rank + DEX	No	No	1
True Shot (p.208)	Rank + DEX	Yes	Yes	0
True Sight (p.208)	Rank	NA	No	0
Truth Skit (p.208)	Rank + PER	Yes	Yes	0
Unarmed Combat (p.209)	Rank + DEX	Yes	No	0
Unmount (p.209)	Rank + STR	No	No	0
Unshakable Earth (p.209)	Rank + STR	No	No	1
Venom (p.209)	Rank + TOU	No	Yes	0
Versatility (p.209)	Rank	NA	No	0
Vital Strike (p.209)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	1
Vitality (p.209)	Rank + TOU	Yes	Yes	0
Warning Shot (p.210)	Rank + CHA	No	No	0
Warp Missile (p.210)	Rank + PER	Yes	No	1
Water Dancing (p.210)	Rank + CHA	Yes	Yes	0
Weapon Breaker (p.210)	Rank + STR	No	Yes	0
Weapon History (p.210)	Rank + PER	Yes	Yes	0
Wheeling Attack (p.211)	Rank + DEX	Yes	Yes	0
Wheeling Defense (p.211)	Rank + DEX	No	No	1
Whirlwind (p.211)	Rank + DEX	Yes	No	2
Willforce (p.211)	Rank + WIL	No	No	1
Wind Bow (p.211)	Rank + STR	No	Yes	0
Wind Catcher (p.211)	Rank + WIL	Yes	No	0
Winning Smile (p.212)	Rank + CHA	Yes	No	0
Wood Skin (p.212)	Rank + TOU	Yes	Yes	0 (see text)
Wound Balance (p.212)	Rank + STR	No	No	0
Wound Transfer (p.212)	Rank + WIL	No	Yes	0

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TALENT KNACKS

ALL DISCIPLINES TALENT KNACKS TABLE

Talent Knack Name	Talent	Rank	Strain
Braiding Threads (p.218)	Thread Weaving	5	2
Talent Linking (p.227)	Thread Weaving	5	2+ (see text)
Thread Masking (p.228)	Thread Weaving	5	2
Unraveling (p.228)	Thread Weaving	5	2+ (see text)

AIR SAILOR TALENT KNACKS TABLE

Talent Knack Name	Talent	Rank	Strain
Air Legs (p.216)	Air Sailing	3	2
Assault (p.217)	Air Sailing	6	4
Glide (p.222)	Wind Catcher	8	2
Swab the Deck (p.227)	Melee Weapons	9	3
Swinging in the Rigging (p.227)	Climbing	3	0
Vertical Jump (p.228)	Great Leap	5	1

ARCHER TALENT KNACKS TABLE

Talent Knack Name	Talent	Rank	Strain
Arrow Stop (p.217)	Missile Weapons	5	2
Backbiter (p.217)	Bank Shot	5	3
Explosive Flame Arrow (p.220)	Flame Arrow	7	4
Extend Range (p.220)	Missile Weapons	8	3
Fire Arrow (p.221)	Flame Arrow	3	1
Placed Shot (p.225)	Missile Weapons	5	2 per attack
Spirit Flame (p.227)	Flame Arrow	5	4

BEASTMASTER TALENT KNACKS TABLE

Talent Knack Name	Talent	Rank	Strain
Calm Herd (p.218)	Incite Stampede	8	2
Cat's Skill (p.218)	Cat's Paw	7	2
Claw Tool (p.218)	Claw Shape	4	2 per minute
Creature Remains (p.219)	Creature Analysis	5	1
Horror Analysis (p.223)	Creature Analysis	7	1
Share Sense (p.226)	Borrow Sense	7	2

CAVALRYMAN TALENT KNACKS TABLE

Talent Knack Name	Talent	Rank	Strain
Air Mount (p.216)	Spirit Mount	11	2 per round
Feinting Lunge (p.221)	Charge	6	2 (see text)
Feinting Retreat (p.221)	Trick Riding	5	3
Mountain Hoof (p.224)	Trick Riding	6	2 per round (see text)
Swift Hoof (p.227)	Trick Riding	3	1
Water Mount (p.228)	Spirit Mount	9	1 per round
Wound Share (p.229)	Blood Share	5	2

ELEMENTALIST TALENT KNACKS TABLE

Talent Knack Name	Talent	Rank	Strain
Air Conditioning (p.216)	Temperature	5	1
Anchored Spell (p.216)	Spellcasting	9	1 Wound (see text)
Bind Spirit (p.217)	Summon	5	2
Cosmetics (p.218)	Reshape Object	7	2 (see text)
Create Orichalcum (p.219)	Thread Weaving	7	2
Create Armored Matrix Object (p.219)	Thread Weaving	10	2
Create Enhanced Matrix Object (p.219)	Thread Weaving	6	2
Create Shared Matrix Object (p.219)	Thread Weaving	14	2
Create Spell Matrix Object (p.219)	Thread Weaving	3	2
Create Thread Item (p.219)	Thread Weaving	5	2
Far Speaking (p.220)	Air Speaking	5	2
Halt Disease (p.222)	Cold Purify	5	2
Heal Others (p.222)	Fire Heal	5	1+ (see text)
Maintain Spell Threads (p.224)	Spellcasting	7	1+ (see text)
Name Spell (p.224)	Spellcasting	7	1+ (see text)
Signature Spells (p.226)	Spellcasting	7	1
Spell Stacking (p.227)	Spellcasting	9	2+ (see text)
Whispered Conversation (p.229)	Air Speaking	6	1
Wound Heal (p.229)	Fire Heal	3	2 (see text)

ILLUSIONIST TALENT KNACKS TABLE

Talent Knack Name	Talent	Rank	Strain
Anchored Spell (p.216)	Spellcasting	5	1 Wound (see text)
Angelic Appearance (p.216)	Disguise Self	7	1
Create Armored Matrix Object (p.219)	Thread Weaving	10	2
Create Enhanced Matrix Object (p.219)	Thread Weaving	6	2
Create Shared Matrix Object (p.219)	Thread Weaving	14	2
Create Spell Matrix Object (p.219)	Thread Weaving	3	2
Deathbed (p.220)	Dead Fall	5	1 per minute
Gaping Wounds (p.222)	Spellcasting	6	2
Lasting Memory (p.223)	False Sight	9	2 (see text)
Liar (p.223)	Detect Falsehood	7	1
Lift the Curtain (p.223)	Astral Sight	7	1 per minute
Maintain Spell Threads (p.224)	Spellcasting	5	1+ (see text)
Mind Trick (p.224)	Mind Wave	7	1
Name Spell (p.224)	Spellcasting	6	1+ (see text)
Signature Spells (p.226)	Spellcasting	6	1
Spell Stacking (p.227)	Spellcasting	8	2+ (see text)

NETHERMANCER TALENT KNACKS TABLE

Talent Knack Name	Talent	Rank	Strain
Anchored Spell (p.216)	Spellcasting	9	1 Wound (see text)
Astral Spy (p.217)	Orbiting Spy	7	1+ (see text)
Bind Spirit (p.217)	Summon	5	2
Create Armored Matrix Object (p.219)	Thread Weaving	10	2
Create Enhanced Matrix Object (p.219)	Thread Weaving	6	2
Create Shared Matrix Object (p.219)	Thread Weaving	14	2
Create Spell Matrix Object (p.219)	Thread Weaving	3	2
Create Thread Item (p.219)	Thread Weaving	7	2
Deathsight (p.220)	Lifesight	9	3
Gaping Wounds (p.222)	Spellcasting	7	2
Maintain Spell Threads (p.224)	Spellcasting	7	1+ (see text)
Name Spell (p.224)	Spellcasting	7	1+ (see text)
Orbiting Watcher (p.225)	Orbiting Spy	7	1
Signature Spells (p.226)	Spellcasting	7	1
Spell Stacking (p.227)	Spellcasting	9	2+ (see text)
Spirit Shield (p.227)	Spirit Dodge	9	3
Translator (p.228)	Spirit Talk	7	1 per minute

SCOUT TALENT KNACKS TABLE

Talent Knack Name	Talent	Rank	Strain
Adept's Best Friend (p.215)	Tracking	5	3 (4, see text)
Astral Tracking (p.217)	Tracking	9	2
By the Fingernails (p.218)	Climbing	5	2
Creature Remains (p.219)	Creature Analysis	5	1
Horror Analysis (p.223)	Creature Analysis	7	1
Identify Tracks (p.223)	Tracking	5	2
Shadow Hide (p.226)	Silent Walk	5	1

SKY RAIDER TALENT KNACKS TABLE

Talent Knack Name	Talent	Rank	Strain
Armor Beater (p.216)	Melee Weapons	9	3
Boarding Action (p.217)	Air Sailing	8	4
Flaming Wounds (p.221)	Fire Blood	7	3
Flying Kick (p.221)	Great Leap	5	2
Hard Glare (p.222)	Steely Stare	9	4
Vertical Jump (p.228)	Great Leap	5	1
Weapon Scream (p.229)	Melee Weapons	6	2

SWORDMASTER TALENT KNACKS TABLE

Talent Knack Name	Talent	Rank	Strain
Armor Beater (p.216)	Melee Weapons	8	3
Arrow Cutting (p.217)	Riposte	9	2
Claw Riposte (p.218)	Riposte	7	3
Deflect Blow (p.220)	Melee Weapons	5	1
Matched Weapons (p.224)	Second Weapon	5	0
Second Riposte (p.226)	Second Weapon	7	4
Setup (p.226)	Maneuver	6	2

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TALENT KNACKS

THIEF TALENT KNACKS TABLE

Talent Knack Name	Talent	Rank	Strain
Covet Item (p.219)	Fence	5	2
Improvised Missiles (p.223)	Throwing Weapons	6	1
Lightning Throw (p.224)	Throwing Weapons	7	1+ (see text)
Offguard (p.225)	Picking Pockets	5	2
Pin Up (p.225)	Throwing Weapons	6	1
Placed Throw (p.225)	Throwing Weapons	5	2 per attack
Shadow Hide (p.226)	Silent Walk	3	1

TROUBADOUR TALENT KNACKS TABLE

Talent Knack Name	Talent	Rank	Strain
Defuse Mob (p.220)	Incite Mob	8	2
Disassociate (p.220)	Empathic Sense	8	2
Epic (p.220)	Emotion Song	5	1
Mimic Music (p.224)	Mimic Voice	6	2
Rapier Wit (p.225)	Resist Taunt	8	4
Songs of Inspiration (p.226)	Emotion Song	5	1+ (see text)
Telling the Tale (p.228)	Emotion Song	4	0

WARRIOR TALENT KNACKS TABLE

Talent Knack Name	Talent	Rank	Strain
Armor Beater (p.216)	Melee Weapons	7	3
Bounce (p.218)	Avoid Blow	7	2
Deflect Blow (p.220)	Melee Weapons	5	1
Head Butt (p.222)	Unarmed Combat	5	2
Improvised Weapons (p.223)	Melee Weapons	5	1
Mighty Throw (p.224)	Unarmed Combat	7	2
Pin Down (p.225)	Unarmed Combat	3	1

WEAPONSMITH TALENT KNACKS TABLE

Talent Knack Name	Talent	Rank	Strain
Create Orichalcum (p.219)	Thread Weaving	9	2
Create Armored Matrix Object (p.219)	Thread Weaving	10	2
Create Enhanced Matrix Object (p.219)	Thread Weaving	6	2
Create Shared Matrix Object (p.219)	Thread Weaving	14	2
Create Spell Matrix Object (p.219)	Thread Weaving	3	2
Create Thread Item (p.219)	Thread Weaving	3	2
Faulty Bowyer (p.221)	Warp Missile	7	2
Faulty Goods (p.221)	Haggle	7	2
Forge Arrow (p.221)	Forge Blade	3	2
Here's The Deal (p.222)	Haggle	7	0
Smooth Armor (p.226)	Forge Armor	7	4

WIZARD TALENT KNACKS TABLE

Talent Knack Name	Talent	Rank	Strain
Anchored Spell (p.216)	Spellcasting	5	1 Wound (see text)
Arcane Curses (p.216)	Arcane Mutterings	6	1
Create Armored Matrix Object (p.219)	Thread Weaving	10	2
Create Enhanced Matrix Object (p.219)	Thread Weaving	6	2
Create Shared Matrix Object (p.219)	Thread Weaving	14	2
Create Spell Matrix Object (p.219)	Thread Weaving	3	2
Create Thread Item (p.219)	Thread Weaving	7	2
Diagnose (p.220)	Astral Sight	5	2
Hold Multiple Threads (p.223)	Hold Thread	8	2+ (see text)
Maintain Spell Threads (p.224)	Spellcasting	5	1+ (see text)
Name Spell (p.224)	Spellcasting	5	1+ (see text)
Photographic Memory (p.225)	Book Memory	9	3
Remember Conversation (p.226)	Book Memory	7	2
Signature Spells (p.226)	Spellcasting	5	1
Spell Stacking (p.227)	Spellcasting	7	2+ (see text)
Subliminal Mutterings (p.227)	Arcane Mutterings	7	2

QUESTOR POWERS

QUESTOR POWERS TABLE

Power Name	Step Number	Duration	Action	Passion
Absorb Damage (p.472)	Rank+CHA	Rank rounds	Yes	Thystonius
Animate Plant (p.472)	Rank+WIL	Special (see text)	Yes	Jaspree
Break Shackles (p.472)	Rank+WIL	1 round	Yes	Lochost
Cause Pain (p.473)	Rank+CHA	Rank rounds	Yes	Raggok
Change Thoughts (p.473)	Rank+CHA	Rank hours	Yes	Lochost
Command Animal (p.473)	Rank+CHA	Special (see text)	Yes	Jaspree
Comfort (p.473)	Rank+CHA	Rank minutes	Yes	Garlen
Confusion (p.473)	Rank+WIL	Rank rounds	Yes	Dis
Create Structure (p.473)	Rank+WIL	Rank hours	Yes	Upandal
Create Weapon (p.474)	Rank+WIL	Rank hours	Yes	Upandal
Deceit (p.474)	Rank+CHA	Rank hours	Yes	Vestrial
Discover Desire (p.474)	Rank+WIL	Rank minutes	Yes	Vestrial
Ease Suffering (p.474)	Rank+CHA	Rank hours	Yes	Mynbruje
Enchanted Gift (p.474)	Rank+CHA	Rank days	Yes	Astendar
Encourage Trade (p.475)	Rank+CHA	Rank minutes	Yes	Chorrolis
Enslave (p.475)	Rank+WIL	Rank rounds	Yes	Dis
Fortify Structure (p.475)	Rank+WIL	Special (see text)	Yes	Upandal
Heal (p.475)	Rank+CHA	1 round	Yes	Garlen

QUESTOR POWERS TABLE

Power Name	Step Number	Duration	Action	Passion
Incite Greed (p.475)	Rank+CHA	Rank hours	Yes	Chorrolis
Increase Initiative (p.475)	Rank+CHA	Rank rounds	Yes	Thystonius
Increase Perception (p.476)	Rank+WIL	Rank rounds	Yes	Mynbruje
Increase Speed (p.476)	Rank+CHA	Rank rounds	Yes	Floranuus
Inspire Rage (p.476)	Rank+CHA	Rank rounds	Yes	Raggok
Increase Stamina (p.476)	Rank+CHA	Rank rounds	Yes	Floranuus
Increase Strength (p.476)	Rank+CHA	Rank rounds	Yes	Thystonius
Inspire Rebellion (p.476)	Rank+CHA	Rank rounds	Yes	Lochost
Instill Love (p.476)	Rank+CHA	Rank days	Yes	Astendar
Living Death (p.477)	Rank+WIL	Rank hours	Yes	Dis
Locate Valuables (p.477)	Rank+ PER	Rank minutes	Yes	Chorrolis
Manipulate Desire (p.477)	Rank+WIL	Rank hours	Yes	Vestrial
Perceive Emotion (p.477)	Rank+PER	Rank minutes	Yes	Mynbruje
Plant Growth (p.478)	Rank+WIL	Permanent	Yes	Jaspree
Raise Undead (p.478)	Rank+CHA	Rank hours	Yes	Raggok
Return Youthful Spirit (p.478)	Rank+CHA	Rank minutes	Yes	Astendar
Seal Home (p.478)	Rank+WIL	Rank hours	Yes	Garlen
Speed Ship (p.478)	Rank+WIL	Special (see text)	Yes	Floranuus

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SKILLS

MASTER SKILL TABLE

Skill Name	Step Number	Default Use	Action	Strain
Acrobatic Strike (p.234)	Rank + DEX	No	No	1
Acting (p.234)	Rank + CHA	No	Yes	0
Air Sailing (p.234)	Rank + WIL	No	Yes	0
Alchemy (p.234)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	0
Animal Bond (p.235)	Rank + CHA	No	Yes	0
Animal Handling (p.235)	Rank + WIL	Yes	Yes	0
Animal Training (p.235)	Rank + CHA	No	Yes	0
Anticipate Blow (p.235)	Rank + PER	No	No	1
Arcane Mutterings (p.235)	Rank + CHA	No	Yes	1
Artist (p.235)	Rank + CHA	No	Yes	0
Artisan (p.236)	Rank + CHA	No	Yes	0
Avoid Blow (p.236)	Rank + DEX	Yes	No	1
Bardic Voice (p.236)	Rank + CHA	No	Yes	1
Battle Shout (p.236)	Rank + CHA	No	No	1
Blade Juggle (p.236)	Rank + DEX	No	Yes	1 (see text)
Bribery (p.236)	Rank + CHA	Yes	Yes	0
Champion Challenge (p.237)	Rank + CHA	No	Yes	1
Charge (p.237)	Rank + STR	No	No	0
Climbing (p.237)	Rank + DEX	Yes	Yes	0
Cold Purify (p.237)	Rank + WIL	No	Yes	0
Conceal Weapon (p.237)	Rank + DEX	No	Yes	1
Conversation (p.237)	Rank + CHA	Yes	Yes	0
Craft Armor (p.237)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	0
Craftsman (p.238)	Rank + DEX	No	Yes	0
Craft Weapon (p.238)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	0
Creature Analysis (p.239)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	1
Critical Hit (p.239)	Rank	No	No	1
Dead Fall (p.239)	Rank + WIL	No	No	1
Detect Trap (p.239)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	1
Detect Weapon (p.239)	Rank + PER	Yes	Yes	1
Disarm (p.239)	Rank + DEX	No	Yes	1
Disarm Trap (p.239)	Rank + DEX	No	Yes	1
Disguise (p.239)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	0
Down Strike (p.239)	Rank + STR	No	No	1
Emotion Song (p.239)	Rank + CHA	No	Yes	0
Engaging Banter (p.240)	Rank + CHA	No	Yes	1
Entertainer (p.240)	Rank + CHA	No	Yes	0
Etiquette (p.240)	Rank + CHA	Yes	Yes	0
Evaluate (p.240)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	0
Evidence Analysis (p.240)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	1
False Shackles (p.240)	Rank + DEX	No	Yes	0
Fast Grab (p.240)	Rank + DEX	No	Yes	1
Fast Hand (p.240)	Rank + DEX	No	Yes	1
Fence (p.241)	Rank + CHA	No	Yes	0
First Impression (p.241)	Rank + CHA	No	Yes	0
Fishing (p.241)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	0
Flirting (p.241)	Rank + CHA	Yes	Yes	0
Forgery (p.241)	Rank + DEX	No	Yes	0
Graceful Exit (p.241)	Rank + CHA	No	Yes	0
Great Leap (p.241)	Rank + DEX	No	No	1
Haggle (p.241)	Rank + CHA	Yes	Yes	0
Heartening Laugh (p.241)	Rank + CHA	No	Yes	1
Hunting (p.242)	Rank + DEX	No	Yes	0
Hypnotize (p.242)	Rank + CHA	No	Yes	1
Impressive Shot (p.242)	Rank + DEX	No	Yes	1
Impressive Strike (p.242)	Rank + DEX	Yes	No	1

MASTER SKILL TABLE

Skill Name	Step Number	Default Use	Action	Strain
Knowledge (p.242)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	0
Lip Reading (p.242)	Rank + CHA	No	Yes	2
Lock Picking (p.242)	Rank + DEX	No	Yes	0
Maneuver (p.242)	Rank + DEX	No	Yes	0
Mapmaking (p.243)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	0
Melee Weapons (p.243)	Rank + DEX	Yes	Yes	0
Mimic Voice (p.243)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	0
Missile Weapons (p.243)	Rank + DEX	Yes	Yes	0
Momentum Attack (p.243)	Rank + DEX	No	No	1
Mount Attack (p.243)	Rank	No	No	1
Navigation (p.243)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	0
Physician (p.244)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	0
Picking Pockets (p.244)	Rank + DEX	No	Yes	0
Pilot Boat (p.244)	Rank + WIL	No	Yes	0
Pin (p.245)	Rank + DEX	No	Yes	0
Quickblade (p.245)	Rank + DEX	No	No	2
Read and Write Language (p.245)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	0
Read and Write Magic (p.245)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	0
Read River (p.245)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	0
Research (p.245)	Rank + PER	Yes	Yes	0
Resist Taunt (p.245)	Rank + WIL	Yes	No	1
Rhetoric (p.245)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	0
Riposte (p.246)	Rank + DEX	No	No	2
Rushing Attack (p.246)	Rank + DEX	No	Yes	0 (see text)
Sailing (p.246)	Rank + DEX	No	Yes	0
Second Attack (p.246)	Rank + DEX	No	No	2
Second Weapon (p.246)	Rank + DEX	No	No	1
Seduction (p.246)	Rank + CHA	Yes	Yes	0
Shackle Shrug (p.246)	Rank + DEX	No	Yes	1
Shield Charge (p.247)	Rank + STR	No	No	1
Silent Walk (p.247)	Rank + DEX	No	Yes	0
Slough Blame (p.247)	Rank + CHA	Yes	Yes	2
Speak Language (p.247)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	0
Spellcasting (p.247)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	0
Streetwise (p.2477)	Rank + PER	Yes	Yes	0
Sure Mount (p.247)	Rank + STR	No	No	0
Surprise Strike (p.247)	Rank + STR	No	No	1
Swift Kick (p.247)	Rank + DEX	No	No	1
Swimming (p.248)	Rank + STR	Yes (No)*	Yes	0+ (see text)
Tactics (p.248)	Rank + PER	No	Yes	0
Tame Mount (p.248)	Rank + CHA	No	Yes	1
Taunt (p.248)	Rank + CHA	No	Yes	1
Throwing Weapons (p.248)	Rank + DEX	Yes	Yes	0
Tracking (p.249)	Rank + PER	Yes	Yes	1
Trading (p.249)	Rank + CHA	No	Yes	0
Trample (p.249)	Rank	No	No	1
Trap Initiative (p.249)	Rank + DEX	No	No	1
Trick Riding (p.249)	Rank + DEX	No	No	1
Unarmed Combat (p.249)	Rank + DEX	Yes	Yes	0
Unmount (p.249)	Rank + STR	No	No	0
Weapon Breaker (p.250)	Rank + STR	No	No	1
Wheeling Attack (p.250)	Rank + DEX	No	Yes	1
Wheeling Defense (p.250)	Rank + DEX	No	No	1
Wilderness Survival (p.250)	Rank + PER	Yes	Yes	0
Wound Balance (p.250)	Rank + STR	No	No	0

* No, for obsidimen and windlings.

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ELEMENTALISM SPELLS

MASTER ELEMENTALISM SPELLS TABLE

Spell Name	Circle	Threads	Weaving/ Reattuning Difficulty	Range	Duration	Casting Difficulty	Effect
[Element] Spear (p. 304)	4	1	7 / 14	60 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 7
Air Armor (p. 295)	1	0	NA / 10	Touch	Rank + 5 minutes	TSD	+3 to Physical Armor; +3 bonus to Fatigue Tests against heat exposure
Air Blast (p. 304)	4	1	10 / 16	60 yards	1 round	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 9
Air Fortress (p. 319)	10	Varies (see text)	17 / 23	Touch	Rank × 10 hours	8	Willpower + 12
Air Mattress (p. 297)	2	1	7 / 17	Touch	10 hours	6	+2 bonus to Recovery Tests
Astral Sense Elementalism (p. 299)	3	2	5 / 15	60 yards	Rank + 10 minutes	6	Willpower + 6
Balloons of Mist (p. 307)	5	3	8 / 15	25 yards	Rank + 5 minutes	6	Willpower + 4
Beastform (p. 312)	7	2	16 / 23	Self	Rank + 5 minutes	TSD	Transforms caster into an animal
Behind Eye (p. 300)	3	2	6 / 16	Touch	Rank + 30 minutes	TSD	Allows Step 4 Perception Tests to rear
Billowing Cloak (p. 297)	2	1	6 / 14	Touch	Rank + 3 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 5
Blade Fury (p. 316)	8	2	13 / 20	Touch	Rank + 3 rounds	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 10
Blizzard Sphere (p. 304)	4	2	10 / 17	100 yards	Rank + 3 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 8
Boil Water (p. 297)	2	2	7 / 13	Touch	Rank + 3 minutes	6	Boils water
Burning Water (p. 317)	9	5	15 / 25	20 yards	Rank minutes	6	Creates flammable water
Call Forth the Maelstrom (p. 321)	15	6 (ritual, see text)	25 / 33	Touch	Rank hours	10	Creates a natural disaster
Calm Water (p. 312)	7	4	8 / 19	500 yards	Rank + 1 hours	6+ (see text)	Willpower + 9
Cloud Banish (p. 317)	9	3	15 / 20	1 mile	Rank + 1 hours	8+ (see text)	Willpower + 8
Cloud Summon (p. 313)	7	3	12 / 20	1 mile	Rank + 1 hours	8+ (see text)	Willpower + 7
Cold Embers (p. 318)	9	4	18 / 25	100 yards	1 round	6	Extinguishes open flames
Council of the Forest (p. 321)	14	9 (ritual, see text)	18 / 32	1 mile	1 day	10	Summons tree and plant spirits
Crop Blight (p. 321)	12	8 (ritual, see text)	21 / 26	Touch	A year and a day	6	Destroys plant life
Crunch Climb (p. 295)	1	1	6 / 14	Touch	Rank + 5 minutes	TSD	+3 bonus to Climbing Tests
Crushing Hand of Earth (p. 316)	8	2	14 / 21	60 yards	Rank + 3 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 6
Death Rain (p. 313)	7	1	15 / 18	75 yards	Rank + 12 rounds	TSD (see text)	Step 5 acid damage (Willpower + 5, see text)
Detect Elementalism Magic (p. 297)	2	2	5 / 15	60 yards	Rank + 10 minutes	6	Willpower + 6
Dispel Elementalism Magic (p. 300)	3	1	6 / 13	60 yards	1 round	6	Willpower
Dragon's Breath (p. 318)	9	3	15 / 20	50 yards	1 round (see text)	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 12
Drastic Temperature (p. 310)	6	2	11 / 19	100 yards	Rank + 3 minutes	6	Willpower + 3
Earth and Air (p. 319)	10	3	16 / 20	120 yards	Rank + 1 hours	TSD	Willpower + 10
Earth Blend (p. 295)	1	0	NA / 7	Touch	Rank + 5 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 7
Earth Darts (p. 296)	1	1	5 / 12	30 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 6
Earth Q'wril (p. 313)	7	4	16 / 18	Self	Rank + 10 minutes	TSD	Move through earth
Earth Staff (p. 308)	5	1	11 / 18	Touch	Rank + 5 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 10
Earth Surfing (p. 313)	7	4	10 / 22	Touch	1 hour	6 (10, see text)	Creates earth wave
Earth Wall (p. 316)	8	3	12 / 20	50 yards	Rank + 1 hours	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 12
Ease Passage (p. 310)	6	1	11 / 17	Touch	Rank + 6 hours	TSD	Willpower + 10
Elemental Merchant (p. 319)	10	3	15 / 19	50 yards	Rank + 1 days	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 5
Engulf [Element] (p. 313)	7	2	13 / 20	10 yards	Rank rounds	TSD	Willpower
Falcon's Cloak (p. 304)	4	2	10 / 20	Self	Rank hours	TSD	Turns the caster into a falcon
Fingers of Wind (p. 300)	3	1	7 / 15	20 yards	Rank + 5 minutes	6	Willpower
Fire and Water (p. 320)	10	3	17 / 20	120 yards	Rank + 1 hours	TSD	Willpower + 9
Fire Hounds (p. 314)	7	2+ (see text)	13 / 20	10 yards	Rank + 5 minutes	TSD (see text)	Summons two or more fire hounds
Fire Wall (p. 318)	9	4	14 / 20	50 yards	Rank + 1 hours	15	Willpower + 10
Fire Whip (p. 304)	4	1	10 / 20	Touch	Rank + 5 rounds	6	Willpower + 6
Fireball (p. 308)	5	1	12 / 20	100 yards	1 round	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 8
Fireweave (p. 310)	6	2	12 / 19	Touch	Rank minutes	TSD	Willpower
Flame Darts (p. 315)	7	2	13 / 23	40 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 7
Flame Strike (p. 298)	2	0	NA / 11	30 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 6
Flameshaw (p. 310)	6	4	10 / 17	100 yards	Rank + 1 hours	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 7
Flameweapon (p. 296)	1	2	5 / 14	10 yards	Rank + 10 rounds	TSD (see text)	Weapon adds a Step 3/D4 Flame die to Damage Tests
Frozen Harbor (p. 320)	10	5 (ritual, see text)	16 / 29	1 mile	1 round (see text)	9	Freezes an expanse of water
Fuel Flame (p. 300)	3	0	NA / 14	10 yards	Rank rounds	6	Willpower + 3
Gills (p. 298)	2	2	4 / 13	Touch	Rank + 10 minutes	TSD	Allows target to breathe underwater
Grasping Hand of Earth (p. 315)	7	1	13 / 20	60 yards	Rank + 3 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 6
Great Sticky Vines (p. 304)	4	2	11 / 20	25 yards	Rank minutes	6 (TSD, see text)	Willpower + 4
Grounding (p. 300)	3	2	4 / 12	Touch	Rank minutes	TSD	+6 to Physical and Mystic Armor against electrical attacks and +6 bonus to Knockdown Tests
Heat Food (p. 296)	1	1	5 / 7	Touch	Rank + 10 minutes	6	Heats up and rejuvenates food
Hunter's Sense (p. 298)	2	0	NA / 14	25 yards	Rank + 3 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 5
Ice Mace and Chain (p. 300)	3	0	NA / 15	40 yards	2 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 5
Ice Spear (p. 298)	2	1	7 / 14	120 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 3
Icy Surface (p. 298)	2	0	NA / 8	Touch	Rank + 3 minutes	6	Willpower
Inflame Self (p. 308)	5	3	8 / 15	Self	Rank + 1 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 8
Ironwood (p. 308)	5	3	11 / 18	Touch	Rank hours	6	Transforms wood
Lighten Load (p. 305)	4	1	9 / 16	10 yards	Rank + 7 hours	TSD	Willpower + 3

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ELEMENTALISM SPELLS

MASTER ELEMENTALISM SPELLS TABLE

Spell Name	Circle	Threads	Weaving/ Reattuning Difficulty	Range	Duration	Casting Difficulty	Effect
Lightning Bolt (p.301)	3	1	10 / 15	25 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 5
Lightning Shield (p.305)	4	0	NA / 16	Touch	Rank + 7 rounds	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 3
Lightning Step (p.305)	4	3	10 / 17	Self	Rank + 3 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 2
Liquid Arrow (p.305)	4	1	10 / 17	80 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 9
Living Wall (p.311)	6	2	12 / 22	20 yards	Rank + 3 minutes	6	Willpower + 3
Lodestone's Touch (p.306)	4	2	13 / 17	10 yards	Rank + 5 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 3
Metal Scream (p.308)	5	1	11 / 17	100 yards	Rank + 1 rounds	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 5
Metal Wings (p.309)	5	2	8 / 18	Touch	Rank + 20 minutes	TSD	Flight; +5 bonus to lifting Strength
Moon Shadow (p.318)	9	5	16 / 22	100 yards	1 month	TSD	Willpower + 10
Moonglow (p.296)	1	0	NA / 10	10 yards	Rank + 5 minutes	6	Creates softly glowing light
Nutritious Earth (p.309)	5	4	8 / 15	Touch	A year and a day	TSD	Makes land fertile
Path Home (p.298)	2	2	7 / 14	60 yards	Rank + 20 minutes	10	Summons spirit wings to guide the caster home
Perimeter Alarm (p.316)	8	3	10 / 20	Rank yards	Rank + 4 hours	6	Willpower + 12
Petrify (p.320)	10	4	19 / 26	20 yards	Rank days	TSD	Willpower + 5
Plant Feast (p.301)	3	3	6 / 16	25 yards	Rank + 1 hours	6	Willpower + 8
Plant Talk (p.296)	1	0	NA / 7	Touch	Rank + 10 minutes	6	Allows conversation with plant spirits
Porter (p.301)	3	2 (see text)	9 / 15	15 yards	Rank days	TSD (see text)	Willpower
Puddle Deep (p.301)	3	1	7 / 15	15 yards	Rank + 3 minutes	6	Willpower
Purify Earth (p.296)	1	1	5 / 13	10 yards	1 round	6+ (see text)	Purifies earth and soil
Purify Forest (p.321)	15	12 (ritual, see text)	28 / 33	10 miles	Permanent	TSD (see text)	Cleanses astral space over forested areas
Purify Water (p.296)	1	1	5 / 13	Touch	1 round	6+ (see text)	Willpower + 8
Repair (p.302)	3	1	9 / 16	Touch	Rank + 3 months	6	Willpower + 5
Resist Cold (p.297)	1	0	NA / 7	Touch	Rank + 6 minutes	TSD	+3 to Physical and Mystic Armor against cold damage
Resist Fire (p.297)	1	0	NA / 7	Touch	Rank + 6 minutes	TSD	+3 to Physical and Mystic Armor against fire damage
Resist Poison (p.309)	5	2	11 / 21	Touch	Rank hours	TSD	+8 bonus to Toughness Tests made to resist poison
Ricochet Attack (p.311)	6	1+ (see text)	12 / 19	75 yards	1 round	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 12
Root Trap (p.306)	4	0	NA / 20	10 yards	Rank + 5 rounds	6, TSD (see text)	Willpower + 2
Rust (p.302)	3	1	7 / 15	30 yards	1 round	TSD (see text)	Reduces a weapon's Damage step or an armor or shield's Physical Armor
Shattering Stone (p.309)	5	1	11 / 21	25 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 6
Shield of Warping (p.306)	4	1	10 / 17	Touch	Rank + 5 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 6
Shield Willow (p.298)	2	2	6 / 14	Touch	Rank minutes	6	+6 to shield's Shatter Threshold and +1 to its Physical and Mystic Armor
Silence Metal (p.316)	8	3	13 / 20	Touch	Rank + 1 hours	TSD	Willpower + 7
Silver Shadow (p.317)	8	3	12 / 19	100 yards	Rank + 1 hours	TSD	Willpower + 3
Sky Lattice (p.302)	3	3	8 / 17	120 yards	Rank + 10 minutes	6	Willpower + 3
Slow Metal Weapon (p.299)	2	1	9 / 13	60 yards	Rank + 8 rounds	TSD	–3 penalty to weapon's Damage Tests
Small Slayer (p.299)	2	1	6 / 14	10 yards	Rank + 3 minutes	TSD (see text)	Summons a poisonous creature
Smoke Cloud (p.302)	3	1	10 / 15	10 yards	Rank + 8 rounds	6	Causes a Complete darkness penalty
Snuff (p.302)	3	2	7 / 15	Touch	1 round	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 5
Spirits of Death's Sea (p.306)	4	3	10 / 17	Touch	Rank hours	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 6
Sterilize Object (p.299)	2	1	5 / 14	10 yards	1 round	6	Willpower + 7
Stick Together (p.299)	2	1	5 / 13	25 yards	Rank + 3 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 7
Stone Cage (p.310)	5	1	11 / 19	60 yards	Rank + 10 rounds	TSD	Traps character in a cage of stone
Stone Rain (p.312)	6	2	15 / 22	30 yards	Rank rounds	TSD	Willpower + 4
Storm Manacles (p.315)	7	2	12 / 18	60 yards	Rank + 12 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 5
Suffocating Paste (p.307)	4	2	9 / 18	25 yards	Rank + 6 rounds	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 3
Sunlight (p.303)	3	2	10 / 15	Self	Rank + 5 minutes	6	Creates daylight
Thrive (p.303)	3	1	7 / 15	Touch	1 round	8	Accelerates plant growth
Throne of Air (p.303)	3	2	8 / 17	Self	Rank + 10 minutes	6	Willpower + 7
Thunderclap (p.315)	7	3	13 / 17	Self	1 round	TSD	–8 penalty to Action Tests; causes deafness
Tossing Earth (p.312)	6	3	11 / 17	100 yards	Rank + 1 hours	6	Willpower + 1
Tree Merge (p.312)	6	3	16 / 23	Self	Rank + 6 hours	TSD	Merges caster's body with a tree to hide him
Uneven Ground (p.307)	4	1	11 / 18	25 yards	Rank + 4 rounds	TSD (see text)	Penalty to enemy character actions
Water Wall (p.318)	9	4	14 / 20	50 yards	Rank + 1 hours	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 10
Waterspout (p.317)	8	2	14 / 21	1 mile	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 15
Weapon Back (p.307)	4	0 (2, ritual, see text)	5 / 16	250 yards	Rank + 3 rounds (see text)	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 6
Weather Change (p.320)	10	5	13 / 20	10 miles	Rank + 10 hours	6	Willpower + 8
Whirlwind (p.315)	7	2	12 / 18	60 yards	Rank + 6 rounds	6, TSD (see text)	Willpower + 9
Winds of Deflection (p.303)	3	1	8 / 15	Self	Rank + 5 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 6
Wood Blade (p.320)	11	4	22 / 28	Touch	Rank + 8 hours	6	Willpower + 16

TSD = Target's Spell Defense

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ILLUSIONISM SPELLS

MASTER ILLUSIONISM SPELLS TABLE

Spell Name	Illusion	Circle	Threads	Weaving/ Reattuning Difficulty	Range	Duration	Casting Difficulty	Effect
Afterlife (p.343)	Yes	10	5	16 / 21	25 yards	Rank minutes	TSD	Willpower + 14
Alarm (p.328)	No	3	1	8 / 17	50 yards	Rank + 6 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 4
And Then I Woke Up (p.328)	No	3	1	10 / 15	Self	2 rounds	TSD	+8 bonus to Perception and True Sight Tests
Assuring Touch (p.323)	No	1	0	NA / 7	Touch	Rank + 12 rounds	TSD	+3 to Spell and Social Defense; +3 bonus to Willpower Tests versus fear
Astral Materialization (p.343)	No	10	4	15 / 22	25 yards	1 hour	TSD	Willpower + 13
Astral Nightmare (p.339)	Yes	8	4	12 / 21	25 yards	Rank + 3 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 10
Astral Sense Illusionism (p.328)	No	3	2	5 / 15	60 yards	Rank + 10 minutes	6	Willpower + 6
Astral Shadow (p.336)	No	6	2	12 / 17	Touch	Rank + 3 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 4
Aura (p.330)	No	4	1	10 / 16	10 yards	Rank + 3 rounds	TSD	Makes target's aura visible
Awaken (p.333)	No	5	2	11 / 18	Touch	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 6
Bellow of the Thundras (p.323)	No	1	0	NA / 15	60 yards	Rank + 5 minutes	TSD	Allows target's voice to be heard up to spell's range
Best Face (p.323)	Yes	1	2	5 / 14	Touch	Rank + 8 minutes	TSD	+5 bonus to target's Charisma-based Tests
Blazing Fists of Rage (p.323)	Yes	1	0	NA / 16	Touch	Rank + 4 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 5
Bleeding Edge (p.330)	No	4	1	10 / 20	Touch	Rank rounds	TSD (see text)	+5 bonus to target melee weapon's Damage Tests, but only against the previous wielder
Blinding Glare (p.328)	No	3	1	10 / 20	30 yards	Varies (see text)	TSD	Willpower + 6
Blindness (p.325)	Yes	2	1	8 / 14	25 yards	Rank + 5 minutes	TSD	Blinds the target
Bond of Silence (p.333)	No	5	3	11 / 18	20 yards	Rank minutes	TSD	Willpower + 4
Bouncing Blaster (p.336)	No	6	4	9 / 20	Touch	Rank + 3 days	6 (see text)	Willpower + 8
Catseyes (p.323)	No	1	1	5 / 10	Touch	Rank + 3 minutes	TSD	Grants Low-Light Vision to the target
Chosen Path (p.336)	No	6	3	10 / 18	60 yards	Rank + 3 hours	6	Willpower + 8
Circle of Well Being (p.331)	No	4	3	8 / 17	Touch	Rank × 10 minutes	6	Willpower
Clarion Call (p.331)	Yes	4	1	8 / 17	100 yards	Rank + 12 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 4
Clothing Gone (p.333)	Yes	5	3	11 / 21	60 yards	5 rounds	TSD	Causes the target to become Harried
Conceal Tracks (p.331)	Yes	4	2	10 / 20	Touch	Rank hours	TSD	Willpower + 5
Crafty Thought (p.325)	Yes	2	1	6 / 14	2 yards	Rank minutes	TSD	Willpower + 5
Dampen Karma (p.329)	No	3	1	8 / 17	60 yards	Rank + 6 rounds	TSD	–4 step penalty to target's Karma step
Dancing Disks (p.336)	No	6	3	7 / 19	75 yards	Rank + 7 rounds	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 6
Detect Illusionism Magic (p.329)	No	3	2	5 / 15	60 yards	Rank + 10 minutes	6	Willpower + 6
Disaster (p.326)	Yes	2	1	9 / 17	10 yards	Rank + 5 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 6
Disguise Metal (p.324)	Yes	1	1	7 / 14	Touch	Rank + 7 minutes	TSD	Willpower
Dispel Illusionism Magic (p.329)	No	3	1	6 / 13	60 yards	1 round	6	Willpower
Displace Image (p.324)	Yes	1	1	7 / 15	Touch	Rank + 7 rounds	TSD	Projects image of the target 3 yards away
Do Unto Others (p.341)	Yes	9	3	14 / 20	15 yards (see text)	Rank rounds	Varies (see text)	Creates illusory spell effects
Dream Sight (p.337)	No	7	3 (ritual, see text)	13 / 23	1 mile	Rank + 8 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 8
Dreamsend (p.340)	Yes	8	3 (ritual, see text)	11 / 24	1 mile	Rank + 5 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 6
Drunken Stagger (p.338)	No	7	4	13 / 20	Touch	Rank + 5 days	TSD	Penalizes the target's Action Tests
Eclipse (p.343)	Yes	10	6	15 / 21	20 miles	Rank days	6	Willpower + 8
Encrypt (p.326)	Yes	2	0	NA / 11	20 yards	Rank hours	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 4
Enter and Exit (p.333)	No	5	3	11 / 21	60 yards	Rank + 5 minutes	6	Shows quickest entrance and exit
Ephemeral Bolt (p.326)	Yes	2	0	NA / 9	60 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 7
Eternal Day (p.343)	Yes	10	5	18 / 21	20 miles	Rank days	6	Willpower + 8
Eye of Truth (p.333)	No	5	1	11 / 18	Self	Rank + 5 minutes	TSD	+10 bonus to Disbelief Tests
Eyes Have It (p.331)	No	4	3	7 / 17	60 yards	Rank + 1 minutes	6; TSD (see text)	Willpower + 4
False Enchantment (p.338)	Yes	7	5	8 / 20	Touch	Rank + 7 days	6 (see text)	Gives an item fake magical abilities, +5 to the illusion's Disbelief Difficulty
False Floor (p.329)	Yes	3	2	7 / 17	Touch	Rank + 1 hours	6	Willpower + 6
Flesh Eater (p.333)	Yes	5	1	14 / 21	Touch	Rank + 5 rounds	TSD	Causes target to be Harried
Flying Carpet (p.334)	No	5	3	10 / 18	Touch	Rank + 1 hours	7	Willpower + 5
Foreseeing (p.336)	No	6	2 (ritual, see text)	12 / 22	Self	1 round	9	Willpower + 3
Form Exchange (p.340)	Yes	8	4	11 / 21	25 yards	Rank + 7 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 10
Fun With Doors (p.324)	Yes	1	2	5 / 10	20 yards	Rank + 1 minutes	TSD (see text)	Creates / alters door illusions
Great Weapon (p.331)	Yes	4	1	13 / 20	Touch	Rank + 2 rounds	TSD (see text)	Causes the target to be Harried
Grim Reaper (p.342)	Yes	9	5	13 / 21	Touch	Rank × 10 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 13
Haunted House (p.344)	Yes	10	5	15 / 20	75 yards	Rank days	6	Willpower + 11
Hunger (p.331)	Yes	4	3	10 / 17	Touch	Rank days	TSD	Increases or diminishes hunger
Illusion (p.334)	Yes	5	2	11 / 21	30 yards	Rank + 5 minutes	6	Creates illusions

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ILLUSIONISM SPELLS

MASTER ILLUSIONISM SPELLS TABLE

Spell Name	Illusion	Circle	Threads	Weaving/ Reattuning Difficulty	Range	Duration	Casting Difficulty	Effect
Illusory Missiles (p.337)	Yes	6	2	12 / 15	120 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 11
Illusory Spell (p.340)	Yes	8	2+ (see text)	14+ / 24 (see text)	120 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 12 (or less, see text)
Impossible Knot (p.326)	Yes	2	2	6 / 14	Touch	Rank + 1 days	6	Willpower + 4
Impossible Lock (p.329)	Yes	3	2	7 / 15	Touch	Rank + 1 hours	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 7
Improve Karma (p.334)	No	5	3	8 / 18	Touch	Rank + 6 rounds	TSD (see text)	+5 step bonus to target's Karma step
Improved Alarm (p.332)	No	4	3	8 / 19	120 yards	Rank + 1 hours	TSD	Willpower + 5
Innocent Activity (p.326)	Yes	2	1	6 / 14	Touch	Rank + 12 rounds	TSD	Covers up true activity
Leaping Lizards (p.341)	Yes	8	3	9 / 21	150 yards	Rank minutes	6	Willpower + 7
Light (p.324)	No	1	1	6 / 14	10 yards	Rank + 5 minutes	6 or TSD	Summons a sphere of light
Massive Missiles (p.341)	No	8	4	12 / 21	250 yards	Rank + 3 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 12
Memory Blank (p.332)	Yes	4	2	10 / 17	2 yards	Rank + 1 hours	TSD	Willpower + 4
Memory Scribe (p.337)	Yes	6	3	12 / 19	Touch	Rank + 1 hours	TSD	Willpower + 6
Mind Fog (p.329)	No	3	1	8 / 15	60 yards	Rank rounds	TSD	Willpower + 6
Monstrous Mantle (p.327)	Yes	2	2	8 / 13	Touch	Rank + 5 rounds	TSD	Increases target's combat prowess
Multi-Missile (p.332)	Yes	4	2	8 / 17	Touch	1 round	TSD (see text)	+4 missiles
Nightmare of Foreboding (p.332)	No	4	5	10 / 17	20 yards	Rank days	TSD	–6 to target's Wound Threshold
Noble Manner (p.335)	No	5	0	NA / 10	Touch	Rank + 3 minutes	TSD	+5 bonus to target's Interaction Tests
Nobody Here (p.329)	Yes	3	1	10 / 18	10 yards	Rank + 8 minutes	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 8
One of the Crowd (p.342)	Yes	9	5	14 / 21	15 yards	Rank + 1 hours	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 10
Other Place (p.341)	Yes	8	3	9 / 21	1 mile	Rank + 3 hours	TSD	Links two doorways
Pauper's Purse (p.324)	No	1	0	NA / 7	Touch	Rank + 1 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 4
Phantom Fireball (p.335)	Yes	5	1	11 / 21	100 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 8
Phantom Warrior (p.330)	Yes	3	1	7 / 15	10 yards	Rank + 3 rounds	TSD	Creates three images of the target
Pleasant Visions (p.335)	Yes	5	1	9 / 18	60 yards	Rank + 3 minutes	TSD (see text)	Creates visions that prevent target from acting
Rebel Limb (p.338)	Yes	7	1	16 / 18	60 yards	Rank + 10 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 4
Remove Shadow (p.327)	No	2	1	6 / 14	Touch	Rank + 5 minutes	TSD	Removes target's shadow and reflection
Restore Pattern (p.344)	No	13	3 (ritual, see text)	20 / 31	Touch	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 15
Reversal of Passion (p.338)	No	7	2	13 / 20	30 yards	Rank + 3 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 8
Revulsion (p.342)	Yes	9	4	15 / 21	Touch	Rank + 1 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 13
Rope Guide (p.325)	No	1	0	NA / 7	25 yards	Rank + 3 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 4
See the Unseen (p.330)	No	3	1	7 / 15	Touch	Rank + 5 minutes	TSD	+8 bonus to sight-based Perception Tests
Send Message (p.327)	Yes	2	1	6 / 14	Self (see text)	Rank rounds	TSD	Passes a paper message to a chosen target
Shadow Palace (p.344)	No	14	6 (ritual, see text)	21 / 32	Touch	Rank days	8	Willpower + 10
Shadow Spell (p.341)	No	8	2	14 / 21	60 yards	Rank + 1 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 12
Shift Walls (p.342)	No	9	5	15 / 21	15 yards	Rank + 3 hours	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 9
Silent Stampede (p.338)	Yes	7	6	11 / 20	Touch	Rank hours	TSD	Silences sound
Soothe the Savage Beast (p.330)	No	3	1	7 / 15	10 yards	Rank + 3 minutes	TSD	Hypnotizes a target animal into passivity
Spotlight (p.337)	No	6	2	11 / 20	100 yards	Rank + 7 rounds	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 8
Stampede (p.339)	Yes	7	4	12 / 17	120 yards	Rank + 1 rounds	TSD	Causes targets to become Harried
Stench (p.337)	Yes	6	3	12 / 22	40 yards	Rank + 3 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 6
Stop Right There (p.332)	No	4	0	NA / 9	60 yards	Rank rounds	TSD	Willpower + 3
Suffocation (p.330)	Yes	3	3	7 / 18	120 yards	Rank + 3 rounds	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 8
Switch (p.335)	Yes	5	5	11 / 18	10 yards	Rank minutes	TSD	Switches magician's appearance
Tailor (p.327)	No	2	2	6 / 7	Touch	10 × Rank minutes	TSD	Willpower + 4
Thundering Walls (p.342)	No	9	3	15 / 21	75 yards	Rank + 7 rounds	6	Willpower + 9
Time Flies (p.339)	Yes	7	4	10 / 23	60 yards	Rank hours	6	Willpower + 3
True Blazing Fists of Rage (p.325)	No	1	0	NA / 16	Touch	Rank + 4 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 2
True Ephemeral Bolt (p.328)	No	2	0	NA / 8	60 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 3
Twisted Tongues (p.339)	Yes	7	1	14 / 18	60 yards	Rank + 3 minutes	TSD (see text)	Jumbles targets' speech
Unmask (p.333)	No	4	1	10 / 20	20 yards	Rank + 3 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 6
Unseen Voices (p.325)	Yes	1	0	NA / 7	40 yards	Rank + 15 rounds	TSD	Creates unseen illusory voices
Vertigo (p.339)	No	7	3	12 / 16	75 yards	Rank + 7 rounds	TSD	–6 penalty to target's Action tests
Walk Through (p.339)	No	7	1	13 / 17	Touch	Rank + 6 rounds	TSD	Creates a temporary pathway through an obstacle
Wall of Unfire (p.335)	Yes	5	3	7 / 15	60 yards	Rank + 3 minutes	6 (see text)	Willpower + 8
Weather Cloak (p.328)	No	2	1	6 / 9	Touch	Rank × 10 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 3
You Got Me (p.328)	Yes	2	1	6 / 14	Self	Rank + 6 minutes	6	+6 bonus to Charisma-based Tests

TSD = Target's Spell Defense

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NETHERMANCY SPELLS

MASTER NETHERMANCY SPELLS TABLE

Spell Name	Circle	Threads	Weaving/ Reattuning Difficulty	Range	Duration	Casting Difficulty	Effect
Alter Life (p.371)	11	Varies (ritual, see text)	21/26	Touch	Rank+7 years	TSD	Alters a life form's pattern
Animate Dead (p.368)	10	3	10/15	Touch	Rank+5 days	TSD (see text)	Creates cadaver men
Animate Skeleton (p.352)	4	2	7/18	100 yards	Rank+8 minutes	TSD (see text)	Animates skeletons
Animate Spirit Object (p.355)	5	3	10/19	25 yards	Rank × 10 minutes	TSD (see text)	Willpower+5
Arrow of Night (p.350)	3	1	7/15	Touch	1 round	6	+8 bonus to a missile's Damage Test
Astral Beacon (p.361)	7	3	13/23	40 yards	1 round	TSD	Creates a beacon in astral space
Astral Flare (p.353)	4	2	7/17	25 yards	Rank+5 rounds	6	Willpower+6
Astral Horror (p.355)	5	3	9/19	120 yards	Rank+1 minutes	TSD (see text)	Willpower+6
Astral Maw (p.361)	7	2	13/17	25 yards	Rank+3 rounds	TSD (see text)	Willpower+10
Astral Mount (p.356)	5	2 or 4 (see text)	11/17	Touch	Rank+1 hours	TSD (see text)	Conjures an astral mount
Astral Sense Nethermancy (p.350)	3	2	5/15	60 yards	Rank+10 minutes	6	Willpower+6
Astral Slice (p.369)	10	5	13/26	80 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower+15
Astral Spear (p.345)	1	1	6/12	120 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower+6
Astral Whisper (p.356)	5	2	11/18	60 yards	Rank+3 minutes	6	Willpower+8
Banquet of Dis (p.362)	7	3	10/17	Touch	Rank days	TSD	Eliminates hunger and fatigue
Blessed Light (p.359)	6	1	8/18	Touch	Rank+15 minutes	6	Willpower+4
Blind (p.356)	5	3	11/15	20 yards	Rank+5 rounds	TSD	Willpower+8
Blood Servitor (p.353)	4	2	7/17	Rank miles	Rank hours	TSD (see text)	Creates a flying servant
Bone Circle (p.347)	2	3 (ritual, see text)	6/17	Touch	Rank+3 months	TSD (see text)	Willpower+5
Bone Dance (p.345)	1	1	7/15	25 yards	Rank+3 rounds	TSD	Willpower+4
Bone Pudding (p.362)	7	3	12/20	10 yards	1 round (see text)	TSD	Inflicts 6 Wounds on target
Bone Puppet (p.359)	6	3	8/15	25 yards	Rank+6 rounds	TSD	Willpower+4
Bone Shatter (p.359)	6	2	12/20	60 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower+8
Bone Walker (p.359)	6	3 (ritual, see text)	12/18	Touch	Rank+2 days	TSD (see text)	Creates a bone walker
Call Forth the Army of Decay (p.373)	14	8 (ritual, see text)	21/29	5 mile radius	Rank days	10	Summons an army of cadaver men
Chilling Circle (p.345)	1	2	6/15	Touch	Rank+6 minutes	TSD	Causes Step 4/D6 cold damage to anyone in the circle
Circle of Astral Protection (p.357)	5	3	11/19	Touch	Rank+1 minutes	TSD	Willpower+8
Cold Storage (p.362)	7	8 (ritual, see text)	10/20	Touch	Rank months	8	Preserves organic matter
Command Nightflyer (p.346)	1	1	5/13	120 yards	Rank+3 minutes	TSD	Willpower+2
Constrict Heart (p.362)	7	0	NA/18	25 yards	Rank+3 rounds	TSD	Willpower+6
Control Being (p.364)	8	3	14/20	25 yards	Rank+10 minutes	TSD	Willpower+6
Create Life (p.366)	9	Varies (ritual, see text)	21/26	Touch	Rank+7 years	TSD	Creates a life form
Damage Shift (p.362)	7	2	13/20	Self	3 rounds	TSD (see text)	Shifts damage to another target
Damage Transfer (p.369)	10	3	14/19	100 yards	1 round	TSD (see text)	Willpower+10
Dark Messenger (p.350)	3	1	7/15	Touch	Rank hours	TSD	Sends a nightflyer to deliver a message
Dark Spy (p.353)	4	1	10/20	10 yards	Rank minutes	TSD (see text)	Allows seeing through nightflyer's eyes
Dark Sword (p.366)	9	6	15/19	Touch	Rank days	TSD	Willpower+8
Death Trance (p.350)	3	2	7/12	Touch	Rank+3 hours	TSD	Places the target into hibernation
Death's Head (p.350)	3	0	NA/9	Self (see text)	Rank+5 rounds	TSD (see text)	Willpower+5
Detect Nethermancy Magic (p.348)	2	2	5/15	60 yards	Rank+10 minutes	6	Willpower+6
Detect Undead (p.346)	1	0	NA/7	Touch	Rank+3 minutes	TSD	Willpower+5
Dispel Nethermancy Magic (p.351)	3	1	6/13	60 yards	1 round	6	Willpower
Disrupt Magic (p.367)	9	2	12/19	60 yards	1 round	TSD (see text)	Willpower
Dry and Wet (p.346)	1	1	7/8	15 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower+4
Dust to Dust (p.360)	6	Varies (see text)	12/22	60 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower+11
Erase Horror Mark (p.373)	13	6 (ritual, see text)	17/22	Touch	1 round	TSD (see text)	Removes Horror mark
Eternal Youth (p.373)	13	6 (ritual, see text)	17/31	Self	Rank years	12	Temporarily stops the magician aging
Ethereal Darkness (p.348)	2	1	8/16	Touch	Rank+6 rounds	TSD (see text)	Creates magical darkness
Evil Eye (p.353)	4	2	7/17	25 yards	Rank+10 rounds	TSD	Causes a –5 Action Tests penalty
Experience Death (p.346)	1	1	6/12	20 yards	Rank+3 rounds	TSD	Willpower+5
Fatal Food (p.353)	4	3	9/17	10 yards	Rank+10 minutes	TSD	Willpower+6
Fog Ghost (p.348)	2	2	6/15	25 yards	Rank+3 rounds	TSD (see text)	Summons fog ghost
Fog of Fear (p.351)	3	2	8/18	60 yards	Rank+6 rounds	6	Willpower+5
Forge Falsemen (p.372)	12	7 (ritual, see text)	20/29	Touch	Rank years	TSD (see text)	Creates falsemen
Foul Vapors (p.360)	6	1	11/19	25 yards	Rank+6 rounds	TSD	Willpower+5
Fragile Pattern (p.369)	10	7	14/23	100 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower+12
Friend or Foe (p.354)	4	2	10/20	10 yards	Rank+5 rounds	TSD	Willpower+6
Friendly Darkness (p.360)	6	3	9/20	Touch	Rank rounds	TSD (see text)	Creates magical darkness; +5 bonus to Action Tests for friendly characters
Gadfly (p.348)	2	1	6/14	30 yards	Rank+4 rounds	TSD (see text)	Causes the target to be Harried
Gateway (p.370)	10	5	12/19	5,000 miles	Rank rounds	TSD (see text)	Willpower+10
Globe of Silence (p.364)	8	3	14/20	40 yards	Rank+2 minutes	6	Willpower+8
Grave Message (p.351)	3	4	7/19	100 miles	Rank days	6+ (see text)	Sends a message to a Nethermancer
Horror Call (p.364)	8	6	13/22	Touch	Rank hours	TSD	Willpower+16

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NETHERMANCY SPELLS

MASTER NETHERMANCY SPELLS TABLE

Spell Name	Circle	Threads	Weaving / Reattuning Difficulty	Range	Duration	Casting Difficulty	Effect
Incessant Talking (p.357)	5	3	14 / 18	40 yards	Rank + 1 minutes	TSD	Forces target to babble nonsense
Insect Repellent (p.346)	1	1	6 / 7	Touch	Rank + 3 minutes	6	Willpower + 5
Last Chance (p.354)	4	1	7 / 17	Touch	1 round	TSD	Grants a bonus +8 Recovery Test
Life Circle of One (p.349)	2	2	6 / 15	Touch	Rank + 3 minutes	6, TSD (see text)	Willpower + 5
Marathon Run (p.363)	7	3	13 / 20	80 yards	Rank + 1 minutes	TSD	Forces target to flee
Mount Call (p.346)	1	1	5 / 13	50 yards	Rank + 5 rounds	TSD (see text)	Spooks target mount
Mystic Vessel (p.367)	9	3	15 / 23	Touch	Rank + 1 hours	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 10
Netherblade (p.365)	8	2	14 / 17	Touch	Rank + 6 rounds	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 8
Nightflyer's Cloak (p.354)	4	2	7 / 17	Self	Rank + 10 minutes	TSD	Transforms caster into a nightflyer
Pack Bags (p.351)	3	1	7 / 11	5 yards	1 round	6	Willpower –1
Pain (p.351)	3	0	NA / 11	10 yards	Rank + 3 rounds	TSD	Willpower
Pass Ward (p.357)	5	5 (6, 7; see text)	13 / 21	Touch	Rank weeks (see text)	6, TSD (see text)	Willpower + 12
Pervert Emotion (p.373)	12	10	23 / 29	Touch	Rank + 1 days	TSD	Twists target's thoughts and emotions
Pocket Guardian (p.349)	2	3	7 / 13	Self	Rank + 1 days	TSD (see text)	Summons a diminutive spirit guardian
Preserve (p.352)	3	2	7 / 12	Touch	Rank days	6	Prevents target from decaying
Putrefy (p.347)	1	0	NA / 9	25 yards	1 round	TSD (see text)	Putrefies food
Recovery (p.361)	6	3	9 / 20	Touch	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 15
Repel Animal (p.349)	2	2	6 / 13	5 yards	Rank + 1 hours	6	Willpower + 6
Restrain Entity (p.363)	7	2	14 / 20	25 yards	Rank + 3 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 12
Restrain Horror (p.365)	8	1	13 / 19	25 yards	Rank rounds	TSD	Willpower + 16
Reverse Withering (p.363)	7	3	11 / 18	Touch	Rank + 3 rounds	TSD	Restores withered limb
Sculpt Darkness (p.357)	5	2	11 / 18	10 yards	Rank + 4 minutes	6	+4 bonus to stealth-based Action Tests
Sense Horror (p.357)	5	2	11 / 18	30 yards	Rank + 5 minutes	6	Willpower + 8
Shadow Hunter (p.357)	5	3	11 / 18	10 yards	Rank + 1 hours	TSD (see text)	Summons a hunter spirit
Shadow Meld (p.352)	3	2	7 / 15	Touch	Rank minutes	TSD	Willpower + 6
Shadow Tether (p.365)	8	2	16 / 19	50 yards	Rank + 10 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 7
Shadow's Whisper (p.349)	2	1	6 / 11	100 yards	Rank + 3 minutes	6	Willpower + 6
Shatter Pattern (p.371)	11	7 (see text)	TSD / 23	Touch	Varies (see text)	TSD	Willpower + 15
Shield Mist (p.350)	2	1	6 / 13	Self	Rank + 3 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 6
Shift Skin (p.367)	9	2	17 / 18	Touch	Rank rounds	TSD	Willpower + 4
Silent Darkness (p.367)	9	3	15 / 22	Self	Rank + 5 rounds	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 8
Soul Armor (p.361)	6	1	7 / 17	Touch	Rank + 15 minutes	TSD	+5 bonus to target's Mystic Armor
Soul Trap (p.370)	10	6	13 / 23	Touch	Rank hours	TSD	Traps the soul of the deceased
Spirit Bolt (p.363)	7	1	13 / 23	60 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 12
Spirit Dart (p.347)	1	0	NA / 7	25 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 2
Spirit Double (p.352)	3	1	11 / 19	Self	Rank + 10 rounds	10	Creates spirit double of the magician
Spirit Grip (p.347)	1	0	NA / 7	Touch	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 6
Spirit Portal (p.363)	7	4	14 / 19	Touch	Rank × 10 minutes	6	Willpower + 10
Spirit Servant (p.354)	4	3	8 / 20	Touch	Rank + 3 days	TSD	Summons a spirit servant
Spirit Tempest (p.370)	10	4	16 / 23	25 yards	Rank rounds	TSD	Willpower + 5
Spiritual Guidance (p.358)	5	3	8 / 18	Self	30 rounds	TSD (see text)	Summons a spirit guide to answer a question
Star Shower (p.358)	5	1	11 / 17	10 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 9
Steal Strength (p.363)	7	3	13 / 23	Touch	Rank + 5 minutes	6, TSD (see text)	Willpower + 4
Step Through Shadow (p.364)	7	3	12 / 24	Self	Rank + 3 rounds	TSD	Creates an astral passageway
Strong Pattern (p.371)	10	6	18 / 23	Touch	Rank + 7 years	TSD	Willpower + 12
Summon Bone Ghost (p.352)	3	1	7 / 15	10 yards	Rank + 1 minutes	9 (see text)	Summons a bone spirit
Talent Shredder (p.368)	9	1	17 / 19	100 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower
Tap Horror Karma (p.371)	10	2	18 / 20	50 yards	2 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 10
Target Portal (p.358)	5	4	10 / 19	1,000 yards	Rank minutes	TSD	Willpower + 7
Tears of the Scourge (p.358)	5	2	11 / 21	10 yards	Rank rounds	TSD	Willpower + 4
Translator Spirit (p.365)	8	4	11 / 19	10 yards	Rank × 10 minutes	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 5
Undead Struggle (p.347)	1	0	NA / 7	10 yards	Rank + 3 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 4
Unnatural Life (p.372)	11	7 (ritual, see text)	19 / 25	Touch (see text)	Rank years	TSD	Restores target to "unnatural" life
Viewpoint (p.354)	4	1	9 / 17	Touch	Rank + 6 minutes	6	Willpower + 9
Visions of Death (p.355)	4	1	9 / 17	100 yards	Rank + 6 rounds	TSD	Immobilizes target character
Visit Death (p.366)	8	4	11 / 24	Touch	Rank + 1 days	TSD	Willpower + 4
Void Wave (p.368)	9	4	15 / 22	100 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 13
Walking Dead (p.368)	9	4	13 / 19	Touch	Rank days	TSD (see text)	Willpower
Wall of Bones (p.366)	8	4	14 / 21	Touch	Rank + 3 minutes	TSD (see text)	Creates a wall of bones
Wall of Darkness (p.361)	6	2	12 / 19	10 yards	Rank + 3 rounds	6	Willpower + 6
Whisper Through the Night (p.359)	5	1	11 / 18	10 yards	Rank + 1 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 6
Wit Friend (p.364)	7	2	8 / 19	Touch	Rank + 10 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 5
Wither Away (p.366)	8	5	11 / 21	Touch	Rank months	TSD	Willpower
Wither Limb (p.359)	5	3	8 / 19	60 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 8

TSD = Target's Spell Defense

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WIZARDRY SPELLS

MASTER WIZARDRY SPELLS TABLE

Spell Name	Circle	Threads	Weaving/ Reattuning Difficulty	Range	Duration	Casting Difficulty	Effect
Absorbing Sphere (p. 389)	9	3	13 / 19	60 yards	Rank + 12 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 8
Alter Form (p. 394)	12	8 (ritual, see text)	16 / 26	Touch (see text)	1 round	TSD (see text)	Alters the nature and pattern of the target
And His Money (p. 376)	2	1	7 / 16	10 yards	Rank + 3 minutes	TSD	–4 to target's Social Defense against Interaction Tests involving finances
Astral Gift (p. 386)	7	3	13 / 23	30 yards	Rank hours	TSD	Gives the target Astral-Sensitive Sight
Astral Sense (p. 374)	1	2	5 / 15	60 yards	Rank + 10 minutes	6	Willpower + 6
Astral Shield (p. 376)	2	0	NA / 7	Touch	Rank + 7 rounds	TSD	+3 to Spell Defense
Aura Strike (p. 377)	3	1	7 / 12	40 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 8
Ball of String (p. 379)	4	3	10 / 15	Varies (see text)	Rank + 3 hours	6	Willpower + 6
Bedazzling Display of Logical Analysis (p. 374)	1	0	NA / 7	Self	Rank minutes	TSD (see text)	+6 bonus to Charisma-based Tests
Binding Threads (p. 380)	4	2	10 / 17	40 yards	Rank + 3 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 8
Block Magic (p. 393)	11	4	16 / 25	40 yards	Rank + 3 minutes	10	–10 penalty to magic-related Action Tests
Blood Boil (p. 386)	7	3	12 / 17	60 yards	4 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 9
Blood Lost (p. 384)	6	3	12 / 22	Touch	Rank + 1 days	TSD	Target loses ability to heal Wounds
Buoyancy (p. 380)	4	1	13 / 20	Self	Rank hours	TSD	+3 bonus to Swimming Tests
Call (p. 386)	7	2	10 / 17	100 miles	1 round	TSD	Delivers a message
Catch Spell (p. 388)	8	2	14 / 21	Self	Rank rounds	TSD	Willpower + 12
Catwalk (p. 377)	3	1	7 / 12	Touch	Rank + 8 rounds	TSD	+6 bonus to Action Tests involving climbing or balancing
Channel Raw Magic (p. 390)	9	2	12 / 25	25 yards	3 rounds	TSD	Channels astral energy through target
City in a Bottle (p. 394)	15	8 (ritual, see text)	18 / 33	25 miles	Rank + 1 days	12	Captures terrain and puts it in a bottle
Clean (p. 376)	2	2	5 / 13	Touch	1 minute	TSD	Willpower + 4
Cleanse Astral Space (p. 394)	13	5 (ritual, see text)	20 / 28	Touch	1 round	10	Willpower + 12
Combat Fury (p. 377)	3	1	9 / 16	Touch	Rank + 7 rounds	TSD	+4 bonus to Attack and Damage Tests
Compression Bubble (p. 388)	8	3	15 / 22	75 yards	Rank + 7 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 10
Confusing Weave (p. 387)	7	1	13 / 20	60 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 3
Counterspell (p. 382)	5	0	NA / 11	15 yards	Rank + 10 rounds	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 5
Crushing Will (p. 375)	1	1	8 / 16	120 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 5
Death Vow (p. 392)	10	3	13 / 22	Touch	Rank weeks	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 10
Delay Blow (p. 388)	8	2	14 / 20	Touch	Rank + 10 rounds	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 15
Dislodge Spell (p. 387)	7	1	9 / 22	60 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 10
Dispel Magic (p. 375)	1	1	6 / 13	60 yards	1 round	6	Willpower
Displace Self (p. 384)	6	2	9 / 16	Self	Rank + 5 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 7
Divine Aura (p. 375)	1	1	6 / 14	25 yards	Rank + 5 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 5
Dodge Boost (p. 376)	2	0	NA / 8	Touch	Rank + 5 rounds	TSD	+3 bonus to Avoid Blow Tests
Doom Missile (p. 385)	6	3	10 / 21	100 yards	Rank rounds	TSD	Willpower + 5
Draining Eye (p. 390)	9	4	14 / 15	60 yards (see text)	Rank minutes	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 10
Draw and Quarter (p. 392)	10	4	16 / 26	Touch	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 15
Dust Devil (p. 380)	4	2	9 / 13	80 yards	Rank + 5 rounds	TSD	Causes a Harried penalty to targets' Action Tests requiring sight, hearing, or smell
False Aura (p. 377)	3	2	7 / 12	Touch	Rank + 3 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 6
Flame Flash (p. 375)	1	1	7 / 15	25 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 4
Giant Size (p. 382)	5	2	11 / 18	Touch	Rank + 2 rounds	TSD	+5 bonus to Strength and Toughness Tests
Glowing Swarm (p. 390)	9	4	12 / 22	10 yards	Rank + 3 rounds	TSD (see text)	Creates a swarm of glowing insects
Hair Frenzy (p. 380)	4	0	NA / 20	25 yards	Rank + 5 rounds	TSD	The target is considered Harried
Healing Sleep (p. 378)	3	2	7 / 12	Touch	8 hours	TSD	Bonus Recovery Test; +4 bonus to Recovery Tests
Heat Metal Armor (p. 383)	5	2	11 / 18	10 yards	Rank + 7 rounds	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 5
Hold Pattern (p. 392)	10	6	14 / 23	Touch	Rank days	6	Willpower + 8
Icy Fingers (p. 380)	4	1	7 / 12	Self	Rank + 5 minutes	TSD	Reduces fire- and heat-based damage
Identify Magic (p. 380)	4	1	10 / 20	80 yards	1 round	TSD	Identifies the type of magic on a person, place, or object
Identify Spell (p. 378)	3	0 (see text)	NA / 12	60 yards	1 round	TSD	Identifies a previously cast spell
Ignite (p. 375)	1	0	NA / 11	5 yards	1 round (see text)	TSD	Ignites flammable objects
Inventory (p. 381)	4	4	9 / 18	25 yards	1 minute	TSD	Willpower + 8
Invigorate (p. 383)	5	2	9 / 17	Touch	Rank + 1 hours	TSD	+5 bonus to Recovery Tests
Iron Hand (p. 375)	1	1	5 / 13	Touch	Rank + 10 rounds	TSD	+3 bonus to melee weapon Damage Tests
Journey to Life (p. 392)	10	7 (see text)	14 / 15	Touch	Rank days	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 15
Juggler's Touch (p. 381)	4	2	10 / 17	30 yards	Rank rounds	6, TSD (see text)	Willpower + 6
Kaer Knocking (p. 381)	4	4	7 / 15	Touch	1 minute	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 5

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WIZARDRY SPELLS

MASTER WIZARDRY SPELLS TABLE

Spell Name	Circle	Threads	Weaving / Reattuning Difficulty	Range	Duration	Casting Difficulty	Effect
Kaer Pictographs (p.383)	5	4	9 / 17	Touch	10 minutes	TSD (see text)	Creates pictures or written messages
Karma Cancel (p.385)	6	2	11 / 18	100 yards	Rank + 8 rounds	TSD (see text)	Prevents the use of Karma
Karmic Connection (p.381)	4	1	10 / 17	Touch	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 10
Leaps and Bounds (p.378)	3	0	NA / 9	Touch	Rank + 5 rounds	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 7
Levitate (p.378)	3	1	8 / 18	100 yards	Rank + 10 minutes	TSD (see text)	Levitate up to 2,000 pounds
Lightning Cloud (p.387)	7	4	12 / 18	120 yards	Rank + 5 rounds	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 10
Liquid Eyes (p.387)	7	3	13 / 23	40 yards	Rank rounds	TSD	Blinds target
Loan Spell (p.385)	6	2	11 / 15	Touch	Rank + 4 rounds	TSD	Loans spell
Mage Armor (p.383)	5	1	12 / 16	Touch	Rank + 7 minutes	TSD	+4 to Physical Armor
Makeshift Missile (p.383)	5	1	9 / 15	Touch	Rank + 2 rounds	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 6
Makeshift Weapon (p.385)	6	1	10 / 15	Touch	Rank + 5 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 8
Mental Library (p.385)	6	3	12 / 19	Self	Rank hours	6	Increases number of books magician can memorize; +10 bonus to Book Memory Tests
Mind Dagger (p.375)	1	0	NA / 7	40 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 2
Move on Through (p.387)	7	0	NA / 17	120 yards	1 round (see text)	TSD	Willpower + 4
Multi-Mind Dagger (p.385)	6	Varies (see text)	9 / 22	30 yards	1 round	TSD (see text)	Willpower + 2
Mystic Net (p.387)	7	3	13 / 20	40 yards	Rank + 2 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 8
Mystic Shock (p.383)	5	2	11 / 21	10 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 10
Notice Not (p.378)	3	1	7 / 15	Touch	Rank + 1 minutes	TSD	+3 bonus to tests for stealthy actions
Observe Event (p.391)	9	5	14 / 15	5 yards	Variable (see text)	TSD	Willpower + 3
Onion Blood (p.393)	10	4	16 / 19	100 yards	Rank rounds	TSD	Willpower + 6
Ork Stoke (p.379)	3	1	7 / 15	75 yards	Instant	TSD	Sets off *gahad* in ork target
Peacebond (p.388)	8	3	11 / 21	Touch	Rank + 5 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 10
Quicken Pace (p.379)	3	2	10 / 13	Touch	Rank + 4 hours	TSD	Willpower + 4
Rampage (p.385)	6	2	12 / 19	25 yards	Instant	TSD	Sets off a group of orks' *gahads*
Razor Orb (p.386)	6	2	11 / 19	100 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 15
Reattach Limb (p.391)	9	6	15 / 15	Touch	1 round	TSD	Willpower
Relax (p.381)	4	3	9 / 13	Touch	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 2
Rope Ladder (p.376)	2	2	6 / 14	50 yards	Rank minutes	6	Create ladder from rope
Safe Opening (p.389)	8	2	12 / 19	5 yards	Rank + 5 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 8
Sanctuary (p.384)	5	3	11 / 18	Touch	Rank + 10 minutes	6	Willpower + 8
Seal (p.377)	2	1	6 / 11	20 yards	Rank + 8 minutes	6	Willpower + 6
Seeking Sight (p.379)	3	1	7 / 15	Touch	Rank + 1 minutes	TSD	+3 bonus to missile Attack Tests made against the target
Shatter Lock (p.379)	3	2 (3, see text)	6 / 13	5 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 8
Silent Converse (p.376)	1	1	5 / 13	100 yards	Rank + 5 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 4
Sleep (p.386)	6	2	9 / 17	60 yards	Rank + 10 rounds	TSD	Puts target characters to sleep
Slow (p.384)	5	2	7 / 15	Touch	Rank + 5 rounds	TSD	Halves movement, –5 penalty to Dexterity-based Tests
Solo Flight (p.384)	5	2	7 / 18	Self	Rank + 15 minutes	TSD	Grants the power of flight
Spell Cage (p.388)	7	3	11 / 19	100 yards	Rank + 8 rounds	TSD	–5 penalty to all Spellcasting Tests
Spell Fusion (p.393)	10	4	16 / 26	40 yards	3 rounds	6, TSD, 12 (see text)	Willpower + 3
Spell Snatcher (p.389)	8	2	14 / 24	60 yards	1 round (see text)	TSD	Willpower + 10
Spellstore (p.386)	6	2	12 / 19	Touch	Rank hours	6	Willpower + 6
Study Thread (p.384)	5	2	11 / 15	10 yards	Rank minutes	TSD	Willpower + 5
Tell Tale (p.391)	9	3	12 / 15	Touch	1 minute	TSD	Gains the answer to a question from the target object
Thorny Retreat (p.382)	4	1	11 / 13	30 yards	Rank + 7 rounds	6	Willpower + 2
Triangulate (p.376)	1	0	NA / 10	500 yards	1 round	TSD	Determines distance to target
Trust (p.382)	4	1	13 / 17	50 yards	Rank minutes	TSD	Willpower + 3
Vines (p.377)	2	1	6 / 15	50 yards	Rank + 3 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 4
Wake-Up Call (p.377)	2	4	6 / 15	Touch	Up to 24 hours	TSD	Sets an alarm to go off at a specified time
Wall Walker (p.376)	1	1	6 / 14	Touch	Rank + 10 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 5 (see text)
Warp Astral Space (p.393)	10	3	17 / 23	50 yards	Rank + 5 rounds	15	Warps astral space, –8 penalty to Spellcasting Tests through or in the warped area
Water Wings (p.379)	3	1	7 / 15	Touch	Rank hours	TSD	Waterproofs windling wings
Wipe Matrices (p.391)	9	1+ (see text)	12 / 22	60 yards	1 round	TSD	Willpower + 12
Wizard Mark (p.379)	3	2	6 / 15	Touch	Rank + 1 hours	TSD	Willpower + 6
Wizard's Cloak (p.382)	4	2	10 / 17	Touch	Rank + 5 minutes	TSD	Willpower + 8
Wound Mask (p.389)	8	3	13 / 15	Touch	Rank + 5 rounds	TSD	Willpower + 10

TSD = Target's Spell Defense

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CHARACTER CREATION SUMMARY

1. Choose a Discipline

A Discipline is more than a character's profession; it determines how he interacts with magic and how he can use magical energies to empower his talents. Certain races cannot follow some Disciplines—if you want to play a character of a particular race, you should choose a Discipline with that race in mind. The fifteen core Disciplines are: Air Sailor, Archer, Beastmaster, Cavalryman, Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, Scout, Sky Raider, Swordmaster, Thief, Troubadour, Warrior, Weaponsmith, and Wizard.

2. Choose a Race

The different races populating Barsaive are dwarfs, elves, humans, obsidimen, orks, trolls, t'skrang, and windlings.

3. Generate Attributes

Generate Values for the six Attributes (Dexterity, Strength, Toughness, Perception, Willpower, Charisma), using one of the two methods below:

Purchase Point Method: You have 66 Purchase Points with which to purchase your character's Attributes. The Purchase Point cost for each Attribute value appears in the Attribute Cost Table.

Random Roll Method: (Optional Rule) Roll 4D6 for each Attribute, discarding the lowest die roll result, and add the three remaining dice rolls to get a result from 3 to 18. After generating Attributes, apply the modifiers shown in the Racial Attribute Modifiers Table to the character's Attribute values. Regardless of modifiers, no Attribute value starts play lower than 1.

A few races have Attribute requirements (see **Record Racial Abilities**, below).

ATTRIBUTE COST TABLE

Attribute Value	Purchase Point Cost
2	+3
3	+2
4	+1
5	0
6	1
7	2
8	3
9	4
10	5
11	6
12	8
13	10
14	13
15	16
16	19
17	21
18	23

RACIAL ATTRIBUTE MODIFIERS TABLE

Race	DEX	STR	TOU	PER	WIL	CHA
Dwarf	+0	+2	+3	+0	+0	–2
Elf	+2	+0	–2	+1	+1	+1
Human	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0
Obsidiman	–2	+6	+4	–1	+0	–1
Ork	+0	+3	+1	+0	–2	–1
Troll	+0	+4	+2	–1	+1	+0
T'skrang	+1	+0	+1	+0	+0	+1
Windling	+1	–4	–3	+1	+0	+2

4. Determine Characteristics

Consult the Characteristics Table on the following page to find the value for each characteristic. Some races receive special movement adjustments to their Dexterity value for the purpose of determining the character's Movement rates, as shown in the Racial Movement and Karma Table (which also lists the information regarding Karma for each race). No modifier reduces a character's Dexterity value below 1.

RACIAL MOVEMENT AND KARMA TABLE

Race	Movement Modifier	Karma Step / Die	Starting Karma Points	Maximum Karma Points
Dwarf	Movement as Dexterity value – 2	4 / D6	6	25
Elf	Movement as Dexterity value + 1	4 / D6	6	25
Human	Movement as Dexterity value	5 / D8	10	40
Obsidiman	Movement as Dexterity value – 3	3 / D4	5	20
Ork	Movement as Dexterity value + 1	5 / D8	10	40
Troll	Movement as Dexterity value	3 / D4	5	20
T'skrang	Movement as Dexterity value	4 / D6	6	25
Windling	Ground Movement as Dexterity value – 8; Flying Movement as Dexterity value + 2	6 / D10	15	60

5. Record Racial Abilities

Your character has abilities specific to his race:

Dwarf: Heat Sight
Elf: Low-Light Vision
Human: Versatility
Obsidiman: Wound Threshold (+3), Min. STR Value (15), Natural Armor (Phys 3)
Ork: *Gahad*, Low-Light Vision
Troll: Heat Sight, Min. STR Value (11), Min. TOU Value (11)
T'skrang: Tail Attack
Windling: Astral-Sensitive Sight, Flight, Inc. PhysDef (+2), Max. STR Value (11)

6. Assign Talent Ranks and Spells

Assign a total of 8 points to the talents listed as available to the First Circle of the character's Discipline. Each point assigned to a talent improves the talent by +1 rank. You may assign 0, 1, 2, or 3 Rank Points to a talent, for a maximum starting Rank of 3.

Characters capable of casting spells may acquire spells using a number of Spell Points equal to their Perception step. You may only choose First and Second Circle spells available to your character's Discipline. First Circle spells cost 1 Spell Point to acquire; Second Circle spells cost 2 Spell Points to acquire.

7. Assign Skill Ranks

You have a total of 8 Rank Points to distribute among Knowledge, Artisan, Language, and General skills. Each point assigned to a skill gives your character one rank in that skill. You may assign 1, 2, or 3 Rank Points to a skill for a maximum starting Rank of 3. Starting characters spend at least 2 Rank Points on Knowledge skills, and an Artisan skill of their choice (assign it at least a Rank of 1). Most characters assign a Rank of 2 to the Speak Language skill; one rank for each language they know. Characters also assign Rank 1 to the Read and Write Language (Dwarf) skill. Distribute any remaining Rank Points among any skills, including General skills.

8. Equip the Character

All characters begin play with the items and equipment shown in the Starting Equipment Table. Each character also receives 120 silver pieces before start of play to purchase additional equipment from the lists in the **Goods and Services** chapter.

STARTING EQUIPMENT TABLE

Adventurer's Kit (backpack, bedroll, flint & steel, torch, waterskin, large sack)
Artisan Tools (relevant to character's Artisan skill; needs gamemaster approval)
Knife or dagger (or a similar Size 1 weapon)
Grimoire (magicians only)
Traveler's Garb (soft boots, shirt, belt, robe or breeches, traveler's cloak)
Trail Rations (1 week)

9. Flesh Out the Character

Choose one or two traits from the Personality Traits Table below, or make up one or two of your own. Once you have established your character's personality, decide what made him that way. Try answering some or all of the questions given in the **Creating Characters** chapter.

PERSONALITY TRAITS TABLE

Aggressive	Cynical	Intense	Passionate
Aloof	Depraved	Intimidating	Patient
Altruistic	Dignified	Intolerant	Persuasive
Ambitious	Disciplined	Introverted	Pragmatic
Amoral	Dishonest	Intuitive	Protective
Apprehensive	Drunkard	Irrational	Proud
Argumentative	Easy-going	Jealous	Rational
Astute	Eloquent	Judgmental	Reactionary
Attentive	Energetic	Kind	Realistic
Bloodthirsty	Extroverted	Lazy	Reasonable
Bold	Fanatical	Liar	Rebellious
Charismatic	Follower	Logical	Reserved
Chivalrous	Forgiving	Loner	Resourceful
Cold	Friendly	Loyal	Rude
Compassionate	Generous	Lustful	Sadistic
Compassionless	Good-humored	Malcontent	Sarcastic
Condescending	Gracious	Manipulative	Selfish
Confident	Greedy	Militant	Sensitive
Conniving	Gullible	Miserly	Sentimental
Conservative	Honorable	Mocking	Shrewd
Courageous	Humorless	Moral	Spontaneous
Courteous	Idealistic	Naïve	Superstitious
Cowardly	Immature	Obsessive	Suspicious
Creative	Immoral	Opinionated	Sympathetic
Cruel	Insightful	Optimistic	Treacherous
Cunning	Insulting	Overbearing	Vengeful
Curious	Intellectual	Paranoid	Witty

10. Play the Game!

Congratulations, you're done! Finish filling out your Character Record Sheet—your character now stands ready to become a hero of the world of **Earthdawn**.

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CHARACTERISTICS TABLE

	Initiative *DEX*	*Defense Ratings* *DEX / PER / CHA*	*Movement Rates* *DEX*	*Encumbrance* *STR*		*Health Ratings* *TOU*			*Armor* *WIL*
Attribute Value	**Step Number**	**Physical / Spell / Social Defense**	**Movement Combat / Full (yds / round)**	**Carrying / Lifting Capacity (lbs)**	**Death Rating**	**Uncon. Rating**	**Wound Threshold**	**Recovery Tests (per day)**	**Mystic Armor**
1	2	2	6 / 12	5 / 10	19	10	3	1 / 2 days	0
2	2	3	7 / 14	10 / 20	20	11	4	1 / 2 days	0
3	2	3	8 / 16	15 / 30	22	13	4	1	0
4	3	4	9 / 18	20 / 40	23	14	5	1	0
5	3	4	10 / 20	25 / 50	24	15	5	1	0
6	3	4	12 / 24	30 / 60	26	17	6	1	0
7	4	5	14 / 28	40 / 80	27	18	6	1	0
8	4	5	16 / 32	50 / 100	28	19	7	2	0
9	4	6	18 / 36	60 / 120	30	21	7	2	0
10	5	6	20 / 40	70 / 140	31	22	8	2	0
11	5	7	22 / 44	80 / 160	32	24	8	2	1
12	5	7	24 / 48	95 / 190	34	26	9	2	1
13	6	7	26 / 52	110 / 220	35	27	9	2	1
14	6	8	28 / 56	125 / 250	36	28	10	3	2
15	6	8	30 / 60	140 / 280	38	30	10	3	2
16	7	9	32 / 64	160 / 320	39	31	11	3	2
17	7	9	34 / 68	180 / 360	40	32	11	3	3
18	7	10	36 / 72	200 / 400	42	34	12	3	3
19	8	10	38 / 76	230 / 460	43	35	12	3	3
20	8	10	40 / 80	260 / 520	44	36	13	4	4
21	8	11	43 / 86	290 / 580	46	39	13	4	4
22	9	11	46 / 92	330 / 660	47	40	13	4	4
23	9	12	49 / 98	370 / 740	48	41	14	4	5
24	9	12	52 / 104	410 / 820	50	43	14	4	5
25	10	13	55 / 110	460 / 940	51	44	15	4	5
26	10	13	58 / 116	510 / 1,020	52	45	15	5	6
27	10	13	61 / 122	560 / 1,120	54	47	15	5	6
28	11	14	64 / 128	620 / 1,240	55	48	16	5	6
29	11	14	67 / 134	680 / 1,360	56	49	16	5	7
30	11	15	70 / 140	740 / 1,480	58	51	17	5	7
31	12	15	74 / 148	810 / 1,620	59	52	17	5	7
32	12	16	78 / 156	880 / 1,760	60	53	17	6	8
33	12	16	82 / 164	950 / 1,900	62	55	18	6	8
34	13	16	86 / 172	1,030 / 2,060	63	56	18	6	8
35	13	17	90 / 180	1,110 / 2,220	64	57	19	6	9
36	13	17	94 / 188	1,190 / 2,380	66	59	19	6	9
37	14	18	98 / 196	1,280 / 2,560	67	60	19	6	9
38	14	18	102 / 204	1,370 / 2,740	68	61	20	7	10
39	14	19	106 / 212	1,460 / 2,920	70	63	20	7	10
40	15	19	110 / 220	1,560 / 3,120	71	64	21	7	10
41	15	19	115 / 230	1,660 / 3,320	72	65	21	7	11
42	15	20	120 / 240	1,760 / 3,520	74	67	21	7	11
43	16	20	125 / 250	1,870 / 3,740	75	68	21	7	11
44	16	21	130 / 260	1,980 / 3,960	76	69	22	8	12
45	16	21	135 / 270	2,090 / 4,180	78	71	22	8	12
46	17	22	140 / 280	2,210 / 4,420	79	72	22	8	12
47	17	22	145 / 290	2,330 / 4,660	80	73	23	8	13
48	17	22	150 / 300	2,450 / 4,900	82	75	23	8	13
49	18	23	155 / 310	2,580 / 5,160	83	76	23	8	13
50	18	23	160 / 320	2,710 / 5,420	84	77	23	9	14

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RESULT LEVEL TABLE

Difficulty Number	—Result— Pathetic	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent	Extraordinary
2	*	1	2–4	5–6	7–8	9+
3	*	1–2	3–5	6–7	8–9	10+
4	*	1–3	4–6	7–9	10–11	12+
5	*	1–4	5–8	9–10	11–13	14+
6	1	2–5	6–9	10–12	13–16	17+
7	1	2–6	7–11	12–14	15–18	19+
8	1–2	3–7	8–12	13–15	16–19	20+
9	1–3	4–8	9–13	14–17	18–21	22+
10	1–4	5–9	10–14	15–18	19–23	24+
11	1–4	5–10	11–16	17–20	21–24	25+
12	1–5	6–11	12–17	18–21	22–26	27+
13	1–5	6–12	13–19	20–23	24–28	29+
14	1–6	7–13	14–20	21–25	26–31	32+
15	1–7	8–14	15–21	22–26	27–32	33+
16	1–7	8–15	16–23	24–28	29–34	35+
17	1–8	9–16	17–24	25–29	30–36	37+
18	1–9	10–17	18–25	26–31	32–37	38+
19	1–10	11–18	19–26	27–32	33–38	39+
20	1–11	12–19	20–27	28–33	34–40	41+
21	1–12	13–20	21–28	29–34	35–41	42+
22	1–12	13–21	22–30	31–36	37–43	44+
23	1–13	14–22	23–31	32–37	38–44	45+
24	1–14	15–23	24–32	33–39	40–46	47+
25	1–15	16–24	25–33	34–40	41–47	48+
26	1–16	17–25	26–34	35–41	42–48	49+
27	1–17	18–26	27–35	36–42	43–50	51+
28	1–17	18–27	28–37	38–44	45–51	52+
29	1–18	19–28	29–38	39–45	46–53	54+
30	1–19	20–29	30–39	40–46	47–54	55+
31	1–20	21–30	31–40	41–47	48–55	56+
32	1–21	22–31	32–41	42–48	49–57	58+
33	1–22	23–32	33–42	43–50	51–58	59+
34	1–22	23–33	34–44	45–51	52–60	61+
35	1–23	24–34	35–45	46–52	53–61	62+
36	1–24	25–35	36–46	47–54	55–63	64+
37	1–25	26–36	37–47	48–55	56–64	65+
38	1–25	26–37	38–49	50–57	58–66	67+
39	1–26	27–38	39–50	51–58	59–67	68+
40	1–27	28–39	40–51	52–59	60–69	70+

* A Pathetic result only occurs on a roll of all ones on the Action Dice for this Difficulty Number (see the **Rule of One**, p.18).

STEP/ACTION DICE TABLE

Step Number	Action Dice
1	D4–2
2	D4–1
3	D4
4	D6
5	D8
6	D10
7	D12
8	2D6
9	D8+D6
10	D10+D6
11	D10+D8
12	2D10
13	D12+D10
14	D20+D4 *or* 2D12*
15	D20+D6
16	D20+D8
17	D20+D10
18	D20+D12
19	D20+2D6
20	D20+D8+D6
21	D20+D10+D6
22	D20+D10+D8
23	D20+2D10
24	D20+D12+D10
25	D20+D10+D8+D4
26	D20+D10+D8+D6
27	D20+D10+2D8
28	D20+2D10+D8
29	D20+D12+D10+D8
30	D20+D10+D8+2D6
31	D20+D10+2D8+D6
32	D20+2D10+D8+D6
33	D20+2D10+2D8
34	D20+3D10+D8
35	D20+D12+2D10+D8
36	2D20+D10+D8+D4
37	2D20+D10+D8+D6
38	2D20+D10+2D8
39	2D20+2D10+D8
40	2D20+D12+D10+D8
41	2D20+D10+D8+2D6
42	2D20+D10+2D8+D6
43	2D20+2D10+D8+D6
44	2D20+2D10+2D8
45	2D20+3D10+D8
46	2D20+D12+2D10+D8
47	2D20+2D10+2D8+D4
48	2D20+2D10+2D8+D6
49	2D20+2D10+3D8
50	2D20+3D10+2D8

* For Step 14, you may roll either D20+D4 *or* 2D12. Statistically the results are similar; psychologically some players prefer to avoid the D20 at this step number. You should choose one or the other for all rolls, however.

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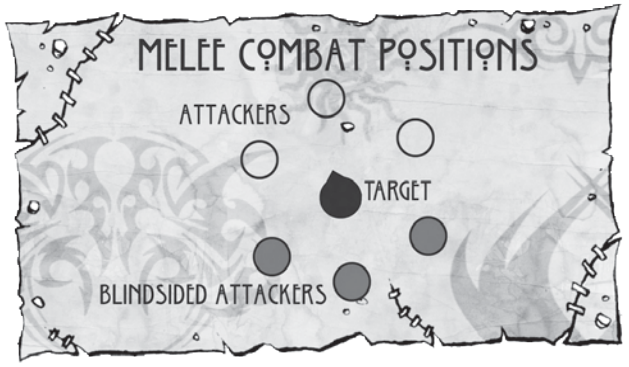
COMBAT QUICK REFERENCE

COMBAT OPTIONS TABLE

Combat Option*	Effect/Modifier
Aggressive Attack (1 per attack) (p. 403)	+3 bonus to Attack and Damage Tests; –3 penalty to Physical and Spell Defense
Aiming (1 per round) (p. 403)	+2 or +3 bonus to next ranged Attack Test (see text)
Attacking to Knockdown (p. 403)	Possibly knocks opponent down; inflicts no real damage to opponent
Attacking to Stun (p. 404)	Damage Test inflicts Stun damage; Wounded opponent is also Stunned
Called Shot (1) (p. 404)	–3 penalty to Attack Test; if successful, attack hits designated area
Defensive Stance (p. 404)	+3 to Physical and Spell Defense; –3 penalty to all Action Tests (except Knockdown Tests)
Giving Ground (1) (p. 405)	+1 to Physical Defense per yard given (up to maximum of Melee Weapons or Unarmed Combat rank); –2 penalty to Attack Tests
Going Inside a Shield (p. 405)	Negates opponent's shield bonuses; –2 penalty to Attack Test
Jumping Up (2) (p. 405)	Allows the character to stand up and perform a Standard action; no other movement allowed
Setting Against a Charge (p. 406)	Allows the character to unhorse a mounted opponent
Shattering a Shield (1) (p. 406)	Breaks opponent's shield
Splitting Movement (1) (p. 406)	Allows a move/action/move combination; –2 to Physical and Spell Defense
Tail Attack [t'skrang only] (p. 50)	Allows an additional attack (–2 to all Action Tests) *or* +1 to Physical Defense per –1 to all Action Tests (max. +2 bonus; see p. 50 for details)

* The number in parentheses ( ) after the option is the Strain cost.



COMBAT ROUNDS

1. Declare Actions (p. 395)
2. Determine Initiative (p. 395)
3. Resolve Actions (p. 396)
4. Begin a New Round (p. 396)

RESOLVING ATTACKS

1. Make an Attack Test (p. 398)
2. Determine Success (p. 398)
3. Make a Damage Test (p. 399)
4. Adjust Damage for Armor (p. 399)
5. Check for Wounds (p. 400)
6. Make a Knockdown Test (p. 400)
7. Check for Unconsciousness or Death (p. 401)

SITUATION MODIFIERS TABLE

Situation	Action Test Modifier	Defense Modifier**
Blindsided (p. 407)	—	–2
Cover (p. 407)	—	Partial: +2 Full: +4 Complete: NA
Darkness (p. 407) (Blindness; Dazzled) (p. 408)	Partial: –1 Full: –3 Complete: –5	—
Distance (p. 408)	Short: NA Medium: –2*** Long: –3***	—
Harried (p. 408)	–2	–2
Impaired Movement (p. 408)	Light: 25%* Medium: 50%* Hard: 75%*	—
Knocked Down (p. 409)	–3	–3
Stunned (p. 409)	Simple actions only; Harried (–2)	–2
Surprised (p. 409)	No Action Tests allowed	–3

* The character's Movement rates are reduced by the given percentage.
** Also applies to Social Defense, at the gamemaster's discretion.
*** Also applies to Damage Tests.

OPTIONAL RULES

OPTIONAL RULES TABLE

Used?	Optional Rule Name	Reference
☐	The Rule of Three	Game Concepts, p. 18
☐	Step Modifiers	Game Concepts, p. 18
☐	Random Roll Method	Creating Characters, p. 44
☐	Hidden and Surface Traits	Creating Characters, p. 53
☐	Talent Crises	Disciplines, p. 62
☐	Rituals of Advancement	Disciplines, p. 63
☐	Riposting Longer Weapons	Talents, p. 198
☐	Circle-based Talent Knack Learning	Talent Knacks, p. 214
☐	Independent Talent Knacks	Talent Knacks, p. 215
☐	Languages as Individual Skills	Skills, p. 233
☐	Failed Thread Weaving Tests	Thread Magic, p. 267
☐	Unweaving Threads	Thread Magic, p. 270
☐	Spell Learning Cost	Spell Magic, p. 284
☐	Spell Legend Point Cost	Spell Magic, p. 284
☐	Untutored Spell Learning	Spell Magic, p. 284
☐	Bypassing Cover	Spell Magic, p. 286
☐	Take the Initiative	Combat, p. 396
☐	Initiative-based Movement	Combat, p. 396
☐	Action Cap	Combat, p. 397
☐	Maximum Weapon Damage	Combat, p. 399
☐	Minimum Weapon Damage	Combat, p. 399
☐	Damage to Weapons and Armor	Combat, p. 400
☐	Wounds That Bleed	Combat, p. 401
☐	Damage to a Limb	Combat, p. 401
☐	Shields and Armor-Defeating Hits	Combat, p. 402

OPTIONAL RULES TABLE

Used?	Optional Rule Name	Reference
☐	Jumping Up	Combat, p. 405
☐	Shattering a Shield	Combat, p. 406
☐	Splitting Movement	Combat, p. 406
☐	Cover Density	Combat, p. 407
☐	Overwhelmed	Combat, p. 408
☐	Fleeing From Combat	Combat, p. 410
☐	Weapon Reach	Combat, p. 410
☐	Grappling Out-sized Opponents	Combat, p. 411
☐	Severing Limbs	Combat, p. 417
☐	Circle-based Attribute Improvement	Building Your Legend, p. 420
☐	Learning Talents from Higher Circles	Building Your Legend, p. 422
☐	Aligning Talents and Skills	Building Your Legend, p. 423
☐	Initiation Tests	Building Your Legend, p. 426
☐	Aligning Talents from New Disciplines	Building Your Legend, p. 427
☐	Aligning Discipline Talents from New Disciplines	Building Your Legend, p. 427
☐	Realigning Durability	Building Your Legend, p. 428
☐	Multi-Discipline Karma Rituals	Building Your Legend, p. 429
☐	Personal Visions	Building Your Legend, p. 429
☐	Deeds of Atonement	Building Your Legend, p. 429
☐	Better and Best Items	Goods and Services, p. 433
☐	Blood Charm Depatterning	Goods and Services, p. 446
☐	Devotion-based Ranks	Passions and Questors, p. 470
☐	Involuntary Devotion	Passions and Questors, p. 471

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THROALIC CALENDAR

YEAR _____

STRASSA

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

RAQUAS

		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

VELTOM

		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

SOLLUS

				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

CHARASSA

			1	2	3	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

RIAG

						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

RUA

						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

TEAYU

	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

MAWAG

	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

BORRUM

			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

GAHMIL

			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

DODDUL

					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

CELEBRATION DAYS

1 2 3 4 5

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ADVENTURE: _____

CAMPAIGN DATE: _____

GROUP NAME: _____

GROUP MEMBERS

CHARACTER NAME	DISCIPLINE (CIRCLE)	HAS PLAYED?	TOTAL LEGEND AWARD
		☐	
		☐	
		☐	
		☐	
		☐	
		☐	
		☐	

ADVENTURING LOG

WRITTEN BY: _____

ADVENTURING LOG

NOTABLE GAMEMASTER CHARACTERS

CHARACTER NAME	RACE / OCCUPATION	NOTES	CHARACTER NAME	RACE / OCCUPATION	NOTES

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ADVENTURING LOG

NOTABLE GAMEMASTER CHARACTERS

CHARACTER NAME	RACE / OCCUPATION	NOTES	CHARACTER NAME	RACE / OCCUPATION	NOTES

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EARTHDAWN®

NAME: _____

DISCIPLINE: _____ CIRCLE: _____

RACE: _____ GENDER: _____ AGE: _____

HAIR: _____ SKIN: _____ EYES: _____

HEIGHT: _____ WEIGHT: _____

RACIAL ABILITIES: _____

ATTRIBUTES

	BASE VALUE	LP INCREASE	CURRENT VALUE	STEP	ACTION DICE
DEXTERITY		+	=		
STRENGTH		+	=		
TOUGHNESS		+	=		
PERCEPTION		+	=		
WILLPOWER		+	=		
CHARISMA		+	=		

CHARACTERISTICS

INITIATIVE

DEXTERITY STEP - ARMOR PENALTY + OTHER = INITIATIVE STEP/ACTION DICE

MOVEMENT RATES

COMBAT | FULL

ENCUMBRANCE

CARRYING CAPACITY | LIFTING CAPACITY

DEFENSE RATINGS

PHYSICAL DEFENSE

SPELL DEFENSE

SOCIAL DEFENSE

ARMOR RATINGS

ARMOR _____

PHYSICAL ARMOR

MYSTIC ARMOR

HEALTH RATINGS

WOUND THRESHOLD

RECOVERY TESTS — TESTS PER DAY | STEP | ACTION DICE

CURRENT DAMAGE

WOUNDS: -1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9

UNCONSCIOUSNESS RATING

BASE VALUE - BLOOD MAGIC + DURABILITY + OTHER = CURRENT VALUE

DEATH RATING

BASE VALUE - BLOOD MAGIC + DURABILITY + OTHER = CURRENT VALUE

WEAPONS

WEAPON	DAMAGE STEP	SIZE	TIMES FORGED	SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG

KARMA

AVAILABLE KARMA

STEP/DICE: _____ _____

MAXIMUM: _____

SPECIAL USE: _____

☐ DEX ☐ STR ☐ TOU ☐ PER ☐ WIL ☐ CHA

TALENTS

INITIATE/NOVICE

TALENT NAME	DISCIPLINE TALENT?	KARMA?	ACTION?	STRAIN	ATTRIBUTE	RANK	STEP	ACTION DICE
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	

SKILLS

SKILL NAME	ACTION?	STRAIN	ATTRIBUTE	RANK	STEP	ACTION DICE
	☐			+	=	
	☐			+	=	
	☐			+	=	
	☐			+	=	
	☐			+	=	
	☐			+	=	
	☐			+	=	
	☐			+	=	
	☐			+	=	
	☐			+	=	
	☐			+	=	
	☐			+	=	
	☐			+	=	
	☐			+	=	
	☐			+	=	
	☐			+	=	
	☐			+	=	
	☐			+	=	

LANGUAGES

_____ _____

_____ _____

CHARACTER RECORD SHEET

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DISCIPLINE

DISCIPLINE: _____ **KARMA RITUAL:** _____

CIRCLE: _____

HALF-MAGIC: _____ **HALF-MAGIC ABILITIES:** _____

TALENTS

JOURNEYMAN

TALENT NAME	DISCIPLINE TALENT?	KARMA?	ACTION?	STRAIN	ATTRIBUTE	RANK	STEP	ACTION DICE
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	

WARDEN

TALENT NAME	DISCIPLINE TALENT?	KARMA?	ACTION?	STRAIN	ATTRIBUTE	RANK	STEP	ACTION DICE
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	

MASTER

TALENT NAME	DISCIPLINE TALENT?	KARMA?	ACTION?	STRAIN	ATTRIBUTE	RANK	STEP	ACTION DICE
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	
	☐	☐	☐			+	=	

TALENT KNACKS

TALENT KNACK NAME	TALENT	STRAIN

GRIMOIRE

DISCIPLINE: _____ **DESCRIPTION:** _____

SPELLCASTING RANK: _____ _____

WILLFORCE STEP: _____ _____

SPELL NAME	IN MATRIX?	ILLUSION?	CIRCLE	THREADS	WEAVING/RE-ATTUNING DIFFICULTY	CASTING DIFFICULTY	RANGE	DURATION	EFFECT
	☐	☐							
	☐	☐							
	☐	☐							

EQUIPMENT

FAMILIAR/MOUNT

NAME: _____

TYPE: _____

ATTRIBUTES

	STEP	ACTION DICE		STEP	ACTION DICE
DEXTERITY			PERCEPTION		
STRENGTH			WILLPOWER		
TOUGHNESS			CHARISMA		

INITIATIVE

STEP _____ ACTION DICE _____

MOVEMENT

COMBAT _____ FULL _____

ATTACK

STEP _____ ACTION DICE _____

NUMBER OF ACTIONS _____

DEFENSE RATINGS

PHYSICAL DEFENSE _____

SPELL DEFENSE _____

SOCIAL DEFENSE _____

ARMOR RATINGS

PHYSICAL ARMOR _____

MYSTIC ARMOR _____

HEALTH RATINGS

UNCONSCIOUSNESS RATING _____

WOUND THRESHOLD _____

WOUNDS ☐ -1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9

DEATH RATING _____

CURRENT DAMAGE _____

RECOVERY

TESTS PER DAY _____ STEP _____ ACTION DICE _____

KNOCKDOWN

STEP _____ ACTION DICE _____

KARMA

STEP _____ ACTION DICE _____

AVAILABLE KARMA _____

WEAPONS/ATTACK TYPES

WEAPON	DAMAGE STEP	WEAPON	DAMAGE STEP

POWERS

POWER NAME	ACTION?	ATTRIBUTE	+	RANK	=	STEP	ACTION DICE
	☐		+		=		
	☐		+		=		
	☐		+		=		
	☐		+		=		
	☐		+		=		
	☐		+		=		
	☐		+		=		

EQUIPMENT

_____

_____

CARRIED EQUIPMENT

ITEMS	WEIGHT

MAGICAL ITEM

NAME: _____

MAX. THREADS: ____ **SPELL DEFENSE:** _____

DESCRIPTION: _____

THREAD RANKS

RANK	KEY KNOWLEDGE/DEED	LP COST	EFFECT

MAGICAL ITEM

NAME: _____

MAX. THREADS: ____ **SPELL DEFENSE:** _____

DESCRIPTION: _____

THREAD RANKS

RANK	KEY KNOWLEDGE/DEED	LP COST	EFFECT

MAGICAL ITEM

NAME: _____

MAX. THREADS: ____ **SPELL DEFENSE:** _____

DESCRIPTION: _____

THREAD RANKS

RANK	KEY KNOWLEDGE/DEED	LP COST	EFFECT

PATTERN ITEMS

ITEM	TYPE

BLOOD MAGIC

TYPE	DAMAGE	DR	EFFECT

THREAD MAGIC

TARGET	RANK	LP COST	EFFECT

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Additional Discipline

Talents

Talent Name	Discipline Talent?	Karma?	Action?	Strain	Attribute	Rank	Step	Action Dice	Circle
	☐	☐	☐			+	=		
	☐	☐	☐			+	=		
	☐	☐	☐			+	=		

BACKGROUND & EXPERIENCE

BIRTHPLACE: _____ **QUOTE:** _____

BIRTHDATE: _____ **PERSONALITY TRAITS:** _____

PERSONALITY

APPEARANCE

CHARACTER SKETCH

THE STORY SO FAR

DEVOTION

PASSION: _____

POWERS: _____

DEVOTION POINTS

ADVENTURE HISTORY

ADVENTURE TITLE	GAMEMASTER	DATE	LEGEND POINTS EARNED

ADVANCEMENT HISTORY

INCREASED ABILITY	OLD VALUE	NEW VALUE	LP COST

LEGEND POINT TOTALS

TALENTS	TALENT KNACKS	SKILLS

ATTRIBUTES	KARMA	SPELLS

THREADS	TREASURE

TOTAL SPENT

TOTAL AVAILABLE

GRAND TOTAL

LEGENDARY STATUS

LEGEND POINT COST TABLE

	TALENT LEVEL					
Rank	Novice	Journeyman	Warden	Master	Skills	Attributes
1	100	200	300	500	200	800
2	200	300	500	800	300	1,300
3	300	500	800	1,300	500	2,100
4	500	800	1,300	2,100	800	3,400
5	800	1,300	2,100	3,400	1,300	5,500
6	1,300	2,100	3,400	5,500	2,100	-
7	2,100	3,400	5,500	8,900	3,400	-
8	3,400	5,500	8,900	14,400	5,500	-
9	5,500	8,900	14,400	23,300	8,900	-
10	8,900	14,400	23,300	37,700	14,400	-
11	14,400	23,300	37,700	61,000	-	-
12	23,300	37,700	61,000	98,700	-	-
13	37,700	61,000	98,700	159,700	-	-
14	61,000	98,700	159,700	258,400	-	-
15	98,700	159,700	258,400	418,100	-	-

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INDEX

… You can't find it? I told you, use the index!

• Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records •

Abbreviations:
El = Elementalist, Il = Illusionist, Ne = Nethermancer, Wi = Wizard

Notes:
Ability: See the relevant **Disciplines** chapter.
Option: Optional rule.
Knack: See the **Talent Knacks** chapter, p. 213–229
Power: Questor Power; see the **Passions and Questors** chapter, p. 460–478
Skill: See the **Skills** chapter, p. 230–250
Spell: See the relevant **Spell Descriptions** chapter.
Talent: See the **Talents** chapter, p. 166–212

—A—

Abate Curse (Talent), 167
Absorb Blow (Blood Charm), 443
Absorb Damage (Power), 472
Absorbing Sphere (Spell, Wi9), 389
Accommodation Table, 453
Accommodation, 453–454
Acrobatic Strike (Skill), 234
Acrobatic Strike (Talent), 168
Acting (Skill), 234
Action Cap (Option), 397
Action Dice, 17
Action Tests, 17–18
Actions, 167, 396
Adept's Best Friend (Knack), 215
Adepts, 16, 57
Adipae Rapids, 483
Adventure Log, 431, 507–508
Adventuring Equipment Table, 452
Adventuring Equipment, 451
Adventuring Groups, 430–431
Adventuring Kit (Equipment), 451
Adventuring Logs, 431
Aerial Combat, 415
Afterlife (Spell, Il10), 343
Age of Magical Thought, 251
Aggressive Attack, 403
Aiming, 403
Air Armor (Spell, El1), 295
Air Blast (Spell, El4), 304
Air Conditioning (Knack), 216
Air Dance (Talent), 168
Air Elevator (Magic Item), 447
Air Fortress (Spell, El10), 319
Air Legs (Knack), 216
Air Mattress (Spell, El2), 297
Air Mount (Knack), 216
Air Sailing (Skill), 234
Air Sailing (Talent), 168
Air Sailor Talent Knacks Table, 491
Air Sailor, 42, 65–71
Air Speaking (Talent), 168
Alachia, 28, 482
Alarm (Spell, Il3), 328
Alarm Accuracy Table, 377
Alchemist's Kit (Equipment), 451
Alchemist's Shop (Equipment), 451
Alchemy (Skill), 234
Aligning Discipline Talents From New Disciplines (Option), 427
Aligning Talents and Skills (Option), 423
Aligning Talents From New Disciplines (Option), 427
All Disciplines Talent Knacks Table, 491
Alter Form (Spell, Wi12), 394
Alter Life (Spell, Ne11), 371
Anchored Spell (Knack), 216
And His Money (Spell, Wi2), 376
And Then I Woke Up (Spell, Il3), 328
Angelic Appearance (Knack), 216
Animal Bond (Skill), 235
Animal Bond (Talent), 168
Animal Companions, 83
Animal Handling (Skill), 235
Animal Leadership (Talent), 169
Animal Possession (Talent), 169
Animal Training (Skill), 235
Animal Training (Talent), 169
Animals and Mounts, 456–458
Animals, 456, 458
Animate Dead (Spell, Ne10), 368
Animate Object (Talent), 169
Animate Object Table, 169
Animate Plant (Power), 472
Animate Skeleton (Spell, Ne4), 352
Animate Spirit Object (Spell, Ne5), 355
Anticipate Blow (Skill), 235
Anticipate Blow (Talent), 169
Anti–Sporific (Healing Aid), 450
Aras Sea, 485
Arcane Curses (Knack), 216
Arcane Mutterings (Skill), 235
Arcane Mutterings (Talent), 170
Archer Talent Knacks Table, 491
Archer, 42, 72–77
Archetypes, 57:
  Air Sailor, Human, 71
  Archer, Human, 77
  Beastmaster, Ork, 84
  Cavalryman, Dwarf, 91
  Elementalist, Dwarf, 99
  Illusionist, Troll, 105
  Nethermancer, Human, 112
  Scout, Human, 118
  Sky Raider, Ork, 124
  Swordmaster, T'skrang, 131
  Thief, Windling, 137
  Troubadour, Elf, 144
  Warrior, Obsidiman, 151
  Weaponsmith, Dwarf, 158
  Wizard, Obsidiman, 165
Archetype, 57
Ardanyan, 483
Armor Beater (Knack), 216
Armor Mount (Talent), 170
Armor Pieces, 443
Armor Points, 442
Armor Ratings, 45
Armor Restrictions, 439
Armor Size, 442
Armor Table, 440
Armor, 399, 439
Armor-Defeating Hits, 398
Armored Matrix (Talent), 170
Aropagoi, 39
Arrow Cutting (Knack), 217
Arrow of Night (Spell, Ne3), 350
Arrow Stop (Knack), 217
Artisan (Skill), 236
Artisan Skills, 51, 64, 231
Artisan Skills, 51, 64, 231
Artisan Tools (Equipment), 451
Artist (Skill), 235
Assault (Knack), 217
Assuring Touch (Spell, Il1), 323
Astendar (Passion), 462
Astral Beacon (Spell, Ne7), 361
Astral Corruption, 256
Astral Face (Ability), 110
Astral Flare (Spell, Ne4), 353
Astral Gift (Spell, Wi7), 386
Astral Horror (Spell, Ne5), 355
Astral Materialization (Spell, Il10), 343
Astral Maw (Spell, Ne7), 362
Astral Mount (Spell, Ne5), 356
Astral Nightmare (Spell, Il8), 339
Astral Pocket (Talent), 170
Astral Regions, 256
Astral Sense (Spell, Wi1), 374
Astral Sense Elementalism (Spell, El3), 299
Astral Sense Illusionism (Spell, Il3), 328
Astral Sense Nethermancy (Spell, Ne3), 350
Astral Sensing Table, 256
Astral Sensing, 257–259
Astral Shadow (Spell, Il6), 335
Astral Shield (Spell, Wi2), 376
Astral Sight (Talent), 170
Astral Slice (Spell, Ne10), 369
Astral Space, 254–257
Astral Spear (Spell, Ne1), 345
Astral Spy (Knack), 217
Astral Tracking (Knack), 217
Astral Web (Talent), 171
Astral Whisper (Spell, Ne5), 356
Astral-Sensitive Eye (Blood Charm), 443
Astral-Sensitive Sight (Ability), 48, 258
Astral-Sensitive Sight, 258
Astral–Sensitive Sight, 48
Attack Test, 398
Attacking to Knockdown, 403
Attribute Cost Table, 44, 502
Attribute Increase Table, 420
Attribute Pattern (Talent), 171
Attribute Value, 43
Attribute-only Tests, 64, 239
Attributes, 16
Attributes, 16, 41, 43–45
Attuning Matrices, 288
Aura (Spell, Il4), 330
Aura Armor (Talent), 171
Aura Strike (Spell, Wi3), 377
Availability Difficulty Table, 432
Availability Rating, 433
Average Result, 19
Avoid Blow (Skill), 236
Avoid Blow (Talent), 171
Awaken (Spell, Il5), 333
Ayodhya, 32

—B—

Backbiter (Knack), 217
Badlands, The, 480
Ball of String (Spell, Wi4), 379
Balloons of Mist (Spell, El5), 307
Bank Shot (Talent), 171
Banquet of Dis (Spell, Ne7), 362
Bardic Voice (Skill), 236
Bardic Voice (Talent), 171
Bargain With Summoned Creature (Talent), 172
Bark (Armor), 439
Bark (Shield), 441
Barsaive Racial Composition Table, 479
Bartertown, 487
Battle Bellow (Talent), 172
Battle of Prajjor's Field, 31
Battle of Sky Point, The, 25
Battle Shout (Skill), 236
Battle Shout (Talent), 172
Battle-Axe (Weapon), 435
Beastform (Spell, El7), 312
Beastmaster Talent Knacks Table, 491
Beastmaster, 42, 78–84
Bedazzling Display of Logical Analysis (Spell, Wi1), 374
Bedroll of Comfort (Magic Item), 447
Beginning Skills, 51
Behemoth, 25, 31, 487
Behind Eye (Spell, El3), 300
Bellow of the Thundras (Spell, Il1), 323
Best Face (Spell, Il1), 323
Bestial Resilience (Talent), 172
Bestial Toughness (Talent), 172
Better and Best Items (Option), 433
Better and Best Items Table, 433
Billowing Cloak (Spell, El2), 297
Bind Spirit (Knack), 217
Binding Threads (Spell, Wi4), 380
Blade Fury (Spell, El8), 316
Blade Juggle (Skill), 236
Blade Juggle (Talent), 172
Bladed Weapon Table, 172
Bladesman (Specialist, Swordmaster), 128, 130
Blazing Fists of Rage (Spell, Il1), 323
Bleeding Edge (Spell, Il4), 330
Blend (Ability), 116
Blessed Light (Spell, Ne6), 359
Blind (Spell, Ne5), 356
Blind Fire (Talent), 173
Blinding Glare (Spell, Il3), 328
Blindness (Spell, Il2), 325
Blindness, 408
Blindsided, 407
Blizzard Sphere (Spell, El4), 304
Block Magic (Spell, Wi11), 393
Blood Boil (Spell, Wi7), 386
Blood Charm Depatterning (Option), 446
Blood Charm Depatterning, 446
Blood Charm Table, 445
Blood Charms, 260, 276, 443–447
Blood Edge (Ability), 156
Blood Guilt Weapon (Talent), 173
Blood Karma (Blood Charm), 444
Blood Knuckles (Blood Charm), 444
Blood Lost (Spell, Wi6), 384
Blood Magic, 20, 259–263
Blood Matrix (Blood Charm), 444
Blood Oaths, 260–262
Blood Peace (Oath), 260, 271
Blood Pebbles (Armor), 439
Blood Promise (Oath), 261
Blood Servitor (Spell, Ne4), 353
Blood Share (Talent), 173
Blood Sworn (Oath), 261
Blood Weapon (Blood Charm), 444
Blood Wood, 28, 482
Blood Wood, 482
Blood Wounds, 259
Bloodberry Wine (Provender), 454
Blowgun (Weapon), 437
Boarding Action (Knack), 217
Body (Shield), 441
Body Blade (Talent), 173
Boil Water (Spell, El2), 297
Bola (Weapon), 437
Bond of Silence (Spell, Il5), 333
Bone Charm (Blood Charm), 444

Bone Circle (Spell, Ne2), 347
Bone Dance (Spell, Ne1), 345
Bone Pudding (Spell, Ne7), 362
Bone Puppet (Spell, Ne6), 359
Bone Shatter (Spell, Ne6), 359
Bone Walker (Spell, Ne6), 359
Bonus Die, 17
Bonus, 18
Book Memory (Talent), 174
Book of Tomorrow, The, 28
Book Recall (Talent), 174
Book Recall Table, 174
Books of Harrow, The, 21, 22
Booster Potion (Healing Aid), 450
Borrow Sense (Talent), 174
Bounce (Knack), 218
Bouncing Blaster (Spell, Il6), 336
Bowman (Specialist, Archer), 75–76
Bowyer (Ability), 75
Bragging Rights, 128, 129
Braiding Threads (Knack), 218
Braza I, 23
Break Shackles (Power), 472
Bribery (Skill), 236
Broadsword (Weapon), 435
Brotherhood, 36–37
Buckler (Shield), 441
Buoyancy (Spell, Wi4), 380
Burning Water (Spell, El9), 317
By the Fingernails (Knack), 218
Bypassing Cover (Option), 286

— C —

Calendar, 506
Call (Spell, Wi7), 386
Call Arrow (Talent), 175
Call Forth the Army of Decay (Spell, Ne14), 373
Call Forth the Maelstrom (Spell, El15), 321
Call Mount (Talent), 175
Called Shot, 404
Calm Herd (Knack), 218
Calm Water (Spell, El7), 312
Cara Fahd, 24, 32, 486
Carrying Capacity, 48
Cash, 433–434
Casting Difficulty, 294
Casting Pattern (Talent), 175
Casting Spells, 285
Casting Triangle (Ability), 163
Casting, 287, 289, 290
Cat's Paw (Talent), 175
Cat's Skill (Knack), 218
Catch Spell (Spell, Wi8), 388
Catseyes (Spell, Il1), 323
Catwalk (Spell, Wi3), 377
Caucavic Mountains, 481
Cause Pain (Power), 473
Cavalryman Mounts, 90
Cavalryman Talent Knacks Table, 491
Cavalryman, 42, 85–91
Cave Axe (Weapon), 435
Chain Mail (Armor), 439
Chair of Comfort (Magic Item), 447
Chameleon (Talent), 175
Champion Challenge (Skill), 237
Champion Challenge (Talent), 175
Change Thoughts (Power), 473
Changing Actions, 398
Channel Raw Magic (Spell, Wi9), 390
Character Creation Summary, 502
Character Creation, 41–55
Character Death, 401
Character History, 54
Character Record Sheet, 16, 41, 509–515
Character Record Sheet, 16, 509
Character, 16, 41
Characteristics Bonuses, 64
Characteristics Table, 46, 503
Characteristics, 41, 45–48
Charge (Skill), 237
Charge (Talent), 175
Charging Attacks, 413
Charisma (CHA), 43
Chilling Circle (Spell, Ne1), 345
Chorrolis (Passion), 22, 462
Chosen Path (Spell, Il6), 336
Circle Advancement Table, 424
Circle Advancement, 61, 424
Circle of Astral Protection (Spell, Ne5), 357
Circle of Well Being (Spell, Il4), 331
Circle Training Cost Table, 424
Circle–based Attribute Improvement (Option), 420
Circle–based Talent Knack Learning (Option), 214
Circles, 16, 43, 57, 61, 424, 425
City in a Bottle (Spell, Wi15), 394
Clarion Call (Spell, Il4), 331
Claw Frenzy (Talent), 176
Claw Ridge, 32
Claw Riposte (Knack), 218
Claw Shape (Talent), 176
Claw Tool (Knack), 218
Clean (Spell, Wi2), 376
Cleaning Broom (Magic Item), 447
Cleanse Astral Space (Spell, Wi13), 394
Climate, 479
Climbing (Skill), 237
Climbing (Talent), 176
Climbing Kit (Equipment), 451
Cloaksense Brooch (Magic Item), 448
Close Combat, 409–411
Clothing Gone (Spell, Il5), 333
Clothing Table, 459
Clothing, 459
Cloud Banish (Spell, El9), 317
Cloud Summon (Spell, El7), 313
Club (Weapon), 435
Cobra Strike (Talent), 176
Coil River, 483
Cold Embers (Spell, El9), 318
Cold Purify (Skill), 237
Cold Purify (Talent), 176
Cold Storage (Spell, Ne7), 362
Combat Fury (Spell, Wi3), 377
Combat Movement, 47–48, 396
Combat Options Table, 404, 505
Combat Options, 403–406
Combat Round, 19, 396
Combat, 395
Comfort (Power), 473
Command Animal (Power), 473
Command Nightflyer (Spell, Ne1), 346
Common Magic Items Table, 449
Common Magic Items, 276, 447–450
Compression Bubble (Spell, Wi8), 388
Conceal Tracks (Spell, Il4), 331
Conceal Weapon (Skill), 237
Conceal Weapon (Talent), 176
Confidence Booster Potion (Healing Aid), 450
Confront Horror (Talent), 177
Confusing Weave (Spell, Wi7), 387
Confusion (Power), 473
Constrict Heart (Spell, Ne7), 362
Control Being (Spell, Ne8), 364
Conversation (Skill), 237
Copper Coins, 433
Core Pattern Items, 254
Corrupt Region, 256
Cosmetics (Knack), 218
Council Compact, 28, 30, 485
Council of the Forest (Spell, El14), 321
Counterspell (Spell, Wi5), 382
Cover Density (Option), 407
Cover, 407
Covet Item (Knack), 219
Craft Armor (Skill), 237
Craft Armor, 156
Craft Weapon (Skill), 238
Craft Weapon, 156
Craftsman (Skill), 238
Craftsman Tools (Equipment), 451
Crafty Thought (Spell, Il2), 325
Create Armored Matrix Object (Knack), 219
Create Arrow (Talent), 177
Create Enhanced Matrix Object (Knack), 219
Create Life (Spell, Ne9), 366
Create Orichalcum (Ability), 156
Create Orichalcum (Knack), 219
Create Shared Matrix Object (Knack), 219
Create Spell Matrix Object (Knack), 219
Create Structure (Power), 473
Create Thread Item (Knack), 219
Create Weapon (Power), 474
Creating Characters, 41–55
Creating Magical Items, 276–278
Creature Analysis (Skill), 239
Creature Analysis (Talent), 177
Creature Attacks: 416–418
  Bite and Hold, 416
  Bite and Shake, 416
  Bite Attacks, 416
  Charging Attacks, 417
  Claw Attacks, 417
  Diseases, 417
  Grab and Bite, 417
  Magical Attacks, 417
  Pack or Swarm Attacks, 417
  Poisonous Attacks, 418
  Pouncing Attacks, 418
  Severing Limbs (Option), 417
  Swooping Attacks, 418
Creature Combat, 415–418
Creature Remains (Knack), 219
Critical Hit (Skill), 239
Critical Hit (Talent), 177
Crop Blight (Spell, El12), 321
Crossbow, Light (Weapon), 437
Crossbow, Medium (Weapon), 437
Crossbowman (Specialist, Archer), 75–76
Crunch Climb (Spell, El1), 295
Crushing Blow (Talent), 177
Crushing Hand of Earth (Spell, El8), 316
Crushing Will (Spell, Wi1), 375
Crystal Arm (Blood Charm), 444
Crystal Buckler (Shield), 441
Crystal Plate (Armor), 439
Crystal Raider (Shield), 441
Crystal Ringlet (Armor), 440
Cure Disease Potion (Healing Aid), 450
Currency, 433–434
Current Legend Points, 419
Cycle of Magic, 251

— D —

Dae'mistishsa, 35
Dagger (Weapon), 435, 438
Daiche Canyon, 483
Damage Shift (Spell, Ne7), 362
Damage Test, 399
Damage to a Limb (Option), 401
Damage to Weapons and Armor (Option), 400
Damage Transfer (Spell, Ne10), 369
Damaged Limb Table, 401
Dampen Karma (Spell, Il3), 329
Dancing Disks (Spell, Il6), 336
Dark Messenger (Spell, Ne3), 350
Dark Spy (Spell, Ne4), 353
Dark Sword (Spell, Ne9), 366
Darkness, 407
Darok Thanalea, School of, 33
Dart (Weapon), 438
Day, 19
Dazzled, 408
Dead Fall (Skill), 239
Dead Fall (Talent), 177
Death Cheat (Blood Charm), 444
Death Claw (Ability), 82
Death Rain (Spell, El7), 313
Death Rating, 17
Death Rating, 47
Death Trance (Spell, Ne3), 350
Death Vow (Spell, Wi10), 392
Death, 479
Death's Head (Spell, Ne3), 350
Death's Sea, 479, 485
Deathbed (Knack), 220
Deathsight (Knack), 220
Deceit (Power), 474
Declare Actions, 395
Deeds of Atonement (Option), 429
Deeds of Atonement, 62, 429
Deeds, 266
Default Skill Use Table, 230
Default Skill Use, 230
Default Skills, 230
Defense (Talent), 178
Defense Bonuses, 64
Defense Ratings, 46
Defensive Stance, 404
Deflect Blow (Knack), 220
Defuse Mob (Knack), 220
Delaris Mountains, 481
Delay Blow (Spell, Wi8), 388
Denairastas, 487
Denlikiyan, 483
Depatterning Rating, 446
Desperate Blow (Blood Charm), 445
Desperate Spell (Blood Charm), 445
Detect Elementalism Magic (Spell, El2), 297
Detect Falsehood (Talent), 178
Detect Illusionism Magic (Spell, Il3), 329
Detect Influence (Talent), 178
Detect Nethermancy Magic (Spell, Ne2), 348
Detect Trap (Skill), 239
Detect Trap (Talent), 178
Detect Undead (Spell, Ne1), 346
Detect Weapon (Skill), 239
Detect Weapon (Talent), 178
Develop Animal Sense (Talent), 178
Devotion Point Award Table, 470
Devotion Point Table, 470
Devotion–based Ranks (Option), 470
Dexterity (DEX), 43
Dexterity Minimum, 434
Diagnose (Knack), 220
Difficulty Numbers, 18
Direction Arrow (Talent), 178
Dis (Mad Passion), 463
Disarm (Skill), 239
Disarm (Talent), 179
Disarm Trap (Skill), 239
Disarm Trap (Talent), 179
Disassociate (Knack), 220
Disaster (Spell, Il2), 326
Disbelief Difficulty Table, 322
Disbelief Difficulty, 322
Disbelief Test, 322
Disbelieving Illusions, 322
Discipline Matrix Table, 288
Discover Desire (Power), 474
Disguise (Skill), 239
Disguise Kit (Equipment), 451
Disguise Metal (Spell, Il1), 324
Disguise Self (Talent), 179
Dislodge Spell (Spell, Wi7), 387
Dispel Difficulty Table, 291, 375
Dispel Elementalism Magic (Spell, El3), 300
Dispel Illusionism Magic (Spell, Il3), 329
Dispel Magic (Spell, Wi1), 375
Dispel Nethermancy Magic (Spell, Ne3), 351
Dispelling Magic, 291
Displace Image (Spell, Il1), 324
Displace Self (Spell, Wi6), 384
Disrupt Magic (Spell, Ne9), 367
Distance, 20, 408
Distance/Weight Conversion Table, 20
Disturbing Appearance (Blood Charm), 445
Divine Aura (Spell, Wi1), 375
Divining Rod (Magic Item), 448
Do Unto Others (Spell, Il9), 341

Dodge Boost (Spell, Wi2), 376
Dominate Arrow (Talent), 179
Dominate Beast (Talent), 179
Doom Missile (Spell, Wi6), 385
Down Strike (Skill), 239
Down Strike (Talent), 179
Draesis ti'Morel, 35
Dragon Mountains, 481
Dragon's Breath (Spell, El9), 318
Draining Eye (Spell, Wi9), 390
Drastic Temperature (Spell, El6), 310
Draw and Quarter (Spell, Wi10), 392
Dream Sight (Spell, Il7), 337
Dreamsend (Spell, Il8), 340
Drowning, 248
Drunken Stagger (Spell, Il7), 337
Dry and Wet (Spell, Ne1), 346
Dry Boots (Magic Item), 447
Duari, 454
Durability (Talent), 179
Durability Increase Table, 180
Duration (Spells), 294
Duration (Talents), 167
Dust Devil (Spell, Wi4), 380
Dust to Dust (Spell, Ne6), 360
Dwarf Mine Rations (Provender), 454
Dwarf Sword (Weapon), 435
Dwarf Winternight Cloak (Magic Item), 447
Dwarfs, 33–34
Dying Act, 262
Dying Curse, 262
Dying Legacy, 262
Dying Oath, 263
Dyre (Mount), 457

—E—

Eagle Eye (Talent), 180
Earth and Air (Spell, El10), 319
Earth and Wind (Ability), 97
Earth Armor (Talent), 180
Earth Blend (Spell, El1), 295
Earth Darts (Spell, El1), 296
Earth Q'wril (Spell, El7), 313
Earth Skin (Talent), 180
Earth Staff (Spell, El5), 308
Earth Surfing (Spell, El7), 313
Earth Wall (Spell, El8), 316
Earthdawn, 14–15
Earthdawn, The, 29
Ease Passage (Spell, El6), 310
Ease Suffering (Power), 474
Echo Location (Talent), 180
Eclipse (Spell, Il10), 343
Effect Pattern (Talent), 180
Effect Step, 294
Effect Test, 294
Eidolon, 483
Eighth Circle, 316
Element Gathering Difficulty Table, 280
Element Matrix (Ability), 97
[Element] Spear (Spell, El4), 304
Element Weaving Difficulty Table, 274
Elemental Air, 279
Elemental Coins, 434
Elemental Earth, 279
Elemental Fend (Blood Charm), 445
Elemental Fire, 279
Elemental Hold (Talent), 180
Elemental Tongues Difficulty Table, 181
Elemental Merchant (Spell, El10), 319
Elemental Tongues (Talent), 181
Elemental Water, 279
Elemental Wood, 279
Elementalism Spells: 295–321
  First Circle, 295
  Second Circle, 297
  Third Circle, 299
  Fourth Circle, 304
  Fifth Circle, 307
  Sixth Circle, 310
  Seventh Circle, 312
  Eighth Circle, 316
  Ninth Circle, 317
  Tenth Circle, 319
  Eleventh Circle, 321
  Twelfth Circle, 321
  Fourteenth Circle, 321
  Fifteenth Circle, 321
Elementalist Talent Knacks Table, 491
Elementalist, 42, 92–99
Elephant (Mount), 457
Elfweave Robe (Magic Item), 448
Elianar Messias, 21
Elven Court, 28, 482
Elven Warbow (Weapon), 437
Elves, 34–35
Emotion Song (Skill), 239
Emotion Song (Talent), 181
Empathic Command (Talent), 181
Empathic Sense (Talent), 182
Enchanted Gift (Power), 474
Enchanting Difficulty Modifiers Table, 276
Enchanting Process, 273–276
Enchanting Test, 275
Enchanting, 273–281
Encourage Trade (Power), 475
Encrypt (Spell, Il2), 326
Encumbrance, 48
Endure Cold (Talent), 182
Enduring Art (Talent), 182
Engaging Banter (Skill), 240
Engaging Banter (Talent), 182
Engulf [Element] (Spell, El7), 313
Enhanced Matrix (Talent), 182
Enslave (Power), 475
Entangling Weapons, 411
Enter and Exit (Spell, Il5), 333
Entertainer (Skill), 240
Ephemeral Bolt (Spell, Il2), 326
Epic (Knack), 220
Equivalent Skill Rank Table, 423
Equivalent Talent Circle Table, 428
Erase Horror Mark (Spell, Ne13), 373
Espagra-Scale Cloak (Armor), 440
Eternal Day (Spell, Il10), 343
Eternal Youth (Spell, Ne13), 373
Ethereal Darkness (Spell, Ne2), 348
Ethereal Weapon (Talent), 183
Etiquette (Skill), 240
Etiquette Table, 240
Evaluate (Skill), 240
Evaluate Item (Ability), 135
Evaluate Weapon (Ability), 155
Event Modifier Table, 391
Everclean Cloak (Magic Item), 448
Evidence Analysis (Skill), 240
Evidence Analysis (Talent), 183
Evil Eye (Spell, Ne4), 353
Excellent Result, 19
Experience Death (Spell, Ne1), 346
Experienced Characters Table, 55
Experienced Characters, 55
Explorer (Specialist, Scout), 117
Explosive Flame Arrow (Knack), 220
Extend Range (Knack), 220
Extraordinary Result, 19
Eye of Truth (Spell, Il5), 333
Eyes Have It (Spell, Il4), 331

—F—

Failed Thread Weaving Tests (Option), 267
Failla, 21
Falcon's Cloak (Spell, El4), 304
Fallan Pavelis, 30
False Aura (Spell, Wi3), 377
False Enchantment (Spell, Il7), 338
False Floor (Spell, Il3), 329
False Shackles (Skill), 240
False Sight (Talent), 183
Fame, 430
Familiars, 263
Far Speaking (Knack), 220
Fast Grab (Skill), 240
Fast Hand (Skill), 240
Fast Hand (Talent), 183
Fatal Food (Spell, Ne4), 353
Father of Thera, 21
Faulty Bowyer (Knack), 221
Faulty Goods (Knack), 221
Fearsome Charge (Talent), 183
Feinting Lunge (Knack), 221
Feinting Retreat (Knack), 221
Fence (Skill), 241
Fence (Talent), 184
Ferndask (Shield), 441
Fernweave (Armor), 440
Fingers of Wind (Spell, El3), 300
Fire and Ice (Ability), 97
Fire and Water (Spell, El10), 320
Fire Arrow (Knack), 221
Fire Heal (Talent), 184
Fire Hounds (Spell, El7), 314
Fire Starter (Magic Item), 448
Fire Wall (Spell, El9), 318
Fire Whip (Spell, El4), 304
Fireball (Spell, El5), 308
Fireblood (Talent), 184
Firefly Chalk (Magic Item), 448
Fireweave (Spell, El6), 310
First Book of Harrow, 22
First Governor Kanidris, 31
First Governor Nikodus, 31
First Impression (Skill), 241
First Impression (Talent), 184
First Ring of Perfection (Talent), 184
Fish, T'skrang (Provender), 454
Fishing (Skill), 241
Fishing Kit (Equipment), 451
Flail (Weapon), 435
Flame Arrow (Talent), 184
Flame Darts (Spell, El7), 315
Flame Flash (Spell, Wi1), 375
Flame Strike (Spell, El2), 298
Flameshaw (Spell, El6), 310
Flameweapon (Spell, El1), 296
Flaming Wounds (Knack), 221
Fleeing From Combat (Option), 410
Flesh Eater (Spell, Il5), 333
Flight Dagger (Weapon), 438
Flight, 49
Flirting (Skill), 241
Floating Chair (Magic Item), 448
Floranuus (Passion), 464
Flying Carpet (Spell, Il5), 334
Flying Kick (Knack), 221
Fog Ghost (Spell, Ne2), 348
Fog of Fear (Spell, Ne3), 351
Food and Lodging, 453, 454
Food, finding, 250
Footman's (Shield), 441
Foraging Table, 250
Foraging, 250
Foreseeing (Spell, Il6), 336
Forge Armor (Talent), 185
Forge Arrow (Knack), 221
Forge Blade (Talent), 185
Forge Falsemen (Spell, Ne12), 372
Forgery (Skill), 241
Forgotten City, 487
Form Exchange (Spell, Il8), 340
Fortify Structure (Power), 475
Foul Vapors (Spell, Ne6), 360
Foundation, 39
Fragile Pattern (Spell, Ne10), 369
Friend or Foe (Spell, Ne4), 354
Friendly Darkness (Spell, Ne6), 360
Frighten (Talent), 186
Frighten Animals (Talent), 186
Frozen Harbor (Spell, El10), 320
Fuel Flame (Spell, El3), 300
Full Movement, 47, 396
Fun With Doors (Spell, Il1), 324

—G—

Gadfly (Spell, Ne2), 348
Gahad, 49
Gain Surprise (Talent), 186
Gallant (Specialist, Swordmaster), 128, 130
Gamemaster Quick Reference, 505
Gaping Wounds (Knack), 222
Garlen (Passion), 464
Garlen Stone (Blood Charm), 445
Garlthik One-Eye, 487
Gateway (Spell, Ne10), 370
Gems, 434
General Knowledge, 232
General Skills, 52, 231
Ghost Masters, 425
Ghost Song (Ability), 142
Giant Size (Spell, Wi5), 382
Gills (Spell, El2), 298
Giving Ground, 405
Glamour (Ability), 103
Glenwood Deep, 482
Glide (Knack), 222
Gliding Stride (Talent), 186
Globe of Silence (Spell, Ne8), 364
Glowing Swarm (Spell, Wi9), 390
Goat, Riding (Mount), 457
Gold Coins, 433
Gold Sense (Talent), 187
Good Result, 19
Goods and Services, 342–459
Graceful Exit (Skill), 241
Graceful Exit (Talent), 187
Granlain (Mount), 457
Grappling Out-sized Opponents, 411
Grappling, 411
Grasping Hand of Earth (Spell, El7), 315
Grave Message (Spell, Ne3), 351
Great Houses, 39
Great Leap (Skill), 241
Great Leap (Talent), 187
Great Library of Throal, The, 431
Great Project, 22
Great Sticky Vines (Spell, El4), 304
Great Weapon (Spell, I14), 331
Greeting Rituals, 231
Griffin (Mount), 457
Grim Reaper (Spell, Il9), 342
Grimoire Casting, 290–291
Grimoire Damage Effects Table, 290
Grimoires, 284
Grounding (Spell, El3), 300
Group Legendary Status, 431
Group Name, 271
Group Symbol, 271
Group True Pattern Legend Point Cost Table, 272
Group True Patterns, 270–272

—H—

Haggle (Skill), 241
Haggle (Talent), 187
Hair Frenzy (Spell, Wi4), 380
Half-Magic Adepts, 60
Half-Magic Tests, 63
Half-Magic: 62–63
  Air Sailor, 70
  Archer, 75
  Beastmaster, 82
  Cavalryman, 89
  Elementalist, 97
  Illusionist, 104
  Nethermancer, 111
  Scout, 117
  Sky Raider, 123
  Swordmaster, 129
  Thief, 136
  Troubadour, 142
  Warrior, 149
  Weaponsmith, 156
  Wizard, 164
Halls of Throal, The, 27
Halt Disease (Knack), 222
Hambrell's Contract (Magic Item), 448
Hand-Axe (Weapon), 435
Harbingers, 461
Hard Glare (Knack), 222
Hardened Leather (Armor), 440
Haropas, 39–40
Harried, 408
Haunted House (Spell, Il10), 344

Haven, 487
Hawk Hatchet (Weapon), 438
Head Butt (Knack), 222
Heal (Power), 475
Heal Animal Servant (Talent), 187
Heal Others (Knack), 222
Healing Aid Table, 451
Healing Aids, 450–451
Healing Kit (Equipment), 452
Healing Mounts, 456
Healing Potion (Healing Aid), 450
Healing Sleep (Spell, Wi3), 378
Healing Wounds, 403
Health Ratings, 47
Heartblade, 151, 156
Heartening Laugh (Skill), 241
Heartening Laugh (Talent), 187
Heat Food (Spell, El1), 296
Heat Metal Armor (Spell, Wi5), 383
Heat Sight, 49
Heat Stone (Magic Item), 449
Hefera, 32
Helmets, 404, 439
Here's the Deal (Knack), 222
Hidden and Surface Traits (Option), 53
Hide (Armor), 440
Hide Matrix (Ability), 103
Hidden Traits, 53
High-Circle Spells, 292
Hold Multiple Threads (Knack), 223
Hold Pattern (Spell, Wi10), 392
Hold Thread (Talent), 187
Honor Braids, 87, 90
Horn Needle (Blood Charm), 445
Horror Analysis (Knack), 223
Horror Call (Spell, Ne8), 364
Horror Fend (Blood Charm), 446
Horror Mark, 289
Horrors, 20, 109
Horse, Draft (Mount), 457
Horse, Pony (Mount), 457
Horse, Riding (Mount), 457
Horse, War (Mount), 458
Hot Pot (Magic Item), 449
House Henghyoke, 486
House K'tenshin, 22, 486
House Ishkarat, 486
House Syrtis, 486
House T'kambras, 486
House V'strimon, 486
Howl (Talent), 188
Humans, 36
Hunger (Spell, Il4), 331
Hunter's Sense (Spell, El2), 298
Hunting (Skill), 242
Hunting Table, 242
Huntsman's Boots (Magic Item), 447
Huttawa (Mount), 458
Hypnotize (Skill), 242
Hypnotize (Talent), 188

— I —

Ice Mace and Chain (Spell, El3), 300
Ice Spear (Spell, El2), 298
Icewing, 26, 32
Icy Fingers (Spell, Wi4), 380
Icy Surface (Spell, El2), 298
Identify Magic (Spell, Wi4), 380
Identify Spell (Spell, Wi3), 378
Identify Tracks (Knack), 223
Ignite (Spell, Wi1), 375
Illusion (Spell, Il5), 334
Illusionism Spells: 322–344
  First Circle, 323
  Second Circle, 325
  Third Circle, 328
  Fourth Circle, 330
  Fifth Circle, 333
  Sixth Circle, 335
  Seventh Circle, 337
  Eighth Circle, 339
  Ninth Circle, 341
  Tenth Circle, 343
  Thirteenth Circle, 344
  Fourteenth Circle, 344
Illusionist Talent Knacks Table, 491
Illusionist, 42, 100–105
Illusionist, 42, 100–105
Illusory Missiles (Spell, Il6), 336
Illusory Spell (Spell, Il8), 340
Illusory Spells, 294
Impaired Movement, 408
Impossible Knot (Spell, Il2), 326
Impossible Lock (Spell, Il3), 329
Impressive Shot (Skill), 242
Impressive Shot (Talent), 188
Impressive Strike (Skill), 242
Impressive Strike (Talent), 188
Improve Armor (Talent), 188
Improve Blade (Talent), 189
Improve Karma (Spell, Il5), 334
Improved Alarm (Spell, Il4), 332
Improving Attributes, 420
Improving Skills, 421
Improving Talents, 421
Improvised Missiles (Knack), 223
Improvised Weapons (Knack), 223
Incessant Talking (Spell, Ne5), 357
Incite Greed (Power), 475
Incite Mob (Talent), 189
Incite Mob Table, 189
Incite Stampede (Talent), 189
Incite Stampede Table, 189
Increase Initiative (Power), 475
Increase Initiative Table, 475
Increase Perception (Power), 476
Increase Perception Table, 476
Increase Speed (Power), 476
Increase Stamina (Power), 476
Increase Stamina Table, 476
Increase Strength (Power), 476
Increase Strength Table, 476
Independent Talent Knacks (Option), 215
Infiltrator (Specialist, Scout), 117
Inflame Self (Spell, El5), 308
Initiate, 58, 61
Initiation Tests (Option), 426
Initiation, 61
Initiative Bonuses, 64
Initiative Booster (Blood Charm), 446
Initiative Penalties, 439, 443
Initiative Test, 395
Initiative, 47, 395
Initiative-based Movement (Option), 396
Injury, 402
Innocent Activity (Spell, Il2), 326
Insect Repellent (Spell, Ne1), 346
Inspire Rage (Power), 476
Inspire Rebellion (Power), 476
Inspire Rebellion Table, 476
Instill Love (Power), 476
Instill Love Table, 477
Invae Burnings, The, 22
Inventory (Spell, Wi4), 381
Invigorate (Spell, Wi5), 383
Involuntary Devotion (Option), 471
Iopos, 487
Iron Hand (Spell, Wi1), 375
Ironwood (Spell, El5), 308
Item History (Talent), 189

— J —

J'Role, the Honorable Thief, 29
Jaron, 25, 251
Jaspree (Passion), 465
Jerris, 487
Jik'harra, 39–40
Jothan IV, King, 26
Journey to Life (Spell, Wi10), 392
Journeyman, 61
Juggler's Touch (Spell, Wi4), 381
Jumping Up (Option), 405

— K —

Kaer Knocking (Spell, Wi4), 381
Kaer Pictographs (Spell, Wi5), 383
Kaers, 24
Kanidris, 31
Karma, 18, 47
Karma (Blood Charm), 446
Karma Absorber (Blood Charm), 446
Karma Bonuses, 64
Karma Cancel (Spell, Wi6), 385
Karma Dice, 18
Karma Die, 47
Karma Points, 423
Karma Ritual (Talent), 189
Karma Step, 47
Karma Step/Die, 47
Karma Table, 47
Karma, 18, 47, 167, 416, 429
Karmic Connection (Spell, Wi4), 381
Kat'ral, 39
Katera, 39
Katorr, 39
Kearos Navarim, 24, 26
Keen Blade (Ability), 129
Keesris (Provender), 454
Keesryp Berries, 454
Kelia's Antidote (Healing Aid), 451
Kelix's Poultice (Healing Aid), 451
Kern Fallo, 25
Key Knowledges, 265
Kiatsu, 40
Kila, 25
Kingdom of Throal, 485
Kiss, The (Ability), 142
Knife (Weapon), 435
Knockdown Test, 400
Knockdown, 403, 414, 418
Knocked Down, 409
Knowledge, 266
Knowledge, Related, 232
Knowledge, Somewhat Related, 232
Knowledge, Specific, 232
Knowledge, Unrelated, 232
Knowledge (Skill), 242
Knowledge Skill Limits, 233
Knowledge Skills, 51, 231, 232
Knowledge Test Table, 232
Knowledge Tests, 232
Kratas, 487
Krathis Gron, 32
Kue (Mount), 458
Kyaapas, 40

— L —

Lake Ban, 484
Lake Pyros, 484
Lake Vors, 484
Lalai Gorge, 483
Lance (Weapon), 435
Landis, 24
Language Difficulty Table, 196, 201
Language Skills, 52, 233
Languages as Individual Skills (Option), 233
Lankarden, 487
Last Chance (Spell, Ne4), 354
Last Chance Salve (Healing Aid), 451
Lasting Impression (Talent), 190
Lasting Memory (Knack), 223
Leadership (Talent), 190
Leaping Lizards (Spell, Il8), 341
Leaps and Bounds (Spell, Wi3), 378
Learning Disciplines, 425
Learning Spells, 283
Learning Talents From Higher Circles (Option), 422
Leather (Armor), 440
Legend Point Cost Table, 515
Legend Points, 16
Legendary Items, 278
Legendary Status Levels, 430
Legendary Status Table, 430
Legendary Status, 430
Levitate (Spell, Wi3), 378
Liaj Jungle, 482
Liar (Knack), 223
Library Access, 455
Life Check (Talent), 190
Life Circle of One (Spell, Ne2), 349
Liferock, 36–37
Liferock Rebellion, 31
Lifesight (Talent), 190
Lift the Curtain (Knack), 223
Lifting Capacity, 48
Light (Spell, Il1), 324
Light Quartz (Magic Item), 449
Light Quartz Weapon (Magic Item), 449
Lighten Load (Spell, El4), 305
Lightning Bolt (Spell, El3), 301
Lightning Cloud (Spell, Wi7), 387
Lightning Shield (Spell, El4), 305
Lightning Song (Ability), 122
Lightning Step (Spell, El4), 305
Lightning Throw (Knack), 224
Lingam, 24
Lion Heart (Talent), 190
Lion Spirit (Talent), 191
Lip Reading (Skill), 242
Lip Reading (Talent), 191
Liquid Arrow (Spell, El4), 305
Liquid Eyes (Spell, Wi7), 387
Living Armor, 277, 439
Living Crystal (Armor), 440
Living Crystal, 279
Living Death (Power), 477
Living Hair Barding (Armor), 440
Living Wall (Spell, El6), 311
Lizard Leap (Talent), 191
Loan Spell (Spell, Wi6), 385
Locate Valuables (Power), 477
Lochost (Passion), 465
Lock Picking (Skill), 242
Lock Picking (Talent), 191
Lock Sense (Talent), 191
Lodestone's Touch (Spell, El4), 306
Longbow (Weapon), 437
Longing Ring, 29
Long-Spear (Weapon), 435
Lorm's Axe, 13
Lowering Spell Defense, 287
Low-Light Vision, 49, 407

— M —

Mace (Weapon), 435
Mad Passions, 461, 463, 466, 468
Mage Armor (Spell, Wi5), 383
Magic, 16, 251
Magical Equipment, 443–450
Magical Theory, 251
Magicians, 16, 51
Maintain Spell Threads (Knack), 224
Major Pattern Items, 253
Makeshift Missile (Spell, Wi5), 383
Makeshift Weapon (Spell, Wi6), 385
Making an Impression, 231
Maneuver (Skill), 242
Maneuver (Talent), 191
Manipulate Desire (Power), 477
Mapmaker (Specialist, Troubadour), 142
Mapmaking (Skill), 243
Maps, 243
Marathon Run (Spell, Ne7), 363
Marrek, 483
Martyr Scholar, The, 21
Massive Missiles (Spell, Il8), 341
Master Elementalism Spells Table, 494
Master Illusionism Spells Table, 496
Master Nethermancy Spells Table, 498
Master Skill Table, 493
Master Talent table, 489
Master Wizardry Spells Table, 500
Master, 61
Matched Weapons (Knack), 224
Matrix Casting, 287
Matrix Split (Ability), 163
Matrix Strike (Talent), 191
Maximum Karma Points, 47
Maximum Weapon Damage (Option), 399
Meach Vara Lingam, 24
Melee Attacks, 412
Melee Combat Positions Diagram, 410
Melee Weapons (Skill), 243

Melee Weapons (Talent), 191
Melee Weapons Table, 436
Memorize Image (Talent), 192
Memory Blank (Spell, Il4), 332
Memory Scribe (Spell, Il6), 337
Mental Library (Spell, Wi6), 385
Message Stone (Magic Item), 449
Metal Scream (Spell, El5), 308
Metal Ward (Talent), 192
Metal Wings (Spell, El5), 309
Mighty Throw (Knack), 224
Mimic Music (Knack), 224
Mimic Voice (Skill), 243
Mimic Voice (Talent), 192
Mind Dagger (Spell, Wi1), 375
Mind Fog (Spell, Il3), 329
Mind Trick (Knack), 224
Mind Wave (Talent), 192
Minimum Casting Difficulty, 294
Minimum Dexterity, 434
Minimum Step Number, 18
Minimum Strength, 434
Minimum Test Result, 18
Minimum Weapon Damage (Option), 399
Minor Adepts, 60
Minor Pattern Items, 253
Missile Attacks, 412
Missile Twister (Talent), 192
Missile Weapons (Skill), 243
Missile Weapons (Talent), 192
Missile Weapons Table, 437
Mist Swamps, 484
Modifiers, 18
Momentum Attack (Skill), 243
Momentum Attack (Talent), 192
Monstrous Mantle (Spell, Il2), 327
Month, 19
Moon Shadow (Spell, El9), 318
Moonglow (Spell, El1), 296
Mothingale River, 483
Mount Attack (Skill), 243
Mount Attack (Talent), 193
Mount Call (Spell, Ne1), 346
Mount Death, 90
Mount Durability (Talent), 193
Mountain Hoof (Knack), 224
Mounted Combat, 413–415
Mounted Unarmed Attacks, 414
Mounts Table, 457
Mounts, 456
Move on Through (Spell, Wi7), 387
Movement Rates, 47
Movement, 47, 396
Moving Earth (Talent), 193
Mule, Pack (Mount), 458
Multi-Charge (Talent), 193
Multi-Discipline Karma Rituals (Option), 429
Multi-Mind Dagger (Spell, Wi6), 385
Multi-Missile (Spell, Il4), 332
Multiple Disciplines, 59, 425
Multi-Shot (Talent), 193
Multi-Strike (Talent), 193
Multi-Tongue (Talent), 193
Multi-Weaving (Talent), 193
Mynbruje (Passion), 21, 466
Mystic Aim (Talent), 194
Mystic Armor, 46
Mystic Net (Spell, Wi7), 387
Mystic Shock (Spell, Wi5), 383
Mystic Vessel (Spell, Ne9), 367

— N —

Name Spell (Knack), 224
Named Spell Key Knowledges Table, 292
Named Spells, 291–292
Named Spells, Dispelling, 292
Name-givers, 20, 33–40, 252
Name-giving, 252
Names, 20, 252
Naming, 252
Naming Items, 274
Naming Ritual, 271
Natural Armor, 50
Navigation (Skill), 243
Navigation Difficulty Table, 244
Neden, 31
Nehr'esham, 21
Net (Weapon), 438
Netherblade (Spell, Ne8), 365
Nethermagic, 108
Nethermancer Talent Knacks Table, 491
Nethermancer, 42, 106–112
Nethermancy Spells: 345–373
  First Circle, 345
  Second Circle, 347
  Third Circle, 350
  Fourth Circle, 352
  Fifth Circle, 355
  Sixth Circle, 359
  Seventh Circle, 361
  Eighth Circle, 364
  Ninth Circle, 366
  Tenth Circle, 368
  Eleventh Circle, 371
  Twelfth Circle, 372
  Thirteenth Circle, 373
  Fourteenth Circle, 373
Netherwalk (Talent), 194
Netherwalk Damage Table, 194
New Discipline Talent Cost Table, 426
Niall, 39
Nightflyer's Cloak (Spell, Ne4), 354
Nightmare of Foreboding (Spell, Il4), 332
Nikar Carinci, 31
Nikodus, 30, 31
Noble Manner (Spell, Il5), 335
Nobody Here (Spell, Il3), 329
Notice Not (Spell, Wi3), 378
Novelties, T'skrang (Equipment), 452
Novice, 61
Nutritious Earth (Spell, El5), 309

— O —

Oak-Leaf Cloak (Magic Item), 448
Observe Event (Spell, Wi9), 391
Obsidiman Skin (Armor), 441
Obsidimen, 36–37
Offguard (Knack), 225
Oil Flask, Burning (Weapon), 438
Old Theran Road, 480
Omasu, 31
One of the Crowd (Spell, Il9), 342
One-Size Hat (Magic Item), 449
Onion Blood (Spell, Wi10), 393
Open Region, 256
Optional Rules Table, 505
Optional Rules, 16
Orbiting Spy (Talent), 195
Orbiting Watcher (Knack), 224
Orichalcum Container (Magic Item), 449
Orichalcum Pieces, 434
Orichalcum Tithes, 97
Orichalcum Wars, 24, 25
Orichalcum, 281
Ork Stoke (Spell, Wi3), 379
Orks, 37–38
Or'zet (Ork tongue), 52, 196, 201
Other Animals Table, 458
Other Place (Spell, Il8), 341
Otherworldly Control (Ability), 110
Overland Trading Company, 31
Overwhelmed (Option), 408

— P —

Pack Bags (Spell, Ne3), 351
Padded Cloth (Armor), 441
Padded Leather (Armor), 441
Pain (Spell, Ne3), 351
Parlainth, 29, 487
Pass Ward (Spell, Ne5), 357
Passions, 20, 460, 462–468
Pathetic Result, 19, 231
Path Home (Spell, El2), 298
Path of Lords, 35
Path of Sages, 35
Path of Scholars, 35
Path of Travelers, 35
Path of Warriors, 35
Pattern Item Spell Defense Table, 269
Pattern Items, 253, 254, 268
Pattern Knowledge, 265
Pauper's Purse (Spell, Il1), 324
Peacebond (Spell, Wi8), 388
Penalty, 18
Perceive Emotion (Power), 477
Perception (PER), 43
Perimeter Alarm (Spell, El8), 316
Permanent Spell Patterns, 274
Personal Visions (Option), 429
Personal Visions, 60, 429
Personality Traits Table, 53, 502
Personality Traits, 53
Personality, 53, 54
Pervert Emotion (Spell, Ne12), 373
Pestain, 455
Petrify (Spell, El10), 320
Phantom Fireball (Spell, Il5), 335
Phantom Warrior (Spell, Il3), 330
Photographic Memory (Knack), 225
Physical Armor, 46
Physical Defense, 46
Physician (Skill), 244
Physician Treatment Table, 244
Physician's Kit (Equipment), 453
Picking Pockets (Skill), 244
Picking Pockets (Talent), 195
Piecemeal Armor Initiative Penalty Table, 443
Piecemeal Armor Price Table, 443
Piecemeal Armor Rating Table, 442
Piecemeal Armor, 442–443
Pilot Boat (Skill), 244
Pin (Skill), 245
Pin (Talent), 195
Pin Down (Knack), 225
Pin Up (Knack), 225
Placed Shot (Knack), 225
Placed Throw (Knack), 225
Plant Feast (Spell, El3), 301
Plant Growth (Power), 478
Plant Growth Table, 478
Plant Shelter (Talent), 195
Plant Talk (Spell, El1), 296
Plate Mail (Armor), 441
Pleasant Visions (Spell, Il5), 335
Pocket Guardian (Spell, Ne2), 349
Poison Forest, 482
Poison Resistance (Talent), 195
Poison Sac (Blood Charm), 446
Pole Arm (Weapon), 435
Pole-Axe (Weapon), 435
Population, 479
Porter (Spell, El3), 301
Pot of Grumbah (Magic Item), 449
Preserve (Spell, Ne3), 352
Provender Table, 454
Provender, 454–455
P'skarrot, 40
Puddle Deep (Spell, El3), 301
Purchase Difficulty Table, 249
Purchase Points, 43
Purchasing Goods, 432–433
Pure Water Pot (Magic Item), 449
Purify Earth (Spell, El1), 296
Purify Forest (Spell, El15), 321
Purify Water (Spell, El1), 296
Pushing Talents and Abilities, 260
Putrefy (Spell, Ne1), 347

— Q —

Quarique Oathstone, 487
Quarterstaff (Weapon), 435
Questor (Talent), 195
Questor Powers Table, 492
Questors, 20, 468–478
  Astendar's Questors, 462
  Chorrolis' Questors, 463
  Dis' Questors, 463
  Floranuus' Questors, 464
  Garlen's Questors, 464
  Jaspree's Questors, 465
  Lochost's Questors, 466
  Mynbruje's Questors, 466
  Raggok's Questors, 466
  Thystonius' Questors, 467
  Upandal's Questors, 468
  Vestrial's Questors, 468
Quick Shot (Talent), 196
Quickblade (Skill), 245
Quickblade (Talent), 195
Quicken Pace (Spell, Wi3), 379
Quiet Pouch (Magic Item), 450
Quiet-Fingers Gloves (Magic Item), 450
Quiver (Equipment), 437

— R —

Races, 33–40, 41, 43
Racial Abilities Table, 48
Racial Abilities, 41, 48–50
Racial Attribute Modifiers Table, 45, 502
Racial Composition, 479
Racial Languages, 52
Racial Modifiers, 44
Racial Movement and Karma Table, 502
Racial Movement Table, 47
Racial Restrictions, 63
Raggok (Mad Passion), 466
Raggok Incident, The, 27
Raise Undead (Power), 478
Rally (Talent), 196
Rampage (Spell, Wi6), 385
Random Roll Method (Option), 44
Range Modifiers, 412
Range Pattern (Talent), 196
Range, 412
Ranged Combat, 411–413
Rank Number, 17
Rank Points, 51
Rapier Wit (Knack), 225
Raw Magic Table, 289
Raw Magic, 289–290
Razor Orb (Spell, Wi6), 386
Read and Write Language (Skill), 245
Read and Write Language (Talent), 196
Read and Write Magic (Skill), 245
Read and Write Magic (Talent), 197
Read River (Skill), 245
Realigning Durability (Option), 428
Reattach Limb (Spell, Wi9), 391
Reattuning Difficulty, 293
Reattuning Matrices, 288
Reattuning on the Fly, 288
Rebel Limb (Spell, Il7), 338
Recovery (Spell, Ne6), 361
Recovery Tests, 17, 47
Recovery, 402
Region, Corrupt, 256
Region, Open, 256
Region, Safe, 256
Region, Tainted, 256
Related Knowledge, 232
Related Tests, 166, 231
Relax (Spell, Wi4), 381
Remember Conversation (Knack), 226
Remove Shadow (Spell, Il2), 327
Re-Naming Items, 274
Repair (Spell, El3), 302
Repairing Armor, 156, 442
Repairing Damaged Armor, 156, 442
Repairing Damaged Weapons, 156, 439
Repairing Weapons, 156, 439
Repel Animal (Spell, Ne2), 349
Research (Skill), 245
Research Knowledge, 266
Research Table, 245
Reserved Actions, 397
Reshape Object (Talent), 197
Resist Cold (Spell, El1), 297

Resist Disease Potion (Healing Aid), 451
Resist Fire (Spell, El1), 297
Resist Poison (Spell, El5), 309
Resist Taunt (Skill), 245
Resist Taunt (Talent), 197
Resolving Actions, 397
Resolving Attacks, 398
Restore Pattern (Spell, Il13), 344
Restrain Entity (Spell, Ne7), 363
Restrain Horror (Spell, Ne8), 365
Restricted Versatility (Option), 209
Result, 18–19
Result, Average, 19
Result, Excellent, 19
Result, Extraordinary, 19
Result, Good, 19
Result, Pathetic, 19
Result Level Table, 19, 504
Result Level, 18–19
Resurrect Mount, 89
Resurrect Self (Ability), 149
Return Youthful Spirit (Power), 478
Reversal of Passion (Spell, Il7), 338
Reverse Withering (Spell, Ne7), 363
Reviving Unconscious Characters, 403
Revulsion (Spell, Il9), 342
Rhetoric (Skill), 245
R'Graya Basha'k, King, 25
Ricochet Attack (Spell, El6), 311
Rider's (Shield), 441
Ring Mail (Armor), 441
Riposte (Skill), 246
Riposte (Talent), 197
Riposting Longer Weapons (Option), 198
Rites of Protection, 24
Ritual of the Ghost Master (Talent), 198
Rituals of Advancement (Option): 63
  Air Sailor, 70
  Archer, 76
  Beastmaster, 83
  Cavalryman, 90
  Elementalist, 98
  Illusionist, 104
  Nethermancer, 111
  Scout, 117
  Sky Raider, 123
  Swordmaster, 130
  Thief, 136
  Troubadour, 143
  Warrior, 150
  Weaponsmith, 157
  Wizard, 164
Root Trap (Spell, El4), 306
Rope Guide (Spell, Il1), 325
Rope Ladder (Spell, Wi2), 376
Round, 19
Rule of One, The, 18
Rule of Three, The (Option), 18
Rushing Attack (Skill), 246
Rushing Attack (Talent), 198
Rust (Spell, El3), 302

— S —

Sacrifice Magic, 262–263
Sadoor Net (Weapon), 438
Safe Opening (Spell, Wi8), 389
Safe Passage (Ability), 69
Safe Path (Talent), 198
Safe Region, 256
Safe Thought (Talent), 198
Sage (Specialist, Troubadour), 142
Sailing (Skill), 246
Salve of Closure (Healing Aid), 451
Sa'mistishsa, 35
Sanctuary (Spell, Wi5), 384
Sap (Weapon), 436
Scarlet Sea, 485
Scatter Diagram, 413
Scatter, 413
Scavia, 484
School of Shadows, 23
Scol Mountains, 481
Scorchers, 32, 479
Scourge, 14, 20, 29, 251, 479
Scout Talent Knacks Table, 491
Scout, 42, 113–118
Screaming Arrow (Talent), 199
Scribe, 455
Sculpt Darkness (Spell, Ne5), 357
Scytha Mountains, 481
Seal (Spell, Wi2), 377
Seal Home (Power), 478
Season Lamp (Magic Item), 450
Second Attack (Skill), 246
Second Attack (Talent), 199
Second Chance (Talent), 199
Second Riposte (Knack), 226
Second Weapon (Skill), 246
Second Weapon (Talent), 199
Seduction (Skill), 246
See the Unseen (Spell, Il3), 330
Seeking Sight (Spell, Wi3), 379
Selestrean Sea, 21, 486
Send Message (Spell, Il2), 327
Sense Horror (Spell, Ne5), 357
Sense Magic Weapon (Talent), 199
Sense Poison (Talent), 200
Sensing Difficulty, 322
Sensing Elemental Spirits, 97
Sensing Elements, 97
Sensing Illusions, 322
Sensing Spirits, 111
Separation of Shosara, 21
Serpent River, 483
Servalen, 484
Services, 453
Services, Trade, 455
Servos Jungle, 482
Servos River, 483
Setting Against a Charge, 406
Setup (Knack), 226
Severing Limbs (Option), 417
Shackle Shrug (Skill), 246
Shadow Heal (Ability), 136
Shadow Hide (Knack), 226
Shadow Hunter (Spell, Ne5), 357
Shadow Meld (Spell, Ne3), 352
Shadow Palace (Spell, Il14), 344
Shadow Spell (Spell, Il8), 341
Shadow Tether (Spell, Ne8), 365
Shadow's Whisper (Spell, Ne2), 349
Shadowcloak (Ability), 135
Shantaya's Sextant, 243
Share Sense (Knack), 226
Shared Matrix (Talent), 200
Shatter Lock (Spell, Wi3), 379
Shatter Pattern (Spell, Ne11), 371
Shattering a Shield (Option), 406
Shattering Stone (Spell, El5), 309
Shelter, Finding, 250
Shield Beater (Talent), 200
Shield Bonuses, 401
Shield Charge (Skill), 247
Shield Charge (Talent), 200
Shield Mist (Spell, Ne2), 350
Shield of Warping (Spell, El4), 306
Shield Restrictions, 439
Shield Table, 441
Shield Willow (Spell, El2), 298
Shields and Armor-Defeating Hits (Option), 402
Shields, 401, 439, 441
Shift Skin (Spell, Ne9), 367
Shift Walls (Spell, Il9), 342
Shivalahala, 39
Short Sword (Weapon), 436
Shortbow (Weapon), 437
Short-Spear (Weapon), 436
Shosara, 24
Shosara, Separation of, 21
Show Armor Flaw (Talent), 200
Signature Spells (Knack), 226
Silence Metal (Spell, El8), 316
Silent Converse (Spell, Wi1), 376
Silent Darkness (Spell, Ne9), 367
Silent Stampede (Spell, Il7), 338
Silent Walk (Skill), 247
Silent Walk (Talent), 201
Silver Coins, 433
Silver Pieces, 433
Silver Shadow (Spell, El8), 317
Silverspring, 483
Simple Actions, 397
Situation Modifiers Table, 407, 505
Situation Modifiers, 406–409
Skill Descriptions, 234–250
Skill Ranks, 51, 230
Skill Training Table, 421
Skill Use, 230
Skills, 230–250
Sky Lattice (Spell, El3), 302
Sky Point, 23, 24, 30, 486
Sky Raider Talent Knacks Table, 491
Sky Raiders, 32, 42, 119–124
Sleep (Spell, Wi6), 386
Sling (Weapon), 437
Slough Blame (Skill), 247
Slough Blame (Talent), 201
Slow (Spell, Wi5), 384
Slow Metal Weapon (Spell, El2), 299
Small Slayer (Spell, El2), 299
Smoke Cloud (Spell, El3), 302
Smooth Armor (Knack), 226
Sniper, 76
Snuff (Spell, El3), 302
Social Defense, 46
Social Defense Rating, 46
Soften Blade (Talent), 201
Solo Flight (Spell, Wi5), 384
Somewhat Related Knowledge, 232
Song of Deflection (Talent), 201
Songs of Inspiration (Knack), 226
Soothe the Savage Beast (Spell, Il3), 330
Soul Armor (Spell, Ne6), 361
Soul Shatter (Talent), 201
Soul Swords, 130
Soul Trap (Spell, Ne10), 370
Speak Language (Skill), 247
Speak Language (Talent), 201
Spear (Weapon), 436
Spear (Weapon), 438
Special Actions, 397
Specific Knowledge, 232
Speed Ship (Power), 478
Spell Bonuses, 64
Spell Cage (Spell, Wi7), 388
Spell Combat, 413
Spell Crystal Lock (Talent), 202
Spell Defense Bonus, 402
Spell Defense, 46
Spell Defense Rating, 46, 285
Spell Descriptions, 239, 295–394
Spell Distance Difficulty Table, 351, 370
Spell Duration, 287, 294
Spell Effect, 287, 294
Spell Fusion (Spell, Wi10), 393
Spell Learning Cost (Option), 284
Spell Learning Difficulty Table, 283
Spell Legend Point Cost (Option), 284
Spell Legend Point Cost Table, 284
Spell Magic, 282–294
Spell Matrices, 287
Spell Matrix (Talent), 202
Spell Matrix Objects, 277, 289
Spell Matrix Types, 287
Spell Pattern, 16, 282
Spell Points, 51
Spell Snatcher (Spell, Wi8), 389
Spell Stacking (Knack), 227
Spell Threads, 283, 293
Spellcasting (Skill), 247
Spellcasting (Talent), 202
Spellcasting Sequence, 286
Spellcasting Test, 286
Spellcasting, 282, 285
Spellstore (Spell, Wi6), 386
Sperethiel (Elf language), 52, 196, 201
Sphinx, The, 25, 26
Spice, T'skrang (Provender), 455
Spiked Mace (Weapon), 436
Spirit Binding, 275
Spirit Bolt (Spell, Ne7), 363
Spirit Dart (Spell, Ne1), 347
Spirit Dodge (Talent), 202
Spirit Double (Spell, Ne3), 352
Spirit Flame (Knack), 227
Spirit Grip (Spell, Ne1), 347
Spirit Hold (Talent), 203
Spirit Mount (Talent), 203
Spirit Portal (Spell, Ne7), 363
Spirit Servant (Spell, Ne4), 354
Spirit Shield (Knack), 227
Spirits of Death's Sea (Spell, El4), 306
Spirit Strike (Talent), 203
Spirit Talk (Talent), 203
Spirit Tempest (Spell, Ne10), 370
Spiritual Guidance (Spell, Ne5), 358
Spirit Wings, 298
Splitting Movement (Option), 406
Splitting Movement, 406
Spore Gland (Blood Charm), 447
Spot Armor Flaw (Talent), 203
Spotlight (Spell, Il6), 337
Sprint (Talent), 204
Stajian (Mount), 458
Stampede (Spell, Il7), 338
Standard Actions, 396
Star Shower (Spell, Ne5), 358
Starting Equipment, 52
Starting Equipment Table, 52, 502
Starting Karma Points, 47
Status Levels, 430
Steal Strength (Spell, Ne7), 363
Steel Thought (Talent), 204
Steely Stare (Talent), 204
Stench (Spell, Il6), 337
Step 1, 17
Step 2, 17
Step Modifiers (Option), 18
Step Numbers, 17, 167, 231
Step Through Shadow (Spell, Ne7), 364
Step/Action Dice Table, 17, 504, 510
Steps, 17
Sterilize Object (Spell, El2), 299
Stick Together (Spell, El2), 299
Stone Cage (Spell, El5), 310
Stone Rain (Spell, El6), 312
Stone Skin (Talent), 204
Stop Right There (Spell, Il4), 332
Stopping Aim (Talent), 204
Storm Manacles (Spell, El7), 315
Strain, 167, 230
Streetwise (Skill), 247
Strength (STR), 43
Strength Booster (Blood Charm), 447
Strength Minimum, 434
Strength of the Sky (Ability), 122
Strength, 43
Stress Depatterning, 446
Strong Pattern (Spell, Ne10), 371
Study Thread (Spell, Wi5), 384
Study Time Table, 269
Stun, 404
Subliminal Mutterings (Knack), 227
Suffocating Paste (Spell, El4), 307
Suffocation (Spell, Il3), 330
Summon (Talent), 204
Summon Bone Ghost (Spell, Ne3), 352
Summoning Circle (Talent), 205
Sunlight (Spell, El3), 303
Sure Mount (Skill), 247
Sure Mount (Talent), 205
Surface Traits, 53
Surprise Strike (Skill), 247
Surprise Strike (Talent), 205
Surprise, 409
Sustained Action, 397
Swab the Deck (Knack), 227
Swift Hoof (Knack), 227
Swift Kick (Skill), 247
Swift Kick (Talent), 205
Swimming (Skill), 248
Swing Attack (Talent), 205
Swinging in the Rigging (Knack), 227
Switch (Spell, Il5), 335
Swooping Attacks, 418
Swordmaster Talent Knacks Table, 491
Swordmaster, 42, 125–131

— T —

T'skrang, 39–40
Tack and Harness Table, 458
Tack and Harness, 458
Tactics (Skill), 248
Tail Attack, 50
Tailor (Spell, Il2), 327
Tainted Region, 256
Take the Initiative (Option), 396
Tale, The (Ability), 142
Talent Cost Multiplier Table, 422
Talent Crises (Option), 59, 62
Talent Crisis Table, 62
Talent Crisis, 59, 62
Talent Descriptions, 167–212
Talent Duration, 167
Talent Knacks, 213–229
Talent Linking (Knack), 227
Talent Pattern (Talent), 206
Talent Rank Cost Table, 421
Talent Ranks, 50, 421
Talent Shredder (Spell, Ne9), 368
Talent Test, 166
Talents, 16, 166–212
Talisman (Magic Item), 450
Talisman, 444
Tame Mount (Skill), 248
Tame Mount (Talent), 206
Tansiarda, 483
Tap Horror Karma (Spell, Ne10), 371
Target Portal (Spell, Ne5), 358
Targeting Eye (Blood Charm), 447
Taunt (Skill), 248
Taunt (Talent), 206
Tears of the Scourge (Spell, Ne5), 358
Tell Tale (Spell, Wi9), 391
Telling the Tale (Knack), 228
Temper Other (Talent), 206
Temper Self (Talent), 206
Temperature (Talent), 206
Test Result, 17–18
Thandos V, 23
The Adept's Way, 57
The Pilgrimage Route, 480
The Rule of One, 18
The Rule of Three (Option), 18
The Twelve, 23
Thera, 23, 24, 31, 486
Theran Armada, 24
Theran Empire, 486
Theran Uyglar (Provender), 455
Thief Talent Knacks Table, 492
Thief, 42, 132–137
Thieves' City, 487
Thieves' Picks and Tools (Equipment), 453
Thom Edro, 25
Thorny Retreat (Spell, Wi4), 382
Thought Link (Talent), 206
Thoughtful Expression (Talent), 207
Thread Items, 278
Thread Limits, 264
Thread Magic, 264–272
Thread Masking (Knack), 228
Thread Sight, 207, 259
Thread Weapons, 439
Thread Weaving (Talent), 207
Thread Weaving Difficulty Table, 267
Thread Weaving Knacks, 429
Thread Weaving Talent Table, 207
Threads, 254, 264, 283
Thrive (Spell, El3), 303
Throal, 486
Throal Mountains, 481
Throalic Calendar, 506
Throne of Air (Spell, El3), 303
Throwing Axe (Weapon), 438
Throwing Dagger (Weapon), 438
Throwing Objects, 413
Throwing Weapons (Skill), 248
Throwing Weapons (Talent), 207
Throwing Weapons Table, 438
Thrown Attacks, 412
Thunder Axe (Talent), 207
Thunderclap (Spell, El7), 315
Thundering Walls (Spell, Il9), 342
Thunder Mountains, 481
Thundra Beast (mount), 458
Thystonius (Passion), 467
Tiger Spring (Talent), 207
Time Flies (Spell, Il7), 339
Time of Hiding, 29
Time, 19
Timeline, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31
Tossing Earth (Spell, El6), 312
Toughness (TOU), 43
Toughness, 43
Trace Missile (Talent), 207
Tracking (Skill), 249
Tracking (Talent), 208
Trade Routes, 480
Trade Services Table, 455
Trade Services, 455
Trading (Skill), 249
Training Pledge, 424
Training, 424
Traits, 53
Trample (Skill), 249
Trample (Talent), 208
Translator (Knack), 228
Translator Spirit (Spell, Ne8), 365
Transport, 455–456
Transportation Table, 456
Transportation, 455–456
Trap Initiative (Skill), 249
Trap Initiative (Talent), 208
Travar, 487
Traveler's Mug (Magic Item), 450
Tree Merge (Spell, El6), 312
Triangulate (Spell, Wi1), 376
Trick Riding (Skill), 249
Trick Riding (Talent), 208
Trikella, 455
Trispear (Weapon), 436
Triumph, The, 31, 32, 487
Troajin (Mount), 458
Troll Sling (Weapon), 437
Troll Sword (Weapon), 436
Trolls, 38–39
Trosk, 484
Troubadour Talent Knacks Table, 492
Troubadour, 42, 138–144
True Air, 279
True Blazing Fists of Rage (Spell, Il1), 325
True Earth, 279
True Element Kernel Cost Table, 281
True Elements, 278–281
True Elements, Gathering, 280
True Elements, Mining, 280
True Elements, Purchasing, 281
True Ephemeral Bolt (Spell, Il2), 328
True Fire, 279
True Patterns, 264
True Shot (Talent), 208
True Sight (Talent), 208
True to Form, 256
True Water, 279
True Wood, 279
Trust (Spell, Wi4), 382
Truth Skit (Talent), 208
Twilight Peaks, 481
Twisted Tongues (Spell, Il7), 339
Two-Handed Sword (Weapon), 436
Tylon Mountains, 481
Tylon River, 483
Typical Artisan Skill Table, 236
Typical Knowledge Skill Table, 242

— U —

Ulutar, Queen, 27
Unarmed Attacks, 411
Unarmed Combat (Skill), 249
Unarmed Combat (Talent), 209
Unconscious Characters, 401, 402
Unconsciousness Rating, 16, 47
Undead Struggle (Spell, Ne1), 347
Undeath, 108
Uneven Ground (Spell, El4), 307
Unmask (Spell, Il4), 333
Unmount (Skill), 249
Unmount (Talent), 209
Unnatural Life (Spell, Ne11), 372
Unraveling (Knack), 228
Unrelated Knowledge, 232
Unseen Voices (Spell, Il1), 325
Unshakable Earth (Talent), 209
Untutored Spell Learning (Option), 284
Unweaving Threads (Option), 270
Upandal (Passion), 467
Upandal's Blessings (Magic Item), 450
Urupa, 487
Ustandar, 455
Ustrect, 24

— V —

Vaare Longfang, 29, 30
Varulus I, 27
Varulus III, 31
Varulus, 30
Vedette, 25
Venom (Talent), 209
Versatility (Talent), 209
Versatility, 50, 429
Vertical Jump (Knack), 228
Vertigo (Spell, Il7), 339
Vestrial (Mad Passion), 468
Vestrial, 468
Viewpoint (Spell, Ne4), 354
Vines (Spell, Wi2), 377
Visions of Death (Spell, Ne4), 355
Visit Death (Spell, Ne8), 366
Vital Strike (Talent), 209
Vitality (Talent), 209
Vivane, 487
Void Wave (Spell, Ne9), 368
Volus Brooch Table, 450
Volus Brooch (Magic Item), 450

— W —

Wake-Up Call (Spell, Wi2), 377
Walk Through (Spell, Il7), 339
Walking Dead (Spell, Ne9), 368
Wall of Bones (Spell, Ne8), 366
Wall of Darkness (Spell, Ne6), 361
Wall of Unfire (Spell, Il5), 335
Wall Walker (Spell, Wi1), 376
Warden, 61
Warhammer (Weapon), 436
Warm Cloak (Magic Item), 448
Warning Shot (Talent), 210
Warp Astral Space (Spell, Wi10), 393
Warp Missile (Talent), 210
Warping Damage, 289
Warping Test, 289
Warping, 289
Warrior Talent Knacks Table, 492
Warrior, 42, 145–151
Wastes, The, 481
Water Condition Table, 248
Water Dancing (Talent), 210
Water Mount (Knack), 228
Water Wall (Spell, El9), 318
Water Wings (Spell, Wi3), 379
Water, finding, 250
Waterspout (Spell, El8), 317
Weapon Back (Spell, El4), 307
Weapon Breaker (Skill), 250
Weapon Breaker (Talent), 210
Weapon History (Talent), 210
Weapon Reach (Option), 410
Weapon Scream (Knack), 229
Weapon Size Restriction Table, 434
Weapon Size Restrictions, 434
Weapon Size, 434
Weaponsmith Talent Knacks Table, 492
Weaponsmith, 42, 152–158
Weather Change (Spell, El10), 320
Weather Cloak (Spell, Il2), 328
Weather, 479
Weave Element (Knack), 228
Weaving Difficulty, 286, 290, 293
Weaving Threads, 265, 268, 272, 286
Week, 19
Weight, 20
Wheeling Attack (Skill), 250
Wheeling Attack (Talent), 211
Wheeling Defense (Skill), 250
Wheeling Defense (Talent), 211
Wheel of Life, The, 35
Whip (Weapon), 436
Whirlwind (Spell, El7), 315
Whirlwind (Talent), 211
Whisper Through the Night (Spell, Ne5), 359
Whispered Conversation (Knack), 229
Wilderness Survival (Skill), 250
Willforce (Talent), 211
Willpower (WIL), 43
Wind Bow (Talent), 211
Wind Catcher (Talent), 211
Wind Instrument (Magic Item), 450
Windling Adventuring Equipment, 451
Windling Bow (Weapon), 437
Windling Clothing, 459
Windling Equipment, 451
Windling Magical Equipment, 443
Windling Net (Weapon), 438
Windling Provender, 454
Windling Spear (Weapon), 438
Windling Weapon Equivalent Table, 435
Windling Weapons, 435
Windlings, 40
Winds of Deflection (Spell, El3), 303
Wings of Fire (Blood Charm), 447
Winning Smile (Talent), 212
Wipe Matrices (Spell, Wi9), 391
Wit Friend (Spell, Ne7), 364
Wither Away (Spell, Ne8), 366
Wither Limb (Spell, Ne5), 359
Wizard Mark (Spell, Wi3), 379
Wizard Talent Knacks Table, 492
Wizard, 42, 159–165
Wizard's Cloak (Spell, Wi4), 382
Wizardry Spells: 374–394
  First Circle, 374
  Second Circle, 376
  Third Circle, 377
  Fourth Circle, 380
  Fifth Circle, 382
  Sixth Circle, 384
  Seventh Circle, 386
  Eighth Circle, 388
  Ninth Circle, 389
  Tenth Circle, 392
  Eleventh Circle, 393
  Twelfth Circle, 394
  Thirteenth Circle, 394
  Fifteenth Circle, 394
Wood Blade (Spell, El11), 320
Wood Skin (Talent), 212
Wound Balance (Blood Charm), 447
Wound Balance (Skill), 250
Wound Balance (Talent), 212
Wound Effects, 403
Wound Heal (Knack), 229
Wound Mask (Spell, Wi8), 389
Wound Share (Knack), 229
Wound Threshold, 17, 47
Wound Transfer (Talent), 212
Wounds That Bleed (Option), 401
Writing Kit (Equipment), 453
Wujemba, King, 25
Wyrm Wood, 27, 28
Wyvern-Skin (Armor), 441

— Y —

Year, 19
You Got Me (Spell, Il2), 328

— Z —

Zoak (Mount), 458

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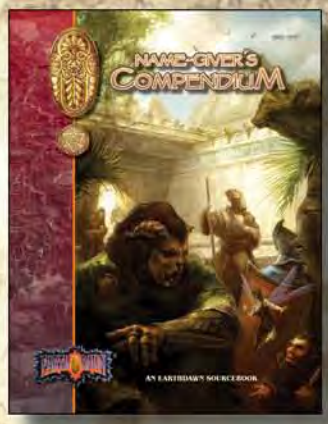

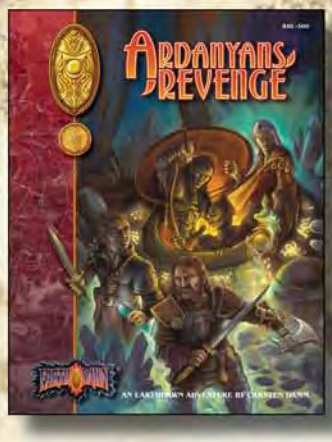

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