

# BASIC ROLEPLAYING

## UNIVERSAL GAME ENGINE

### 3: GAMEMASTERS

## ORC Content Document

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# CHAPTER 9: GAMEMASTERING

As the gamemaster, you have the most difficult role of anyone in the group, helping the players create their characters and creating (or adapting) the setting. You must create and roleplay the non-player characters encountered, describe the world as it is explored, and be a fair and ultimate referee, especially during conflicts. While players can take turns and entertain one another, the gamemaster is always on. You must respond to the players' actions and engage them all equally, ideally keeping them engrossed and sharing the spotlight.

It can be difficult to balance narration, roleplaying, bookkeeping, and rules refereeing. Many players never try to gamemaster, while others do it exclusively. It can be an immensely rewarding experience, which is usually why roleplaying gamers do it. Following is an overview of the gamemaster's potential duties. Not all are necessary: you get to determine what's best for you and your players.

## WHO ARE YOU?

In this chapter, 'you' refers to the gamemaster. There's nothing here that will spoil a player's enjoyment, but the material in this chapter is primarily useful only to the gamemaster.

## YOUR PLAYERS

If you are just getting started as a gamemaster, you may need to recruit some players. There are many ways to go about this, whether game nights at local stores and game clubs, or posting notices on social media or online tabletop gaming sites. Game conventions are also a great way to meet local gamers. Additionally, you can create new gamers by recruiting people who have never gamed before (but are curious). These can be friends, family, co-workers, etc. if they are willing. Basic Roleplaying is an excellent beginner's game, with the easy-to-understand percentile system. You may be surprised at how many people were exposed to role-playing games at an earlier age but have never played themselves. Hopefully, they'll come back for more!

## GROUP SIZE

A roleplaying group can be anywhere from a single player and a gamemaster to many more. Each group has its own dynamics and is unique—some have someone who always runs the game, and others change gamemasters, giving everyone a chance to play. The dynamics of group size differs, and following are guidelines for groups of different sizes:

- **Average Groups:** This is usually three to seven players plus a gamemaster. Smaller groups tend to be more closely knit and are often easier to organize and maintain. Generally, the larger the group, the more difficult it is to get everyone in one place at one time. Make allowances for an occasionally shifting group of players: someone might miss one session or bring a friend the next. Games set in densely populated environments are often best for this, as missing characters can simply do something else while the other player characters play. Games where the group is isolated or tightly knit means that missing players need to have their characters either explained away, run by other players, or handled as non-player characters.
- **One-on-one Groups:** Games with one player and gamemaster are often very character focused and sessions can be intense, with a lot accomplished. Planning is easier and often combat plays a lesser, easier-to-resolve role. Virtually any setting works for one-on-one gaming, though superhero, horror, or sword & sorcery settings are ideal. You should have enemies avoid killing the character, instead taking them prisoner, or leaving them to their fate once defeated. The player may participate in describing the environment, and may have hirelings, sidekicks, etc. to make things less lonely.
- **Large Groups:** If your group is larger than eight players, you may need an assistant gamemaster. To handle such a group size, ask one or more players to help with dice rolling and record-keeping during combats, perhaps even letting an uninvolved player run some opposing non-player characters. It's also a good idea to keep some sort of system for checking in with everyone and keeping them engaged: keep characters grouped with characters they work well with and go around the table (or screen) periodically to make sure everyone is included.

## THE GAME

The biggest decision is whether the game is a one-shot (a single adventure, either one session or more) or a campaign (a series of adventures with characters who continue throughout). Each has benefits and weaknesses.

One-shots are fun and focused. Characters are created for the one-shot, generally not used again, so there is little need to worry about experience or a longer-term goal. Characters for a one-shot can be extremely focused and specific to the adventure, deeply involved in the story. You may even create pre-generated player characters for a one-shot (see **Pre-generated Characters**). Preparation for a one-shot is also easier, as it does not need to continue beyond a single story. In one-shots,

the overall focus is usually a story with a simple plot hook, dramatic enough to provide some points of action and/or conflict, and an achievable goal or goals. Campaigns are better for in-depth roleplaying and players who want to see their characters grow and improve over time. They may consist of a grand overarching plot with smaller adventures either tied to or independent of that plot, or they can be united only by the characters' presence in the adventures. They are more challenging to create, as they require a bit of continuity and between-adventure work, but many find the campaign to be the truest and most satisfying part of roleplaying. Basic Roleplaying's experience and character improvement systems reward campaign play.

## THE SETTING

The **setting** is the time and place the game happens in, whether a one-shot or a campaign. The setting can be any place or any time you can imagine. See *Chapter 10: Settings* for more information about settings. It covers historical and popular settings and if one of these doesn't appeal, it might serve as inspiration for you to adapt an existing setting from some other form (another game, a movie, television show, book, comic, etc.) for your use.

Generally, as the gamemaster, you get to choose the setting with the players' agreement. However, excitement is as contagious as disinterest, and if you aren't enthusiastic, your players won't be either. You may even have an open discussion of the desired setting to play in, a creative improvisation where many voices are heard.

## GETTING STARTED

Now pick a place and a time you can all meet, whether a physical space like a living room, coffee shop, or even online through a videoconferencing system or tabletop roleplaying platform (of which there are many). Gaming can happen anywhere but is more enjoyable when free from distractions. The time you spend gathering is called a game session (or sometimes just a session).

Time is an important consideration, as sessions usually take a few hours or longer. Pick a place you won't be abruptly kicked out of, and budget time for getting started and finishing up (these always take a little longer than expected). You and your players should decide what time you're meeting, and whether that means that the game begins exactly at that time, or whether everyone should begin trickling in at around that time. Online games are easier in this regard, as they usually just involve opening a browser from the comfort of one's home.

Determine what you and your players prefer and plan (and adapt) accordingly.

## DESCRIBE THE SETTING

Once you're ready and have gathered the players, explain the setting to them. The ones in *Chapter 10: Settings* are easy places to start and provide relatively concise descriptions of each setting. You can customize one of these as desired or come up with a completely new setting.

One of the best ways to think of this part of the game is that you're 'selling' the players on the setting, or the premise. Try to condense the description to a few quick sentences, providing clear answers to the following questions:

- **What is the setting like?** If you can think of a movie, book, or television show that your setting resembles, you should name it outright. Don't be shy about naming your inspirations! If you're creating something original, try to boil it down to a high-concept Hollywood pitch, combining two known properties in a way that sparks imagination and interest.
- **Who are the player characters?** This isn't a list of professions; it's a purpose, telling the players where they stand, and what they stand for, in the setting. This is usually the element that ties them together as a group, rather than just being a bunch of individuals with no reason to interact.
- **What do the player characters do?** This is the overall description of what kinds of adventures you'll be creating for the players, whether investigations, exploration, political manoeuvring, urban skullduggery, overland survival, etc. This affects the sorts of characters they will want to create, so be clear here.

This can also be a collaborative effort, enlisting your players to provide input. Once you know the answers to these three questions, you can begin with character creation. Hopefully everyone is excited about what's in store for them in the game sessions to come!

## GAMEMASTERING CHARACTER CREATION

*Chapter 2: Characters* provides a ten-step guide for character creation. Walk the players through that process, answering their questions. It's useful to ask the players to decide what type of character each is going to play, to eliminate any potential redundancies or weaknesses. Most of the time, it's good to have a well-rounded group of character types, to better handle a wide range of situations and to give each player a speciality or area of focus that they're best at. This is sometimes called **niche protection**.

## OPTIONAL RULE CHECKLIST

Following are all the optional rules and their effect in play.



## Characters and Character Creation

- **Choosing Characteristic Values:** Players assign characteristics where they want, resulting in characters more suited to their preferences.
- **Higher Starting Characteristics:** More robust and generally more competent characters.
- **Education/Knowledge Roll:** Useful for games in the modern settings.
- **Cultural Modifiers:** Best in settings with dramatically different cultures and societies.
- **Non-human Characters:** Used in high fantasy and science fiction settings.
- **Point-based Character Creation:** Characters are designed by the players, allowing for precise customization.
- **Step Seven:** Results in competent and well-rounded characters.
- **Increased Personal Skill Points:** Characters are professionals with prior experience.
- **Hit Points per Location:** Useful for very combat-intensive settings, ideally with Armour by Hit Locations.
- **Total Hit Points:** Characters can survive considerable damage. If only player characters and important non-player characters use this, gameplay becomes very heroic.
- **Fatigue Points:** Best used in gritty, combat-, survival-, or travel-focused games.
- **Sanity:** Useful in games with horror elements.
- **Distinctive Features:** Primarily for flavour, useful everywhere.
- **Freeform Professions:** Useful for customized, difficult-to-categorize player characters.
- **Ageing and Inaction:** Useful for long-term campaigns where characters age significantly.

## Skills

- **Skill Category Bonuses:** If skills are important, skill bonuses are useful. Not compatible with Simpler Skill Bonuses.
- **Simpler Skill Bonuses:** A simpler approach to skill bonuses. Not compatible with Skill Category Bonuses.
- **Complimentary Skills:** Useful in any game or setting.
- **Acting Without Skill:** Allowing a minor chance of success in any skill, regardless of training. Freak luck might break suspension of disbelief in some games.
- **Literacy:** Useful whenever reading and writing is less common.
- **Skill Ratings Over 100%:** Essential for high-powered settings with hugely competent characters.

## Powers

- **Projection:** Necessary when using superpowers.

## System

- **Opposed Skill Roll Systems:** Largely a matter of preference.
- **Encumbrance:** Useful for grittier, combat-, survival-, or travel-oriented games, especially when paired with Fatigue.

## Combat

- **Eliminating or Reversing Statement of Intent:** This speeds combat considerably.
- **Initiative Rolls:** This adds randomness to combat round-to-round.
- **Power Use in the Action Phase:** Emphasizes powers in combat.
- **Attacks and Parries over 100%:** Best with high-powered fantasy and super-hero adventure, though combat gets somewhat slower.
- **Dodging Missile Weapons:** Best for games where combat is exaggerated and unrealistic.
- **Dying Blows:** Useful for giving a beloved player character (or hated villain) a dramatic ending.
- **Armour by Hit Locations:** Best for detailed and simulation-oriented games.
- **Damage and Hit Locations:** Best for detailed and simulation-oriented games.
- **Miniatures, Maps and Virtual Tabletops:** Best for detailed and simulation-oriented games.

## Miscellaneous

- **Allegiance:** Useful for games with gods that actively intervene in the world.
- **Fate Points:** Players can spend power points to adjust dice results and introduce narrative elements.
- **Passions:** Allows characters to act in personality-driven fashion.
- **Reputation:** A useful metric for achievement and fame.
- **Personality Traits:** Useful to help define characters and non-player characters alike.

## EXAMINE THE PLAYER CHARACTERS

When all the characters are created, review them to understand what sorts of characters you are dealing with. You may check their maths, making sure that all the points for skills and powers add up correctly and that the player didn't make any

mistakes. Or you may be less formal. You should decide up front which sort of a gamemaster you'll be, and let the players know ahead of time.

Use this time to note the important aspects of each player character, such as their name, profession, high characteristics, and important skills (Listen, Sense, Spot, etc.). You may also note any skills over 70%, which can inform the sorts of things the player would like their character to excel in.

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**For example,** *if a character has high Communication and language skills, you may want to give them a chance to use those skills in play, where possible.*

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It shouldn't be too difficult to come up with a scene or plot element that focuses on desired skills and will make players feel they haven't made a mistake with their characters.

This is a good time for troubleshooting, such as recognizing what skills are missing, or if a player hasn't spent their skill points effectively. If an adventure calls for a lot of political negotiation and is set in a single location, and a player has invested a lot of points into skills like Pilot and Heavy Machine, you might let them know that their character may not feel very useful during much of the intended adventure. Similarly, pay attention to when a player is spending too many skill points on skills that seem uncharacteristic, based on the character's profession and what they know about the adventure. Sometimes this is a case of the player exploiting out of character information, and you should be aware if it is happening. How you choose to deal with it depends on your players and your own personality and style, though such behaviour can be an unfair advantage over the other players.

Remember, always, that it's just a game, and try to keep people focused on the fun.

## CHARACTER GOALS

After the players have finished character creation, it's useful to ask them what goals they have for their characters. This might be a little early, as they haven't begun play yet, but if the players know the setting, ask what their characters (and they) might enjoy doing. This can be invaluable, letting you customize your game to the characters and to the players' tastes. You can come up with heroic moments, life goals, extended endeavours, or put them where they are most effective. A player may even think it would be cool for their character to die in a particular heroic fashion, somewhere down the line.

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**For example,** *if you're running a Wild West game, one of the players might surprise you by telling you that they want their character to run for sheriff in a small town. That sounds interesting, and since the planned setting was to have the characters based in a frontier town, having one player as sheriff would be a useful plot element and a rich source of plot hooks. The other characters should also have things to do, so they're not all being bossed around by the sheriff, though.*

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Sometimes, without even trying, the players will help you write adventures, just using the ideas they provide at the beginning of play.

## KNOW THE RULES

The *Basic Roleplaying* rules are intuitive enough that you don't even need to know them that well to run a simple game. You don't have to be a rules expert, but you should be familiar enough to make sensible judgments or know where to look. Your players can also help, looking rules up for you while you deal with other things.

**Teaching the Rules** (following) provides a high-level overview and a single read-through of relevant rules sections before the game is always useful. One helpful trick is to provide a quick list of relevant rules and note the page numbers for those sections. Sticky notes are another useful tool for this kind of preparation, tagging frequently used sections of the rules.

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***For example,** if your adventure has a wall the characters must climb, noting the page numbers for *Climb* and *Falling* is useful to have ready.*

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There are many optional rules for different settings and play styles. Choose those you're going to use and tell the players ahead of time, when relevant to their gameplay. When in doubt about the effect an optional rule may have, either don't use it or try it out for a limited time, such as for one session. If you don't like the way it worked, lose it.

## TEACHING THE RULES

Though this book has quite a bit in it, the most important thing to remember is that **the players don't need to know every rule to have a good time**. *Basic Roleplaying* has only a few core concepts at its heart, and once your players know these, they'll be fine.

- **Characteristics** are usually 3–18 (the higher the better).
- Most issues are resolved with a **percentile dice** roll (D100).
- Make a **characteristic roll** (usually a characteristic  $\times 5$ ) when there is no opposition and a **resistance roll** when there is an opposed force.
- A resistance roll is based on equal forces having a 50/50 chance against one another. The more unequal the forces are, the greater the difference. Only one side rolls: either the active side or the player. Both chances add up to 100%.
- Skills are rated in **percentages** (the higher the better). Roll low on percentile rolls to succeed. A roll of 99 and/or 00 is a **fumble**. A roll over the skill rating is a **failure**. A roll equal to or under the skill rating is a **success**. A roll of 1/5 the skill rating is a **special success**. A roll of 1/20 your skill is a **critical success**.
- Usually, roll full skill rating on percentile dice. If there's no reason the skill can't be performed successfully, it's **Automatic**, so don't roll. If it's **Easy**, double the skill rating. If it's **Average**, do not modify it. If it's **Difficult**, cut the skill in half. If it's **Impossible**, don't even roll, as it always fails.

- Occasionally, skill ratings are modified by a value (usually within the range of  $\pm 20\%$ ) if an outside factor makes things more challenging or aids the attempt.
- Characters' lives are measured in **hit points**. These are lost through injuries and other harmful situations. When a living being runs out of hit points, they die.
- Characters may have powers such as mutations, psychic abilities, magic, or superpowers. Most powers use **power points** for fuel. When these run out, they fall unconscious.

Everything else can be determined during play or explained as required. Players who understand the rules fully is always a benefit, but if knowledge of the rules is getting in the way of playing, better to keep playing, figure things out or look them up when needed, and don't be afraid to make your own rulings where necessary.

## THE ADVENTURE

The **adventure** is usually the core of most roleplaying games. This is not necessarily an adventure in the classical sense, but the term can mean any story with a beginning, middle, and ending with opportunities for the characters to do something and achieve a goal.

To start, you need to either create an adventure or use a published one. Later in this chapter, guidance for creating an original adventure is provided. If using a published adventure, you should be familiar with it and should make any notes that may be of interest. You might print it out and mark it up with highlighter pens, sticky notes, bookmarks, and other notes to assist while running it, or even write a quick outline or flowchart to keep things straight.

## DESIGNING ADVENTURES

The structure approximates a traditional dramatic narrative structure, though it is not the only example you might look to. Usually, this follows these phases:

- **Introduction:** The main characters (protagonists and antagonists) and the core conflict are introduced. The player characters are usually the protagonists, and the antagonist(s) embodies or serves some central conflict that is to be resolved later. The protagonists may not meet the antagonist face-to-face here or even become aware of their existence, but they are aware of the central conflict. If the adventure begins with action setting the plot in motion... that's even more exciting and involving.
- **Complication:** One or more complications come into the situation, usually to force the protagonists into action. They may discover that they cannot escape the attention of their enemies, or they could lose their homes, or will have loved ones threatened. In many cases, this is where the stakes are defined, usually

by letting them know what happens if they don't act. This is where the big conflict becomes the protagonists' problem. Now something must be done about it.

- **Rising Action:** Now the hammer falls, with the protagonists coming face-to-face with the antagonist and/or their agents. This may be a single confrontation, or a series of short engagements that build to a dramatic face-off. Often, this results in the antagonist getting the upper hand, forcing the protagonists to regroup and rally.
- **Loss:** Sometimes the antagonist forces a stalemate, but they almost always have an advantage later. An ally of the protagonists may be killed or incapacitated. The protagonists may be captured, exiled, or lose some significant advantage. The protagonists should feel like there is only a slim chance of winning, and that the unfortunate outcome of the conflict will occur if they do not risk everything. If the story ends here, it might be depressing. Fortunately, it doesn't usually end at this point, though this can be used as a good spot for a cliffhanger.
- **Rising Action:** This begins with the protagonists reeling from loss in the prior phase. It may have become personal. They may gain new or unexpected allies or discover some weakness in the antagonist's forces. There is new hope, though it may be desperate and reckless. This leads to a second challenge, where the protagonists and the antagonist must confront one another.
- **Climax:** The rising action from the previous segment has reached its greatest height. The stakes are usually survival of all that matters to the protagonists. This may boil down to a single instant when everyone's fates are dependent upon a single action, or a rising sequence of steps that must fall into place exactly (with the tension rising from when they don't). In a heroic story, the protagonists win because they have overcome some personal doubt or weakness or exhibit some quality (such as mercy) that the antagonist lacks. Usually, if the antagonist wins it is because there will be a continuation where the protagonists have another chance at victory.
- **Dénouement:** This French term means 'resolution', and here all the aftermath from the climax plays out. Rewards are granted, and a new status quo is established (or hinted at). In heroic stories, this is the happy ending.

If this outline sounds familiar, it should. It's encoded into a hundred or even a thousand movies you've seen or books you've read. Many stories are coded in this fashion and viewers are subconsciously trained to respond to them, even if they recognize the elements as they transpire. The structure may be clichéd, but it works and can serve as a solid foundation for your own adventures. Don't be afraid, though, to come up with your own variations on this basic structure, or ignore it entirely, so that your adventures don't all resemble one another. You can mix things up, add or subtract elements, and defy expectations, so long as the story you're providing is compelling.

Players can be unpredictable and don't always follow a desired path. They may split up or follow their own story threads, and often they'll encounter various challenges and complications at different times than planned. This can be challenging, but not

overwhelming. You can handle this by taking notes on a flowchart, or just winging it and improvising as desired.

There is no right or wrong way to do this, only what works for you.

## SANDBOX WORLDS

Some players rebel against being manipulated through a narrative and prefer a world that reacts to their own actions. This is called the ‘sandbox’ approach, where any story elements are there dormant, waiting for the characters to interact with them. There are pros and cons to the sandbox approach. It requires a lot more setup work and proactive players, as you as gamemaster need to know what’s in the sandbox beforehand and less active players may become bored if they’re not given clear indications of what to do. As the gamemaster, you must also be ready at improvising, because the players will inevitably do something you haven’t prepared for.

The main advantage to the sandbox is that the players are the ones driving the stories, a unique and personalized sort of thrill. It’s the sort of thing that roleplaying games do better than any other form of existing entertainment. It’s even possible with sandbox gaming to throw out the gamemaster entirely, and let players take on the roles of other non-player characters in the environment when required, with everyone working together to forge a unique game experience.

## THE CAMPAIGN

Designing a campaign sounds daunting, but it isn’t, because campaigns can be as simple or complex as you want. The major difference is that a one-shot or short adventure usually consists of one basic story arc spread across one or a few sessions, while a campaign is a longer story or series of stories, spread across multiple serialized sessions, perhaps with no end planned. As the gamemaster, you can decide whether you’re running a campaign or a single adventure, and plan accordingly.

The structure of a campaign varies tremendously. You might make yours like a television show, with a finite ‘season’, maybe even ending on a cliffhanger. Or it can be figured out as you go. A benefit of a loose structure is that diversions or downtime sessions can naturally happen. However, long-term campaigns can get bogged down if players don’t feel that the resolution is achievable. A campaign that doesn’t feel like it’s going somewhere will lose player interest rapidly.

Campaigns can be ongoing and without a theme, where the characters simply proceed from one adventure to another. Each adventure can be independent of one another, their only major connection being the characters and (maybe) the setting. If you’re using published materials from a variety of sources, this might be the default campaign type. Or they can build as if with a grand unifying scheme, where events in one adventure directly impact events in the next, and everything builds to an in-

tended endpoint. This allows you to steer things towards this conclusion, and adventures usually lead to that conclusion. Such a campaign usually features an epic ending, such as vengeance or the end of a great conflict, but it can be something less violent, like bringing about positive change on a major level. If the campaign was a success, you can always revisit it with a sequel featuring the same or new characters.

## CAMPAIGN THEMES

If you need help thinking of a unifying theme for your campaign, here are a few suggestions, though this list is not exhaustive:

- **Quest:** A quest-based campaign is the easiest to understand and works best with a fantasy setting. The characters are given a mighty task that they feel compelled to complete, and struggle and journey to achieve that quest. When and if it is completed, the campaign ends. If they fail, there are usually serious consequences.
- **Duty:** A duty-based campaign has the characters either employed or serving a single entity (group, an individual, a country, etc.), where they are assigned a variety of assignments. The adventures may vary each time, but the framework remains essentially unchanged. Unlike the quest, the participants do what they do because it's their job.
- **Task:** This campaign structure revolves around a certain finite number of tasks that must be achieved for the story to be resolved. This may be recovering a series of items scattered across the world, hunting down a certain number of entities, undoing a series of wrongs, etc. There's almost a countdown timer here, and when all the steps are completed, something big happens that resolves the campaign.
- **Story:** This campaign is strongly narrative, usually rich in drama and roleplaying opportunities, following a major plot, subplots, with the player characters as active participants. This is often the most rewarding to pull off but requires a lot of planning in advance. For this type of game, always remember that the characters should make a difference, and that it should be them, not a non-player character, who makes the final pivotal action or decision around which the story is resolved.
- **Location:** The characters are assigned to or 'stuck' in a particular location. It may be their home town, some place they've been assigned, like a neighbourhood, or it can be a remote outpost. They stay in the same place, and adventures come to them. A variation is where the base is mobile, such as a ship (space, seagoing, or even an airship). These campaigns can be episodic, but threats to the location should feature prominently.

## FORESHADOWING

In a campaign, you can introduce things early that have a payoff much later, through incidental details, bits of dialogue, or non-player character actions that seem small



but turn into very important plot elements. Be extremely careful about abusing this technique, as it can lead to paranoia or the idea that the world is too interconnected, with every minor character or detail expected to be somehow important in the grand scheme of things.

## RECURRING NON PLAYER CHARACTERS

Determine who the important non-player characters are, whether helpful or antagonistic, and give them options for survival or continuance. If your players kill the supposed villain in the first story arc of a long-term campaign, they may be retroactively determined to be just a pawn of a greater villain and be prepared to use the same tricks that player characters use to stay alive. Dramatic, impossible escapes and unexpected returns are perfectly suitable for many genres.

## THE SUPPORTING CAST

Once the adventure is created, it must be populated with non-player characters, monsters, and other encounters. These can add to the general theme of the adventure or be purely incidental, for flavour or tied to the characters somehow. This rule-book provides many ready to use example non-player characters and creatures, easily modified to suit the setting, adventure, or power level.

## MAPS

Maps and visual aids are always useful in any adventure, whether a one-shot or in a campaign. If miniatures are used, a map is essential. Even if miniatures are not being used, a map can help explain an area to players in a way that a great deal of description does not. On the other hand, sometimes a map can be too limiting, especially in indoor areas. If you prefer to improvise descriptions of a setting or let the players add background information, a map can sometimes stifle and contradict this creativity.

A good map doesn't have to account for every tree and bush to be effective, and overland land maps may only have some major geographic landmarks displayed. This way, you can always improvise or add elements to the area as required, so if the characters are sorely in need of a place to rest after a combat took an unanticipated turn for the worse, they might discover a small little inn alongside the road, unmarked on their maps. If the map presents every farm and road-stop, it is more difficult to make such a change, as it contradicts the visual evidence before them. Similarly, sometimes a map can tell too much, especially when the players see so many places they want to visit that they may stray from the intended path because of all the options displayed on the map.

Maps can be easy to make (a quick drawing on a sheet of scratch paper), meticulous (done on graph paper with a key and legend), using a graphics program, or using one of the many online mapping programs. Programs allowing for layouts of houses and homes can prove invaluable in modern games, allowing the gamemas-

ter to create isometric and top-down maps, to scale, complete with furniture and landscaping. A gamemaster with an artistic flair may choose to create maps hand-drawn in coloured inks on parchment, artificially weathered through various means, or can find a quality map from some online source and alter it with a graphics program, and even print it onto fancy paper.

Ultimately, if you're using a map, find a level of detail that seems comfortable and allows for some flexibility. Not everything needs to be set in stone from the first session, and you should be able to add detail when it is required.

## INTEGRATE THE CHARACTERS INTO THE STORY

Now that you know who the player characters are and their goals (if any). You should look at the adventure (or the campaign) and figure out how to involve them. It's usually important to provide a reason why player characters care enough to embark on the adventure at hand. Why do they feel that they must do this thing, and why are they present in the initial scene? This is important, because it provides motivation for them to stick around and see the adventure through to its conclusion. If the player characters don't feel compelled to be in the initial scene, it will be that much more difficult to keep their interest throughout the adventure.

There are countless ways to begin an adventure (or campaign), with these as common choices:

- The characters already know one another and have been hired to do a particular task. You can begin as they're hired, or assume they accepted and begin as they're planning or executing the task.
- The characters encounter for the first time at cross purposes, such as each having their own reasons to be in a particular place at a particular time, but quickly the circumstances change, and they are forced to work together to survive.
- The characters don't know one another but are asked by different patrons to perform a particular task. Things are not as they seem, and they must find a common cause quickly.
- The characters are thrown together in the same misfortune, either being captured by enemies, caught up in the middle of a greater conflict, or just in the aftermath of a natural disaster. They need to put aside any differences and work together to get out.
- The characters are unrelated, but at the same time and place when something dramatic happens or an opportunity arises. Their reactions shape what happens next.

A great method with maximum player freedom is to present an opening scene and ask the players why their characters are there. The players can then come up with their reasons, including subplots or past relationships they may have with the non-player characters, each other, and the overall premise. This method requires some improvisation, but often is more rewarding to the players, as their motives are their own.

You should be prepared to help players who aren't able to improvise on the spot, and you may have to veto any outlandish reasons or those that contradict your background and premise too much. One of the best methods for dealing with this is to ask for a compromise, but give them something in return, such as an interesting piece of information that they'd normally have to discover through a non-player character. That way, you can shift some of the story work to one of the players, rather than a non-player character, and you can give the player some personal stake in the story.

This sort of integration can continue well into the adventure and the campaign. If possible, make contacts and non-player characters known to the player characters, and maybe even suggest some history with them, so that they react more interestingly than to total strangers. This process makes the setting seem more alive, and the player characters a more important and integrated part of it, rather than just visitors with no personal history or connections. On the other hand, if it's a "stranger in a strange land" sort of game, it would be strange for the player characters to know too much about the area or the people, so only use this method if appropriate.

It is also useful to try to spread any contacts around the group of player characters, and make sure each of them has some integration with the adventure. If it's a longer campaign, this doesn't have to be a part of the first adventure, but players often get frustrated if one player dominates all the time and is integrated into the world far more than they are. Generally, it's a bad idea to concentrate all gameplay or world interaction through a single character. Spread the riches around!

## CONNECTING THE CHARACTERS TO EACH OTHER

One of the most challenging parts of dealing with a group of player characters is finding reasons to keep them together and to get them to work with one another in a way that makes sense. Some settings and campaign structures lend themselves immediately to groups, such as having all the player characters already part of the same team, organization, or faction. Some or all the player characters can be close or distant relatives, old friends, co-workers, classmates, colleagues, or connected through other affiliations. Depending on what is expected of them in the campaign, the player characters can have been assembled by a mysterious benefactor or hired for a specific purpose. These last two lend themselves well to some missions, though this often stretches incredulity and assumes that the player characters are for hire or willing to work with one another.

There are many ways that the connections between player characters can be developed, and sometimes the players themselves are happy to help with this. At the beginning of the game, you might ask players to identify one other character that they have some connection to (personal history together, past rivalry, friendship, etc.) and a non-player character that they know through that other player character. These connections do not have to be mutual, and it is often preferable if they aren't. When this is done, each player character has a connection to one or more of the other player characters, and a non-player character or more that they both know. This helps to connect the player characters to one another, and to the world. You should ultimately approve or disallow any connections or non-player characters that

don't work for the campaign or scenario, but it's best to guide any player choices toward something that works, or accommodate them, rather than vetoing them outright. If you're using passions, these non-player character relationships might be represented as Loves or Loyalties.

However, if this method isn't useful, skip it. Sometimes it's best to let the players figure out why their characters need to stick together, and why they shouldn't be left behind or otherwise shunned. In these cases, work with your players and make sure that they're not excluding anyone in the group.

## SET THE INITIAL SCENE

The opening scene is often crucial, because it sets the tone for the rest of the adventure or campaign and gets the players (and their characters) interested in what is happening and eager to continue.

There are many ways to do this, but an initial scene almost always needs to consist of the following elements:

- **Location:** A location that is either symbolic of the challenges the adventure presents, or a natural starting spot. The more interesting or dramatically appropriate the initial location is, the better. It sets the tone for the rest of the campaign.
- **Introductions:** Describe any non-player characters present, but more importantly, each player should describe their character as they appear to the others present. The players might do full introductions, giving their names, professions, important skills, etc., or keep those 'secret' for now, and reveal them later through play.
- **Motive:** Why are the player characters there? As noted prior, either provide a reason for the player characters to be involved or let them come up with their own reasons.
- **'The Carrot':** As in 'the carrot or the stick', a carrot is some clue or spark of action that provokes the player characters to engage in what's happening. If you don't use a carrot (letting 'hunger' drive the characters), you should use a stick (see below).
- **'The Stick':** This is a threat, either to the characters, their loved ones, people they feel responsible for, or the world at large. Usually this means an attack or the looming potential for violence, usually connected to the antagonist in some fashion. If it is not a person, then it's a threat of the environment that prompts the characters to action.
- **Drama:** Usually, the initial scene needs to really kick off the adventure with some sense of the stakes. A strong visual or emotional conflict, setting up a required payback, is always helpful. Unless there's a reason to begin in a mundane fashion, it's usually best to start by interjecting drama into an initial scene to sell it to the players that they're here to have an adventure!

Once these elements have been introduced, let the scene play out to its natural conclusion, and make sure there are clear avenues to proceed from there. If this is

the first time the players have played Basic Roleplaying, take things slowly and introduce rules systems gradually. Combat and actions may take longer to resolve than they will later, as players may spend a bit of time figuring out how the system works as well as how their characters should act.

From here, you're ready to move onto the following scene or scenes. Depending on how much information you've provided and the nature of the adventure and setting, this may be a guided progression to a single location, or you may favour a more free-form approach allowing the players to find their own way around the adventure, taking the encounters in the order that they choose. Some styles of gamemastering favour the first sort of plot structure. At its worst, this is called 'railroading', where players feel that they're stuck on a track and cannot deviate from it. Other gamemaster styles allow for more freedom, such as the sandbox approach mentioned above.

## KEEP THINGS MOVING

Regardless of how you're running the game, it's vitally important to keep things moving. The adventure doesn't have to be like an amusement park ride, but you should try to keep the players from getting bogged down in overlong discussions or rules debates. These can lead to boredom, which dampens enthusiasm. It's contagious: if one or more players have 'tuned out' of the session, you should try to shift gears to keep things interesting for everyone.

One method for this is to have something unexpected happen, or someone unwanted show up, a twist no one saw coming, a dead body where there shouldn't be, etc. This sort of sudden interjection of drama can break a slow portion of a game and make the players get more active. However, you shouldn't do this so often that the players feel like their characters are at the whim of some giant broom that continually sweeps them along.

## HOUSE RULES

If there's a rules argument, don't be afraid to say something to the effect of "*For now, let's do it this way. Later, if we learn differently, let's use the new rule.*" You're the gamemaster, and one of your duties is that of a referee. You are expected to make calls when there's a dispute. Do so fairly, and try to be consistent, from instance to instance, and from player to player.

There will be situations that aren't covered in these rules, so from time to time you may need to make up a rule or just decide how something goes. If a similar rule isn't obvious, don't be afraid to make up a new rule. If it works, write it down. This becomes a 'house rule', like those used in card and board games, where the rule essentially applies only in the house (or with the group) it originates.

You can tell other players and gamemasters about your house rules, perhaps online, but don't expect any of them to use these house rules. Often, you can find house rules on forums and discussion groups relating to your game. *Basic Roleplaying* has been around for a long time and there are many places online where you can house rules and eager players and gamemasters to discuss those rules.

## NON PLAYER CHARACTERS

One of your most important jobs as gamemaster is to be “the rest of the world”—meaning every non-player character and creature the characters may encounter. This is perhaps the most challenging task, presenting a variety of characters with different personalities and goals, each interacting with the player characters in a slightly different manner. You should play each significant non-player character as if they have an agenda and potential goals, when appropriate. If it doesn't make sense for a non-player character to fight to the death, they should surrender or flee. However, you should always keep in mind the difference between important and unimportant non-player characters. Usually, the act of giving a non-player character a name is all you need to make the distinction. A fully developed non-player character with a name is important, while ‘Guard #3’ may be all the name that particular non-player character needs.

Some of the ways you can make your gamemasters more distinctive is to give each of them some quirk or individual aspect that makes them stand out, like a peculiar accent, a distinctive physical characteristic, a striking bit of gear or costume, or a vocal tic or catchphrase. Feel free to use the distinctive features to characterize them. When you're thinking of your non-player characters, it helps to tell the players about any of these mannerisms or visual elements that they would notice right off. The more you do this, the more your players think of non-player characters as unique individuals, and that makes your job that much easier.

A couple of quick methods exist for this: basing a non-player character off someone you know, or some actor (or a role played by that actor). If it's a real person, try to avoid someone too obvious that the players know, as the character disappears, and it just becomes the person they know. If using an actor or their character, you can describe them physically and use those mannerisms, but be careful, though, as it can lead to too many in-jokes or doing impression rather than an actual character.

Remember, though, that it is the player characters, not the non-player characters, who are the leads in the story. They may not be the most important people in the world, but they are the protagonists of the story you're creating together. Gauge the number and presence of non-player characters accordingly. You should probably try to avoid too many random non-player characters on hand, or having extended periods where the players are sitting around listening to non-player characters explain things (or, even worse, having two non-player characters discussing things to one another).

Non player character followers who are more competent and steal the spotlight from the player characters are rarely a good idea, unless the point is for them to lull the player characters into a false sense of security, and then get out of the way quickly and thrust the player characters into adventure. Whenever you can give an active role to a player character in place of a non-player character, do so. You can provide any background information on a note card or feed it to the player when they make successful Knowledge rolls (or some equivalent).

In addition to the acting challenge of evoking all these different non-player characters, you must represent them on a mechanical level. You roll for them, determine

what actions they take, and note how injured they are during the course of a combat. You should have key attributes for important non-player characters, if they're essential, using those in Chapter 11: Creatures if needed. Usually, in a non-violent encounter, you need only a few characteristics (INT, POW, CHA) and relevant Communication-based skill ratings for a non-player character. For combat, you need the opposite set of attributes, with characteristics like (DEX, CON, STR), other statistics like hit points, power points, armour value, any combat-oriented skills, and any applicable weapons and/or powers (and their levels).

A great and subtle trick for a gamemaster to do is to make copies of the player character sheets, and use these as the basis for non-player characters, making changes where necessary to disguise their origin. Often this is a great source of well-designed characters who are the relative equals of the player characters.

## **ABSENT PLAYER CHARACTERS**

Sometimes a player misses a session but their character is still present, such as when you are continuing an adventure from a prior session. You can handle the player character as if they were a non-player character, or let another player handle that character, whichever works best. If a player isn't present, any successful rolls their character makes do not yield experience points.

Alternatively, you might find it easier to come up with an in-game reason why a player character has suddenly disappeared. This can range from them simply being called away on an unrelated matter, falling through a collapsing floor, being swept away suddenly, disappearing mysteriously, teleported away, or even being captured, depending on the setting. Their rescue can be the source of a future session, or it might simply resolve itself when the player is available again. It's not advised to begin a session with one player character incapacitated and waiting for the others to get to them before they can do anything.

## **TAKE A BREAK IF YOU NEED IT**

You may find that the players are overwhelming you with requests, or things have become exhausting. It's always a good idea to take a quick break (anywhere from five to fifteen minutes) every so often during a long play session. For the gamemaster, this may give you a chance to regroup and plan for the next part of the game. If the players have surprised you by going beyond what you were expecting, and you find yourself needing a few minutes of downtime to get your own notes in order and decide what you want to happen, call a break.

It's also just good to get up and stretch. Tabletop gaming, or online gaming, is sedentary, inasmuch as it involves sitting at a table or some other more comfortable seating arrangement, talking to one another. You may do a lot of gesturing, but this isn't very much physical activity. Every hour or two, you may want to just call a quick break for people to stand up, stretch, move around, refill their beverages or snacks, and even go to the restroom. Sometimes if things bog down too much, a quick breather is just the trick to break a slow point and have players return to the table re-

freshed. Breaks can also provide players a chance to do some of their own book-keeping, and make plans of their own, and you should probably allow players to call breaks if they feel that one is required.

You might even start a break with a cliffhanger or at the beginning of a big endeavour. You should assume that the game world just pauses, with no time whatsoever passing between the beginning and end of the break, or you can use the break as a good way to indicate a break in the game time.

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***For example, you may tell the players “You arrive in town just before dark. It’s quiet, but you find an inn with some open rooms. Your innkeeper warns you to stay off the streets, as it can get a bit dangerous. Let’s take a break now. When we get back, you can tell me what trouble you get into before morning.”***

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If a break indicates a lot of time has passed, it might be time to handle healing, experience checks, and training.

## SET THE TONE AND MOOD

There are many ways to establish a tone and mood for your game, varying greatly by setting. Here are suggestions for some easy ways to evoke the desired setting through more than just narration.

## MUSIC AND SOUND EFFECTS

You may want to have some music playing in the background, like a television or movie soundtrack. Choose carefully, based on the setting and your players. You might use ambient music and run it indefinitely in the background, or specific pieces of music for scenes of importance. You may even have a campaign theme, played at the beginning of the session, such as a television show’s intro. Online music services allow for customized playlists and very specific sound landscapes, including a vast number of music services specific to roleplaying game sessions. It is possible to put together highly customizable soundtracks for an adventure, but should be used with caution, making sure not to distract from gameplay with inappropriate pieces of music for particular scenes.

Similarly, there are many sound effects libraries available online to spice up scenes or events, and some ambient sound sites offer environmental background loops, which can be layered or customized.

## PROPS

Sometimes, having a few tiny props on hand might help evoke the setting, such as strange dusty old books in stacks next to the gamemaster for a Lovecraft-inspired game involving horror at a remote and antiquated university. For a martial arts game set in modern China, some Chinese coins scattered across the table might be



enough. Try stacking some old disk drives, circuit boards, cables, and various adapters around the play area to provide flavour to a cyberpunk game or light the table only through laptops and computer monitors.

## THE GAME ENVIRONMENT

This is perhaps the most optional of all the methods of evoking a mood, as it is the most labour intensive. You can alter the play area in subtle ways to evoke your setting, putting posters up related to the setting, or coloured lights to evoke strange environments. If playing online, a virtual background of the setting always helps. A visit to a party supply store provides many cheap and easy means of decorating your play area. If you and your group play together in a physical space, you may serve a meal appropriate to the setting or have everyone bring thematically appropriate snacks or drinks (within reason).

However, don't go so far that it's distracting to the actual play, and be considerate of the players comfort and convenience. Don't expect people to splurge on expensive foods or make them uncomfortable for the sake of ambience. Mood lighting is great, but when players can't see their character sheets, it's a problem. Do what's comfortable for you and your players, and no more than that.

## NOTE TAKING

You should try to take notes or even ask a player to help with it. This helps keep track of who the players talked to, what they learned, who they killed, and what the general situation was when you left off, if you're going to continue. This can be done during the session or afterwards by reviewing the game notes. It is often useful to provide a brief "Previously..." overview at the beginning of a new session, refreshing everyone's memories. You might have a shared online document to update during or between adventures, with notes about things the players need to keep in mind or bookkeeping they need to do before the next session. You might handle this via email or a shared online repository of game-related documents, maps, images, and references.

There's no right or wrong way to do this, no correct amount of documentation, so use whatever method—or none—that feels best to you.

## WRAPPING THINGS UP

At the end of a session, try to bring things to some sort of dramatic conclusion. If there's been a big fight at the end, you might want to stop right afterwards, or if the story arc has wrapped up, conclude with a scene of reward or epilogue. Players should get a feeling that things are either going to continue or that they're finished, and if there is a continuation, some clues as to what might come next are always useful.

If there's any 'homework', now is the time to assign it. This might include doing experience checks, planning what happens between sessions, or doing some other

form of wrap-up. If a big story ended, you might want to provide a short coda to the adventure, letting players know how the story flowed from the final scene. Keep in mind also that not everyone can do work on a game between sessions, and that you should always allow for some time at the beginning of one session to take care of anything that didn't get done between sessions.

Something you might do periodically is to informally ask the players how they felt about the session. What sort of things they liked, disliked, or anything they weren't expecting. This doesn't have to be a critique but can instead serve as a barometer of what went right. If you're the sort of gamemaster who doesn't take criticism well or have players who aren't comfortable talking about things they didn't like, don't bother with this wrap-up.

If an adventure is over, but the campaign is continuing, you might also ask the players what they'd like to see happen in the next session or adventure. Sometimes player feedback can push you in interesting directions and provide unexpectedly rich content. As noted, this is entirely optional, and should be casual. You could even do this via email or one-on-one later, as appropriate. Oftentimes, post-game chatter is almost as much fun as a game itself, which is a reason games sometimes tend to run long!

If you're meeting in person, you might ask to collect the character sheets at the end of a game session, or scan them so you have copies. This insures against lost character sheets, or absent players when you need to run their character for them. If you're doing things electronically, you might ask the players to update their characters in the online repository. Virtual game platforms can store character sheets, as well, letting you update them electronically, with no paper involved.

## TO BE CONTINUED...?

At the end of a successful game, you should determine with the players whether you'll continue. Sometimes a one-shot can turn into a campaign, and sometimes a campaign doesn't really go as well as hoped and turns into a one shot. You might ask your players at the end of an adventure if they'd like to continue if it hasn't been established already. If you already know the answer, don't bother, but it's always good to know how interested your players are in continuing the game you're running. Naturally, if you're not continuing, you shouldn't bother with experience checks, notes, or trying to establish continuity, but if there's a chance of coming back to the same group of characters and the setting, you should make sure that the possibility exists, so don't accidentally destroy or discard your notes or the character sheets.

# GAMEMASTERING TECHNIQUES

The following aren't rules or even guidelines, but suggestions to aid you in the complicated and incredible task of game mastering. None are required, and some may

run contrary to your style. Take these suggestions for what they are: tools in your gamemaster toolbox.

## INTRODUCTION

A good introduction can set a campaign off to a bang. This is where you read a short, scripted introduction, giving a bit of relevant background or framing the current sequence. In movies this can be a 'title card' or an 'opening crawl' of text providing the information about the setting and bringing the audience up to speed. It's different from the initial scene in that it's usually not roleplayed through and is often just narrative. Ideally, you want to keep it short (not more than a few sentences) and if one of your players has a good voice and talent for that sort of thing, ask them to do it.

## THE PLAYER CHARACTERS ARE THE STARS

The player characters are the stars of the adventure. This doesn't make them the most important people in the universe, but it makes them the most significant people in the game. Their actions should be significant, and unless there's a good reason for it in the setting or adventure, they should be the ones who get to shine. Having non-player characters around who are more competent and heroic than the player characters is fine, but making the players feel like they're watching someone else's adventures from the sidelines is usually a sure-fire way to lose player investment.

## ENCOURAGE PLAYER INVESTMENT

Do what you can to get the players to contribute to the campaign and their characters. Encourage them to create things that will enrich the game experience without affecting it directly, such as in-character journals, illustrations of their characters or non-player characters, or even performing real world tasks such as aiding you with some of the note-taking and bookkeeping. This could also be basic things like agreeing to host the game sessions, contributing to the group's food and drink, or running the shared online group document. If the reward of simply making the game better isn't enough, offer small rewards such as free experience checks in relevant skills, so long as they don't become too much of a distraction and are distributed fairly.

## SHOW, DON'T TELL

Whenever you can, be as visual as possible with descriptions of locales, non-player characters, and events. When coming up with your plots, always ask "*Is this something the players can experience first-hand?*" For an event that the characters need to be aware of, if you can get them on the scene to experience it first-hand, the experience will be much more important and significant to them. Rather than their

characters being told about something that happened and asking them what they want to do about it, put them in the middle of it and let them experience it viscerally. This doesn't have to be a full-fledged scene. You can easily begin with such a scene, summarize how it resolved, then jumping to the point where the characters can act.

## FLASHBACKS

You can even have the players play through an earlier event or prologue, where they enact the roles of other (likely pre-generated) characters. You might even split a flashback adventure between a modern setting and a historical one, with parallels between the two, with players taking on the roles of their modern characters and their ancestral forebears. For a variation on this, you might have the player characters transported to another time and place in some strange fashion, where their dreaming selves must enact a scene in the past. Or you could do a 'flash forward', where you give the players a glimpse of what is to come with their player characters in the near or distant future, or some alternate branch of history. *Basic Roleplaying* has all the tools for play in different periods, genres, and even alternate realities, all in the same campaign.

## CUTSCENES

These are commonly used in films, but they can be used in a tabletop setting to great effect. Essentially, a cutscene occurs away from the characters (hence, we 'cut away' from them) and involves other significant characters. In a game, this is a scene that occurs elsewhere, and involves one or more non-player characters, usually doing something significant to the plot or adding foreshadowing to the player characters' future.

The challenge of cutscenes is that they usually focus on out-of-character knowledge, and it requires the players to watch while the gamemaster tells a little story or enacts a scene. A great technique for introducing a cutscene is to have the players read a scripted version of that scene, roleplaying it as if it were their own characters, or as a news broadcast with multiple anchors and interviews, etc.

If you're a story-based gamemaster who wants the players to feel like they're the active parts of a narrative, then this might work well for you. If you're more episodic with your adventure(s), you might not bother with this trick. It can also be used to great effect in a light-hearted or comedic game, where out-of-character knowledge can be explained away easily, and it can give players a chance to inhabit outrageous or extreme characters other than their own.

## 'JOBBER' SEQUENCES

This storytelling trick and term comes from professional wrestling, introducing a formidable opponent (or several) and emphasizing how frightening or powerful they

are. Then, a newcomer arrives and dispatches them, demonstrating the newcomer's prowess. To 'jobber' is to make someone else look competent at one's own expense. This can work for heroes or villains, protagonists, or antagonists.

You can also let the players suggest their own 'jobber' sequences as part of their introductions, showing them shining in their field of expertise. This can extend to any speciality or skill. If appropriate, let each player give themselves such a sequence while the other players watch (or pitch in). You don't even need to roll the dice for such a scene, as it should be a foregone conclusion that the character triumphs and makes it to the next, or initial scene.

## BAIT-AND-SWITCH

This is a classic storytelling trick, where the players are given one premise (a setting, an adventure, etc.) and then quickly discover that they are in the middle of another premise. Usually this is a dramatic discovery, causing them to reevaluate everything that they know or have experienced so far. This can be used to comedic effect, or to completely transform an adventure. It should be used carefully, however, as some players can balk if they feel they've been sold one thing and had another substituted. This is especially true if you've had them involved from the start in crafting the sort of campaign you want, then abandoning it. You can ask if you feel it's going to be a problem, or warn them ahead of time that things are not always what they seem.

## RECOGNIZE YOUR PLAYERS

Players goals can differ tremendously, even within the same groups. If you know them, you might identify what they enjoy in games, and why they play. For ease, you could classify players based on the following general types, codified by Robin Laws in his excellent gamemaster advice book, *Robin's Laws of Good Game Mastering* (Steve Jackson Games, Inc., 2002):

- **The Leader:** This player ends up leading and creates characters who command respect and authority from the existing power structure (police officers, government agents, military officers, etc.). This sort of player usually seeks attention, often from the other players as well as from the gamemaster.
- **The Specialist:** The player creates characters that are secondary, almost at the level of background characters, but extremely skilled in a narrow field, whether it be weapons, computers, piloting, etc. When in their field of speciality, the player wants to succeed, and succeed well.
- **The Power Gamer:** This player creates characters who are extremely powerful (sometimes with judicious rules application). Such characters are often after more power, whether the most powerful magic weapon, the most terrifying spell, etc.
- **The Method Actor:** This player will create elaborate backstories and focus on their character as if they were from some other medium, even taking on unnecessary flaws and disadvantages just because they feel 'right'.

- **The Follower:** This is the simplest type of player. Often, they are just content to hang back and watch the fun, rolling dice or acting when required. They might enjoy being in the spotlight now and again, but usually don't require, or even want, attention.

Not every player is the same type in every campaign. Sometimes a player is always one type, while other times, they may choose their role based on the setting and the campaign. Players can also act like more than one of these types from session-to-session. However, once you have a good idea about what these roles usually are after, you can see that preferences and needs are being met in the game and adjust accordingly.

## PERSONALITY TRAITS

You can describe a non-player character's personality numerically, just like a skill or passion. An easy method to do this is a personality trait scale, where a trait is described as a percentile value of 0 to 100. A value of 0 indicates that the personality trait is non-existent, and a 100 is always representative of that character. Personality traits are paired with an opposite, such as Aggressive vs. Passive, and the value of the opposite trait is equal to 100 minus the initial personality trait. A quick means of shorthand for this pairing is 'Aggressive 90 | 10 Passive', for example. Someone with 50 | 50 in a trait the Personality Traits sheet below helps make this easy to keep track of these traits for non-player characters. You can use some, many, or all these to define your non-player characters.

### Personality Traits

Initial Trait	Value   Value	Opposing Trait
Aggressive	___   ___	Passive
Impulsive	___   ___	Cautious
Extrovert	___   ___	Introvert
Optimistic	___   ___	Pessimistic
Stubborn	___   ___	Receptive
Physical	___   ___	Mental
Patient	___   ___	Nervous
Emotional	___   ___	Calm
Trusting	___   ___	Suspicious
Leader	___   ___	Follower
Greedy	___   ___	Generous
Energetic	___   ___	Lazy
Honourable	___   ___	Dishonourable
Brave	___   ___	Cowardly
Curious	___   ___	Incurious

Dependable	___   ___	Unreliable
Pious	___   ___	Irreligious
Honest	___   ___	Dishonest
Clever	___   ___	Dull
Humorous	___   ___	Dour
Conservative	___   ___	Innovative

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**For example,** a non-player character is highly aggressive, with a value of 90 on their Aggressive personality trait. The opposing trait is Passive and thus has a value of 10 ( $100-90=10$ ). A non-player character with an Aggressive 90 is ready to pick a fight, answers any challenge, and usually escalates to violence, while someone with Passive 90 usually backs down from conflicts and avoids any direct confrontations.

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You do not need to determine all the personality traits for your significant non-player characters. Instead, choose one or a few relevant ones and assign values to them. You don't even need to determine the opposing trait's value, as it's apparent. Assign values as desired or pick relevant ones and divide a D100 roll by 2 and add 50 to the result, for a spread of 51–100. Or roll  $3D10+70$  for extreme cases.

Personality traits can guide your roleplaying of the non-player character by simply looking at the value, or you can roll to see how the non-player character behaves. Success with one trait means they act on that character trait, while failure means that the opposite trait is followed. You may also choose to utilize special or critical results for these rolls, but only in a general sense.

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**For example,** the characters meet the non-player character with the 'Aggressive 90 | 10 Passive' personality trait spread, and one of them behaves rudely to the non-player character. You know from the spread how they're likely to react, but you decide to roll, just to see what happens. Any roll of 01–90 and the non-player character reacts aggressively, while a roll of 91–100 indicates a passive response. Perhaps they're distracted or unwilling at this time to get into it with the characters?

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## Skills and Personality Traits

The Insight skill may be used to quickly determine a non-player characters personality trait spread in a general sense, or Psychology might be used for long-term analysis. Don't reveal the actual values, but rather a particular strongly lean in one direction or the other.

Though it is extremely unlikely to have a player character performing Psychology on a non-player character for an extended period, you may allow a successful Psychology roll to affect a single paired personality trait in the same fashion that it restores lost SAN. Roll to see whether SAN points are restored, but instead of adding SAN, instead use the result to shift a particular personality trait by that many points in the

desired direction. Treatment time is identical. This way, through patience and therapy, a successful Psychology roll can 'help' a non-player character change their natural inclinations towards a desired personality trait.

## **Personality Traits and Player Characters**

You can also use personality traits for player characters, if desired, treating them as you would for non-player characters. They become like passions, augmenting activities or being consulted when provoked, with experience checks if successful. The player always has control over what their character does, but if they make a successful roll on one trait and decide to act according to the opposing trait, you should have them automatically make an experience check for that opposite trait. When one trait increases, the other is decreased. If they wish to seek treatment for this trait, see the rules for Psychology (above).



# CHAPTER 10: SETTINGS

This chapter discusses settings—the times and/or places where your adventures happen. Usually, the setting is the genre—Western, science fiction, techno-thriller, sword-and-sandal, high fantasy, or many others. This chapter also includes optional rules for allegiance, passions, and insanity.

## MAKING THE SETTING

*Basic Roleplaying* is designed to help you, the gamemaster, create a setting of your own, whether original or adapting something that exists. Following are some popular settings that all follow the same format, and some notes about each. Each comes with suggested character types (though these are not restrictions), powers that make sense in the setting, technology to help select equipment, prompts for adventure types, and suitable optional rules.

### PREHISTORIC AGE

Any prehistoric or primitive tribal environment before the dawn of civilization, or somehow set apart from it. Life is short and brutal, and usually the only social organization is the family or tribe. Prehistoric mammals are usually the main threat, though alternate histories sometimes include dinosaurs.

- **Character Types:** Crafter, Farmer, Hunter, Shaman, and Tribes-folk.
- **Powers:** Primitive shamans might use magic, and mutations and psychic abilities may exist.
- **Technology:** No manufactured items are available in a prehistoric world, with everything being shaped from primitive resources such as wood, stone, bone, leather, fur, feathers, and clay—whether clothing, tools and weapons, and religious totems or keepsakes. Though a skilled crafter may make better stone axes and shape better talismans, there is not much beyond that. Most items are of poor or average quality, and there is no wealth.
- **Adventures:** Tribal conflict between groups of hunter-gatherers over prime hunting spots, adverse weather, aggressive animals, or even great hunts can form the core of prehistoric adventures. Alternate prehistories might include an-

cient creatures from the Cthulhu Mythos, aliens bent on enslaving primitive humanity, or even divergent evolutionary paths where intelligent dinosaurs or apes have become the dominant species, and humanity their fodder.

- **Options:** None.

## ANCIENT WORLD

The era of kingdoms such as Sumeria, Greece, Rome, Egypt, Persia, and other mighty empires, from the Mesopotamian epoch to Biblical antiquity, classical Greece, until the fall of Rome and the subsequent chaotic breakdown of Europe. Alternately, this might be a sword-and-sandal fantasy setting set in an imagined ancient world.

- **Character Types:** Any but Journalist, Scientist, and Technician.
- **Powers:** Magic and sorcery, likely divine in origin. Psychic powers may exist, and monsters may have mutations. Demigods or legendary heroes may have superpowers.
- **Technology:** The heyday of the Bronze Age and the flowering of the Iron Age, in which metalwork has transformed culture and commerce. This is the flourishing of artistry and the birth of civilization.
- **Adventures:** This era suits gritty fantasy epics as well as grander mythological themes with strong emphasis on culture and worship.
- **Options:** Allegiance, Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Damage and Hit Locations, Dodging Missile Weapons, Fatigue Points, Higher Starting Characteristics, Hit Points per Location, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Passions, Power Use in the Action Phase, Reputation, Skill Ratings Over 100%, Total Hit Points.

## EARLY MEDIEVAL

After the fall of the Roman Empire, much of Europe is in disarray. Though there are social advances and improvements to overall quality of life, this is often characterized as a brutal and unenlightened time. This includes the rise of the Norse (Viking) culture, and regional wars across Europe to fill the vacuum left by Rome. This could also be a fantasy setting, including non-human races such as elves and dwarves, or even mythic animals and monsters.

- **Character Types:** Any but Journalist, Scientist, and Technician. Politicians are often Nobles and Writers are usually Priests or may be poets.
- **Powers:** Magic and sorcery are the two most common power types, and may be divine, infernal, or pagan in nature.
- **Technology:** Despite sometimes being called the 'Dark Age'—there are scientific developments, improvements in mechanical engineering, and treatment of disease. Study of the physical world flourishes, and creating books and preserving knowledge becomes prevalent among the nobility and clergy. Sailing ships grow in sophistication.

- **Adventures:** Europe after Rome is a veritable post-apocalyptic wasteland, and life was hard for the commoners. Petty wars and oppression are commonplace. The division between the religions is rife with conflict and turmoil.
- **Options:** Allegiance, Cultural Modifiers, Damage and Hit Locations, Education/Knowledge Roll, Fatigue Points, Hit Points per Location, Literacy, Passions, Reputation, Sanity.

## HIGH MEDIEVAL

This is a feudal era. Nobility, knighthood, and dynastic governments and social structures characterize the period. Idealized romance drives the chivalric world, contrasted by brutal and grim reality. Magic is believed to be devilry, and the divine is considered as real as the infernal. This might also describe a far-off post-apocalyptic world where the last vestiges of civilization have fallen to neo-feudalism.

- **Character Types:** Any but Journalist, Scientist, and Technician. Writers are usually Priests or may be poets, and Scientists are likely Priests with an interest in the natural world.
- **Powers:** Magic and sorcery are the two most common power types, and may be divine, infernal, or pagan in nature.
- **Technology:** Mass production of goods, early guild structures, extended trade, and widespread distribution of goods have transformed the world. Generally, the lack of widespread literacy limits the availability of books and advanced knowledge. Armour and weaponry continue to grow more effective, then baroque.
- **Adventures:** Arthurian or Carolingian adventure, questing knights, etc.
- **Options:** Allegiance, Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Damage and Hit Locations, Fatigue Points, Higher Starting Characteristics, Hit Points per Location, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Non-human Characters, Passions, Reputation, Skill Ratings Over 100%.

## HIGH FANTASY

Similar to the High Medieval setting, this differs in that non-humans, such as elves, dwarves, etc. exist alongside human beings, frequently allied with humans against orcs, trolls, goblins, etc. The gods may be active and their worshippers gain divine abilities. Magic is prevalent, with magic items such as healing potions, magic swords, enchanted armour, etc. commonplace. Ancient ruins abound and dungeons sprawl belowground.

- **Character Types:** As with High Medieval (above).
- **Powers:** Any. Magic and sorcery may be divine, infernal, or pagan in nature. Mutations may be found among certain types of monsters, and there may be races that use psychic abilities. Powerful supernatural beings may use super-powers in the guise of divine or infernal abilities.

- **Technology:** As with the High Medieval, but less realistic.
- **Adventures:** Dungeon raids, quests for magic items, war, exploration, etc.
- **Options:** Allegiance, Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Damage and Hit Locations, Fatigue Points, Higher Starting Characteristics, Hit Points per Location, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Non-human Characters, Passions, Power Use in the Action Phase, Reputation, Skill Ratings Over 100%.

## IMPERIAL ASIA

A general term for historical Japan or China, also including the fantastic world of the martial arts. This category can also describe Mughal India.

- **Character Types:** Any other than Journalist, Scientist, or Technician. Writers are likely poets.
- **Powers:** Magic and sorcery are common and may be based on elemental principles. Intense study of esoteric martial arts disciplines allows abilities like psychic or superpowers.
- **Technology:** The arts and sciences of China and Japan developed far beyond that of the Western world in the same era, with printing presses, gunpowder, etc., paired with a flourishing of institutionalized learning and bureaucracy.
- **Adventures:** These can range from battles for clan or regional leader, and can even incorporate anachronistic elements such as found in manga or anime.
- **Options:** Allegiance, Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Dodging Missile Weapons, Education/Knowledge Roll, Higher Starting Characteristics, Increased Personal Skill Points, Passions, Power Use in the Action Phase, Reputation, Skill Ratings Over 100%, Total Hit Points.

## ARABIAN NIGHTS

The ancient Arabian or Persian world, generally a world defined by deserts and daring adventure.

- **Character Types:** Any but Journalist, Scientist, and Technician. Writers are usually Priests or may be poets, and Scientists are likely Priests with an interest in the natural world.
- **Powers:** Magic and sorcery, though supernatural beings may have superpowers.
- **Technology:** Knowledge of the physical world—mathematics, chemistry, astronomy, medicine, other sciences—were highly developed and generally wealth was able to purchase quality of life and freedom of action.
- **Adventures:** These could resemble fairy tales or those found in classic tales from the era, exploration or ancient curses, bargains with mythical beings, and plucky characters from the lowliest of thieves to noble princes or princesses.

- **Options:** Allegiance, Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Increased Personal Skill Points, Passions, Reputation, Skill Ratings Over 100%.

## ENLIGHTENMENT AND RENAISSANCE

Primarily about Europe in the Renaissance era, though it could also incorporate fantasy and fanciful reality, such as widespread use of the inventions of Leonardo da Vinci. A time when the arts and the sciences grew dramatically, patronage encouraged artistic development, with a notable influence from the classical world of antiquity.

- **Character Types:** Almost any.
- **Powers:** Magic and sorcery may exist but be forbidden by religious institutions. Alchemy (creation of magic items and elixirs) is a popular pursuit for scholars.
- **Technology:** As with the High Medieval era, it is the height of skilled craftsmanship, science, and invention: with clockworks, gunpowder, and precision tools, and principles such as steam, water, and wind power being explored. The introduction of the crossbow has virtually eliminated the use of body armour.
- **Adventures:** A baroque political atmosphere and a profound schism between the Church and the Enlightenment create a dynamic setting where characters can be patrons of the arts drawn into intrigue, or they can be wayward inventors whose discoveries lead them into trouble. Alternately, they can take to the high seas or voyage to the New World.
- **Options:** Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Education/Knowledge Roll, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Passions, Reputation.

## AGE OF EXPLORATION

This period is marked by expansion outward from Europe, into North and South America, Africa, India, China, etc. primarily for colonizing, religious conversion, territorial annexation, and opportunism. This inevitably goes badly for the indigenous peoples, victimized, exploited, and even enslaved, their cultures pushed aside, criminalized, or even eradicated. In England, Queen Elizabeth I's reign is considered a golden age: an outpouring of poetry, literature, fashion and theatre. Continental Europe, however, is torn by war. Swashbuckling adventure is a convention of the period.

- **Character Types:** Almost any.
- **Powers:** Sorcery, if it is practised, is likely based on infernal origins. Less technically advanced native cultures may use magic or sorcery in the form of shamanic knowledge or witchcraft.
- **Technology:** Mostly marked by an improvement and refinement of that provided in the Renaissance. Gunpowder becomes prevalent in warfare, with early machinery defining the period. The indigenous people whose lands are

annexed in during this period were generally less technologically advanced, overcome by superior firepower.

- **Adventures:** This is a challenging period due to the institutions of slavery and exploitation that come hand-in-hand with colonialist expansion. Adventures within the European mainland are less likely to deal with these topics, such as swashbuckling exploits or military campaigns between the warring churches or nobility.
- **Options:** Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Dodging Missile Weapons, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Passions, Reputation, Skill Ratings Over 100%.

## AGE OF SAIL

The early 19th is marked by seafaring and naval battles, matched by land wars across Europe. It is a time of soldiers and officers on each side of the battlefield, pawns in futile wars, while life in court remains largely untouched.

- **Character Types:** Almost any.
- **Powers:** Sorcery, if practised, is likely to be banned by the Church.
- **Technology:** Technologically, this period is nearly identical to the Colonial era, though there were advances in ship-making and large-scale warfare devices.
- **Adventures:** Some of the world's greatest land and sea battles are being fought, providing ample grist for military-themed engagements. Adventures might delve into baroque political escapades, secret missions, ingenious spy-craft, court intrigues, or duels of honour.
- **Options:** Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Education/Knowledge Roll, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Passions, Reputation, Skill Ratings Over 100%.

## INDUSTRIAL AGE

This era corresponds with the Victorian Age and is rife with invention. Defined almost entirely by technological and manufacturing advances that transforms the prior world into the precursor to the modern age, the Technology section below is the most informative description of the setting.

- **Character Types:** Almost any.
- **Powers:** This age saw another divide between spirituality and modernization. Magic and psychic abilities would represent one side of the struggle, while technology may offer a variety of superpowers in the form of unusual and experimental technology.
- **Technology:** Mass-production and factory-style manufacture have made standardized goods more widely available and cheaper than at any point in human history prior. Steam, coal, gas, and other energy sources are widely-known and utilized in home and cities, with cities illuminated by gaslight, steam

engines racing across the United States and Europe, and the oceans traversed by great ships with coal-burning, steam-powered engines. Chemistry is being refined, and scientists are beginning to discover many of the secrets of the universe. Soon comes the automobile, radically transforming human travel and cities. Alternate histories often focus on steampunk, mixing steam power and Victorian aesthetics, and retro-futurism.

- **Adventures:** Emblematic adventures should reinforce themes of industry versus spirituality, with exploration and new technology coming into dramatic contact with old ways of life.
- **Options:** Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Education/Knowledge Roll, Increased Personal Skill Points, Passions, Reputation.

## VICTORIAN AGE

The height of the British industrial revolution and the greatest influence of the British Empire, the Victorian Age is characterized by a yawning disparity between social classes and aggressive imperialist expansion throughout Asia and Africa. It is also as a time of great austerity in personal expression.

- **Character Types:** Almost any.
- **Powers:** Magic and sorcery may be practised by occultists and intellectuals seeking the outer limit of experience, while native cultures use these same powers in their religions. Strange, blasphemous creatures might be mutants, and the era's burgeoning interest in mentalism utilizes psychic abilities.
- **Technology:** Identical to that described in the Industrial Age (above).
- **Adventures:** The Gaslight period presents a great dichotomy between rich dilettantes living side-by-side with a seething dark underbelly containing some of the most unjust, inhumane conditions humanity has been able to inflict upon itself.
- **Options:** Choosing Characteristic Values, Education/Knowledge Roll, Increased Personal Skill Points, Passions, Reputation, Sanity.

## WILD WEST

This era occurs in the U.S. during and in the aftermath of the Civil War, complete with cowboys, gunslingers, range wars, the Gold Rush, and frontier expansion. The West is being transformed by new rail tracks upon which arrive a steady influx of Easterners, Europeans, Chinese, and freed slaves, all seeking to make a place in the wild new world. Dangers include the various Native American nations fighting for their very survival, and the vast, untameable environment itself.

- **Character Types:** Almost any.
- **Powers:** Magic or sorcery might simulate Native American shamans, witchcraft, voodoo, or other magical traditions that could exist.

- **Technology:** The Industrial Age has resulted in trains crossing the country, telegraphs forming a network of communication, photography, widespread print media. The end of the era sees the first automobiles, early submarines and submersibles, and even flying machines. Electrical current replaces gaslight as the modern world begins here.
- **Adventures:** The mythic Wild West includes with legendary gunfighters enacting tales of vengeance and heroism against a stark backdrop. The horrors of slavery and the atrocities committed against Native Americans looms over this era, however, the it is advised not to dismiss these aspects and their seriousness.
- **Options:** Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Education/Knowledge Roll, Increased Personal Skill Points, Passions, Reputation.

## PULP ERA

Named after the cheap newsprint of adventure magazines that defined the era, pop culture about time between the first and second World Wars is one of mass entertainment, international travel to exotic locales, organized crime, technological innovation, treasure-hunting, rugged individualism, as well also weird horror and masked crime-fighters.

- **Character Types:** Any.
- **Powers:** Any.
- **Technology:** Pulp often features strange science, such as death rays, giant robots, flying machines, mind-altering devices, and earth tunnellers, as well as amazing marvels such as ships capable of interstellar flight, jet packs, wrist radios, flying cars, and the like. Anachronistic technology is a staple of the pulp era.
- **Adventures:** Mysteries; thrillers; grisly horror; exploration of the unknown, of space, and the hollow earth; lost cities still inhabited; aerial adventure; cliff-hangers; weird and lurid tales of strange crime; square-jawed heroes fighting sinister criminal overlords and their minions; alien invasion; and even masked avengers dispensing cold justice . . . all of these are elements of possible pulp adventures.
- **Options:** Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Dodging Missile Weapons, Education/Knowledge Roll, Higher Starting Characteristics, Increased Personal Skill Points, Power Use in the Action Phase, Passions, Reputation, Sanity, Skill Ratings Over 100%, Total Hit Points.

## PLANETARY ADVENTURE

This setting focuses on journeys to strange worlds, seen through the eyes of humans sent to them through mysterious means. There, they inevitably encounter alien species, strange customs, ancient ruins, and baroque super-technology, often side by side with sword-and-sandal adventure.



- **Character Types:** Any.
- **Powers:** Usually mutations or psychic abilities, or even superpowers.
- **Technology:** Usually a mix of ancient and nearly forgotten technology of incredible power and utility, side-by-side with super-science from ingenious inventors. Warriors might carry energy pistols along with swords, fly airships and ride alien mounts.
- **Adventures:** Characters are usually sent to these worlds by unexplained means and often struggle to understand their new environment and its challenges. They must navigate strange customs and ancient traditions, can be agents of change in these bizarre alien places. Betrayal, epic love, dramatic betrayals, sudden reversals of fortune, alliances with strange creatures, lost cities full of ancient and forgotten technology... these are all staples of planetary adventure.
- **Options:** Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Dodging Missile Weapons, Higher Starting Characteristics, Increased Personal Skill Points, Non-human Characters, Power Use in the Action Phase, Reputation, Skill Ratings Over 100%, Total Hit Points.

## WORLD WAR II

World War II and the years before and after were marked by nationalistic fervour, uncertainty, global conflict, and espionage. This is also a good setting for war-era superhero activity.

- **Character Types:** Almost any.
- **Powers:** Hitler's Third Reich believed in magic as a means to power, and they may have been onto something. Also, many such settings have the era as the dawn of the world's first costumed superheroes.
- **Technology:** New developments in war technology included bigger and better battleships, more sophisticated submarines, tanks, and aeroplanes, etc. but all were shadowed by the emergence of the atomic bomb, which fundamentally defined the course of science and politics forever.
- **Adventures:** Characters can be resistance fighters in Occupied Europe, Allied soldiers or agents on the battlefield, spies behind enemy lines, crime-fighters and government agents fighting saboteurs back home, or even costumed superheroes battling at home and abroad.
- **Options:** Education/Knowledge Roll, Fatigue Points, Increased Personal Skill Points, Passions, Sanity.

## NOIR

Noir is almost always urban and defined by a bleak outlook, with world-weary heroes, seductions, insidious criminality, amoral socialites, moral corruption, inevitable betrayals, etc. Usually, the protagonists are haunted by inner demons and must

struggle to survive, alone against a hostile and uncaring universe, often still traumatized by World War II.

- **Character Types:** Any.
- **Powers:** Usually none, but magic noir has protagonists who either oppose sorcery or use it.
- **Technology:** Equivalent to postwar America and Europe.
- **Adventures:** Inevitably, mysteries dealing with ethical and moral quandaries, often 'no way out' scenarios where normal people are trapped by bad circumstances and must resort to desperate measures.
- **Options:** Education/Knowledge Roll, Increased Personal Skill Points, Passions.

## MODERN

The now, dawn of the 21st century, with advanced societies, global informational structure, unchecked capitalism, and unbounded technology, all progressing at an unimaginable pace towards a near-certain global collapse. This setting is also the default era for thrillers and modern horror. This can also cover the Cold War.

- **Character Types:** Any.
- **Powers:** Any.
- **Technology:** Can be realistic or super-advanced, as desired.
- **Adventures:** Any, from horror, thrillers, military action, spies, corporate intrigue, near-future sci-fi, dystopian, international intrigue, conspiracy, superhero, etc.
- **Options:** These can vary by genre.

## SUPERWORLD

Our world but with costumed superheroes, and the ramifications of superheroes, are a part of history and modern life. A superhero setting can incorporate alt-history, parallel realities, time travel, aliens, magic, conspiracy theories, or anything desired.

- **Character Types:** Any.
- **Powers:** Any, and many characters have more than one power type.
- **Technology:** As modern. Though super-science is known, it has yet to make a meaningful impact on the lives of most normal humans.
- **Adventures:** Tales of heroism and challenges, exploration of strange parallel dimensions, etc. Superheroes often wrestle with alter egos and secret identities, and complex issues of right and wrong. A super world campaign can vary from a flashy four-coloured world with vaguely ridiculous villains, a near-mythical treatment of superheroes as modern demigods, giddy exploration of the galaxy and strange corners of the earth, gritty street crime distinguished only by Lycra bodysuits, or even a paramilitary framework for world-changing superhero intervention.

- **Options:** Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Dodging Missile Weapons, Education/Knowledge Roll, Higher Starting Characteristics, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Non-human Characters, Passions, Power Use in the Action Phase, Reputation, Skill Ratings Over 100%, Total Hit Points.

## POST-APOCALYPTIC

A catastrophe has forever shattered the modern world, plunging it into a state where humankind must struggle to survive. The cause could be a limited nuclear exchange, science gone wrong, alien invasion, the Elder Gods awoken, society breakdown, pandemic, an environmental catastrophe, or zombies... or more than one of these. The setting may include mutants, scavenged technology, and raiding gangs. Some post-apocalyptic settings are like Westerns, with small enclaves of suspicious townsfolk and wandering loners who must rely on their wits and weapons to survive.

- **Character Types:** For a recent apocalypse, survivors may be from any profession, while later, options become more limited.
- **Powers:** Mutations in settings with radioactivity, while psychic abilities and superpowers may also have developed from the fallout. Centuries later, people may have rediscovered magic or sorcery as well.
- **Technology:** Depending on the nature of the catastrophe, technology can be antiquated compared to that of the modern world, identical, or it can feature scientific advances far removed from our own era. If it's aliens, there may be alien technology.
- **Adventures:** Post-apocalyptic stories usually deal with the brutality and cost of survival, or the efforts at rebuilding society. There may be the need to scavenge old technology and learn what can be found within the ruins.
- **Options:** Choosing Characteristic Values, Fatigue Points, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Non-human Characters, Sanity.

## NEAR-FUTURE/CYBERPUNK

Humanity has continued to interface with technology and lost much in the process. Mega-corporations have assumed governmental levels of control over citizens, and knowledge is the most valuable currency. Life is quick, convenient, cheap, and readily disposable. The union of humanity and machines has led to astonishing developments in genetic manipulation. The Dataspace is as real, if not more so than the dystopian material world.

- **Character Types:** Almost any.
- **Powers:** Any, usually simulated by technology.
- **Technology:** The modern world on overdrive. Space travel may have become commonplace, and virtual worlds are limitless.

- **Adventures:** Rebellion and the quest for identity are usual themes in these adventures, and characters can find themselves running for their lives, trying to stay ahead of monolithic, impersonal foes that seem to be everywhere.
- **Options:** Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Education/ Knowledge Roll, Increased Personal Skill Points, Sanity, Skill Ratings Over 100%.

## SPACE EXPLORATION

In this hard science fiction setting, space exploration at a large scale is either underway or has been recently established. Life on and off Earth continues much as it did before. Political conflicts shape the spread across the stars, and the search for habitable planets or resources dominates much exploration.

- **Character Types:** Any.
- **Powers:** Mutations and psychic abilities may exist, but are often freakish and terrifying.
- **Technology:** Generally, this setting has a scientific approach to spacefaring, and technology is easily extrapolated from modern technology.
- **Adventures:** Many human dramas and conflicts can play out in the sea of space, presenting the greatest challenge to survival. Environmental challenges or epic endeavours can be notable adventures, and exploring the edges of the Solar System may put humanity face-to-face with other mysteries, such as a first contact with alien life. Will it be horrific or wondrous?
- **Options:** Choosing Characteristic Values, Increased Personal Skill Points, Non-human Characters, Skill Ratings Over 100%.

## SPACE OPERA

This fusion of space travel and pulp adventure is writ against a galactic background, rife with aliens that work and live alongside humanity, to various degrees of cooperation. There may be some all-defining galactic conflict, or it may be a case of an epic threat to Earth (or another planet). In some space opera settings, mystical powers may exist—psychic or alien belief systems that give strange powers to their users.

- **Character Types:** Any.
- **Powers:** Aliens might be created using mutations, psychic abilities might represent mystical powers or emergent powers, and superpowers might model cybernetic implants. In some space opera settings, sorcery or magic might also exist, drawing on scientific principles rather than supernatural forces.
- **Technology:** The technology level differs wildly from planet to planet: some may have only primitive weapons and engineering, while others will be more technologically advanced than the default. Energy weapons, lasers, personal spaceships, energy shields... these are all available.

- **Adventures:** This is often heavily layered with another archetypal setting, such as pulp or sword & sorcery. Characters in space opera settings will embark on high adventures and strive for grand goals such as kingship, righting wrongs, or restoration of a previous, golden age.
- **Options:** Allegiance, Attacks and Parries over 100%, Choosing Characteristic Values, Cultural Modifiers, Dodging Missile Weapons, Higher Starting Characteristics, Increased Personal Skill Points, Literacy, Non-human Characters, Passions, Power Use in the Action Phase, Reputation, Skill Ratings Over 100%, Total Hit Points.

## HYBRID SETTINGS

Any of these sections can be combined with another, or introduced with some new element, creating a unique setting full of interesting and exciting opportunity. One could add superheroics to an ancient world setting for a campaign featuring the mythic offspring of gods, or into a sword & sorcery setting for something approximating anime.

Another option is to add something new and unexpected to an existing setting, an “It’s like X, but with Y...” approach, introducing aliens, zombies, vampires, or even the Cthulhu Mythos to a non-traditional choice for one of the above settings.

## ALTERNATE HISTORIES

You could also take one of the settings described above and add one critical detail that’s different—some technological development occurs centuries earlier, some famous battle goes a different way, a pivotal figure behaves other than history had them, or some major endeavour has an outcome other than what happened—creating what’s called an ‘alternate history,’ like “What if the US lost the Revolutionary War?” or “What if Genghis Khan’s hordes didn’t turn back and instead conquered all of Europe?” Extrapolating from there, one can create an intriguing variant setting where familiar elements have been reshaped by altogether different history. This sort of setting works wonderfully on its own but can also be combined with parallel realities or even time-travel. Is there anything the characters can do to restore a world they never knew?

## MULTIPLE SETTINGS

Because *Basic Roleplaying* is suitable for many different settings, you may even use them all, moving the characters through strange portals, time travel, or some other method that allows them to jump between worlds, with all of time and space as their playground. There may be only a single parallel reality that is a completely different setting (perhaps a variant of their own Earth) or it might be several parallel

worlds with their own distinctive features. Alternately, characters could be essentially immortal and begin in some distant and prior epoch, having adventures that span all human history, allowing full use of almost every setting in this chapter.

## POWERS AND SETTING

*Chapter 4: Powers* presents five different systems for powers of various types without much context—such as what settings these powers are suitable in. Each setting description above includes powers it's traditionally associated with. More novel settings can come from combining powers in settings other than the ones they're traditionally associated with.

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***For example,** adding mutations to the Dark Ages setting, with the characters bearing these strange stigmata. Are they of divine origin, or infernal? The Church might think these strange abilities and deformities are the result of demonic blood, while the characters might believe them gifts of Heaven, and use their abilities for good, fighting to protect a world that fears and hates them.*

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## ADAPTATION

You can also adapt a setting from fiction, movies, television shows, comic books, other games, or some other media into a setting using these rules. There are many licensed games available, but the most obvious reason is where a setting appeals to you and the players, but there is no set of rules available. There are many methods you may choose to use to adapt a setting using *Basic Roleplaying*, with the amount of work almost entirely up to your ambition and time you're willing to do it. Following is an outline of one way to adapt a setting from another medium into a playable game:

## FIDELITY

How slavishly are you going to be with the setting? Are you going to try to emulate it exactly, treating it as unchangeable canon, or will you use it as a source for your own purposes? Some settings are remarkably open for creative expansion, while others are more limited. You should decide how much effort you're going to put into evoking the exact feeling of the setting, or if you will allow your own tastes and ideas to dominate. Neither way is better than the other—they just appeal to different styles of gamemastering and different player expectations.

Copying the setting exactly is appealing to fans of the original setting, which hopefully has enough leeway to let the player characters do something. The appeal is obvious: they like that world and want to feel immersed in it. Player familiarity and 'buy in' helps immensely. This decision influences how you should handle the characters, described in **Characters in an Adapted Setting**.

Treating a setting as a springboard for your own creativity is best for settings that allow new ideas and concepts from different creative personnel, such as comic book worlds, serialized television, or multi-author book series. They can avoid the trap of too much backstory or canon, and let the players feel free to shake things up, but if they go too far from the established setting, the appeal of using that setting might be watered down.

Ask the players themselves what they'd like to see in an adapted setting and find out what level of freedom they want to have.

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***For example,** for a Robin Hood campaign, you and your players might want to maintain an overall theme of embattled bandit-heroes striking against the villainous authorities, trying to win the hearts and minds of the people of Nottingham. Do they want to be part of Robin Hood's band, taking orders from him and fighting alongside Will Scarlet, Maid Marian, and Friar Tuck, or do they want to replace the band entirely, with Robin Hood being little more than a fictional identity they all use. Perhaps King Richard anoints them as the wardens of Sherwood Forest and they serve to defend it against supernatural enemies of the realm, a world complete with werewolves, the dwindling denizens of Faerie, and ancient pagan gods.*

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Ideally, your players and you can find common ground in playing in an adapted setting, and everyone will be happy. Having everyone invested in the setting and eager to explore it makes all the difference in play, and you may make a point of periodic check-ins to ask players how they're feeling about the game. (This is generally a good idea for any type of campaign.)

## CHARACTERS IN AN ADAPTED SETTING

Adapting source material into a setting is easier if you first determine how the player characters fit into that setting. If the source material is strongly character-based, do you want the player characters to be like them, to replace them, or to cross paths with them? The following are entirely different ways to handle player characters in adapted worlds:

- **Inspired By...** Often, the main reason for wanting to use a particular setting is to play through adventures like those in the source material, so having the characters be like the originals is usually a safe bet. The player characters can be original, but cast in the same mould, or they can serve similar roles.
- **Replacement Heroes:** Sometimes players don't want to feel like they're second-class figures, living in the shadows of a much more famous group of characters. In this case, have the player characters replace the original figures, either creating new characters who fill the exact same roles, or simply using the original characters as their own player characters.
- **Friendly Rivals:** Another option with huge appeal is to have the player characters exist in the same world as the original protagonists. They may know them, be related to them, or may even cross paths with them. In cases like these, it's

important to make sure the players don't feel like their characters play second-fiddle to the 'real' movers and shakers.

## DESCRIBING THE SETTING

Once you know what the players will be doing in the world it's time to move onto the setting itself. First, you should become familiar with the tone and broad level of details of the original setting, taking notes on any information that may be important. You might find a fan wiki or resource that makes things easier. There's rarely a need to note every single minor character or throwaway detail, but you should pay attention to things that the players will find important.

Here's a list of sections you could use to organize the information about the setting:

- Character options, professions, powers, etc.
- Powers, if any
- Cultures or significant creatures
- Traditions or cultural beliefs
- Environments, points of interest, sacred places, etc.
- Vehicles and notable technology
- Religions or social organizations and tenets of note
- Society, mode of government, etc.
- Historical events of note
- Important figures like kings or queens, presidents, religious leaders, historical figures, etc.
- Groups, organizations, societies, orders, etc.
- Weapons and armour, if relevant
- Flora and fauna of note
- Adventure seeds, if the players are expected to seek out their own plots

This is also a time to define any high level 'rules' of the setting, if any. What power level best represents the setting? What's the overall moral universe, such as 'good will inevitably prevail', or 'humankind is an aberration in a cold and merciless universe'.

Some settings won't require all these, and you should only note enough to run your games and answer any questions the players have. And you don't need to do it up-front. You can always tell the player that you'll think about a question you don't know the answer to and get back to them, or you can field it with the players and decide as a group.

You might even create a wiki or a shared online document when developing your setting, even opening it up to your players. If they're interested, let them contribute to the setting's creation.

Keep in mind, though, that if you're spending more time on creating or adapting the setting than will actually see use in play, you might want to step back and assess



what's necessary vs. what's totally optional. You might thrive on exhaustively cataloguing all of the elements from a setting, while others will read (or view) it once and decide "I know enough now to run this. Let's go!" Figure out which of these extremes you're closest to and act accordingly.

This process can also be followed for any original setting, only in this case, you (and potentially your players) get to make up these details.

## ALLEGIANCE (OPTION)

Many settings include belief in higher powers. These could be gods, angels, saints, devils, divine principles, or even abstract philosophical concepts. A character who consistently behaves according to their beliefs has an allegiance to it, measured with the allegiance score. Acting or behaving as favoured by one's deity (or deities) can earn allegiance points that indicate dedication. Allegiance can change in play and new allegiances can appear as new forces become important.

Characters may earn allegiance points from more than one entity or god. People don't always behave consistently from one day to the next, and even the most moral and ethical person can commit acts of incredible evil. The system of allegiance allows a character to have allegiance scores towards opposed or multiple forces.

When one allegiance score is 20+ points higher than any other allegiance score, the character is considered allied with that force, and may achieve certain benefits because of that allegiance. The character must consciously acknowledge this allegiance however, regardless of the score. While an allegiance may seem obvious, they do not enjoy its benefits if they do not acknowledge it.

Allegiance points are almost never lost. They are always positive or 0. If reduced, they cannot go below 0. Allegiance points are a reward for behaviour of one type or another, thus having multiple (or at least opposed) forces is ideal. Behaviour that would be punished in one belief system is often rewarded in another, so that the character is not being penalized points by acting against the divine force they favour, but is instead being awarded points by the force that opposes their favoured allegiance.

As an allied character gains higher levels of allegiance, they may attain status within the associated cult or church (if any), represented in titles, powers, or responsibilities.

### Starting Allegiance

If allegiance is used, roll 1D6–2 (minimum 0) a number of times equal to the number of available allegiances to represent allegiance points earned prior to the beginning of the game. The gamemaster can choose one of the following for the player to do:

- Assign allegiance totals in the order they're rolled.
- Assign allegiance scores as desired.

For each (if any) power type tied to any spiritual force, add +1 point to each appropriate allegiance. Similarly, add +1 for each mutation for an appropriate allegiance.

Characters of the occultist, priest, or shaman professions add allegiance points equal to  $\frac{1}{2}$  POW (round up) distributed as desired.

## Increasing Allegiance

Actions that favour the allegiance increase the character's allegiance score. See **Creating Allegiances** for a list of potential actions that may grant allegiance points. After an adventure, provided that the character has behaved in a manner favoured by the force, ask the player to perform an allegiance test. This is identical to an experience check **Skill Improvement**. If successful, the character's allegiance score increases by +1D6 points.

If the character has performed actions encouraged by multiple allegiances, call for experience tests for all allegiances that apply, each gaining +1D6 points if successful.

## Multiple Allegiances

**No matter what guidelines are favoured by their allegiance, every character has free will and can act as desired.** A character can have scores in all, some, or none of the available allegiances. However, the character's alliance is only with the highest of the scores if that score is 20+ points higher than the next highest, and then only if the character acknowledges the allegiance.

## Maintaining Allegiance

When an allied character acts contrary to the interests of their allegiance, you may require the player to succeed in roll of D100 to test that allegiance. If the roll is above the character's current allegiance score, you should increase the character's opposed allegiance score by an amount equal to 1D4 through 1D8, depending on the degree of the aberrant behaviour. If the roll is equal to or less than the character's current allegiance score, there is no consequence.

If the character has an allegiance score of 100+ and has made commitment to that cause, you should warn the player that any actions taken against that allegiance are at the character's peril. A character with a strong allegiance may lose the benefits of the allegiance and be considered an enemy to fellow believers. There may be a divine or karmic punishment inflicted, or they may have to undertake penance to see their benefits reinstated. Penance might be fasting and prolonged meditation, a quest, an act of contrition, a sacrifice of some sort, or a ritual of purification.

## Creating Allegiances

You should define the allegiances and establish what each stands for. It is best to have at least two forces vying for a player character's allegiance, to emphasize the struggle between one course of belief vs. another.

The next step is to determine how many allegiance points are awarded for various actions. The easiest way to do this is to create a checklist of actions likely to occur in

the game and decide which force awards allegiance points to each action. Following are some suitable actions:

- Aiding someone weaker than yourself
- Behaving dishonourably
- Behaving honourably
- Charity towards the weak or destitute
- Creating something to honour. your allied force
- Destroying a supernatural being
- Destroying something sacred to another force
- Freeing someone from imprisonment
- Invoking your allied force disrespectfully
- Invoking your allied force with respect
- Killing someone in cold blood (murder)
- Killing someone in self-defence
- Major service to your allegiance
- Minor service to your allegiance
- Protecting someone
- Saving someone's life
- Theft

For each action, it is suggested that you list the allegiance reward for an opposed action, such as 'Aiding someone weaker than yourself' might be opposed by 'Exploiting someone weaker than yourself'. Major actions are worth 3 points of allegiance, significant ones worth 2, and minor ones worth 1 point.

After this, you must decide whether allegiance offers any particular rewards or whether the allegiance points will merely be a measure of devotion to that force. These can be drawn from **Benefits of Allegiance** (following) or can be more specific to the nature of the divine force.

When the character reaches 100+ with a specific allegiance they may be considered to have become an **apotheosis** of the allegiance, a paragon of that divine force's will in the world.

A campaign incorporating Christian theology would have Heaven and Hell as the two opposed allegiances, with the highest allegiance being a strong indicator as to where the character will go when they die. A campaign setting with a pantheon of gods lets the character have allegiance to multiple gods.

Allegiance does not necessarily have to be tied to divine beings from fantasy worlds, or even religions. In a science fiction setting, allegiance could be to something as abstract as a mystical force binding all living things together, with opposed bright and shadowy sides. Allegiance in a superhero setting could be towards Law or Anarchy, or Right and Wrong. Superheroes earn allegiance by defeating supervillains and saving the innocent, while supervillains are rewarded by committing crime and escaping justice.

## Benefits to Allegiance

Decide whether there are any real benefits to allegiance, and what those are. If one allegiance grants a benefit, the others should offer equivalent benefits, such as any of the following:

- Once the character's power points are expended, they may, upon a successful allegiance roll, instantly gain up to 1/10 (10%) of their current allegiance score (round up) as an extra reserve of power points. The allegiance points do not change with this benefit. These points must be drawn as the character's last power points are spent, otherwise they will fall unconscious. The points are otherwise identical to normal power points. This can be attempted up to three times during a game session. If using this ability, the character can make an allegiance test at the end of the adventure.
- With a successful allegiance roll, the character can use up to 1/5 (20%), rounded up, of their current allegiance score as temporary hit points, once per game session. The allegiance points do not change. These hit points are expended before the character's normal hit points and are not regenerated or restored in any way if lost. At the end of the session, any hit points over the character's regular hit point total disappear. If the character uses these extra hit points, they can make an allegiance test at the end of the adventure.
- With a successful allegiance roll, the character can create a pool equal to their entire current allegiance score as a reservoir of extra skill points that can be added to existing skill ratings for specific rolls. This can be done up to three times per session. Allegiance points do not change with this benefit. The player can choose which skills to add these points to, and how many points to add. The increases to these skill points must be declared before rolling, and the adjusted numbers are utilized if determining special successes, etc. These points can only be used for skill checks, and not resistance rolls, characteristic rolls, allegiance rolls, experience rolls, etc. A successful skill roll using these points is not eligible for an experience check. After using these extra skill points, the character can make an allegiance test at the end of the adventure.
- Any character who is allied to a power (20+ more than the second highest allegiance) can call for **divine intervention**. The chance of success is equal to that of a critical success. If a critical success is rolled, the power intervenes in some fashion, whether directly, through an agent or proxy, or through some clearly miraculous manifestation of the natural world. Generally, most deities have virtually unlimited power, so this aid can be extraordinary. The character can make an allegiance test at the end of the adventure.

Similar benefits might be created to provide fatigue points, Sanity points, or even allow for divine inspiration in the form of Idea rolls.

## Apotheosis

As noted above, if the character reaches a total of 100+ with an allegiance and is allied with that allegiance, they may be asked in a vision (or some other divine message) to serve it, to become its apotheosis. Scores in other allegiances do not mat-

ter. Apotheosis is not automatic. The character must demonstrate through their faith and actions that this is warranted. If the offer is accepted, an apotheosis occurs, changing the character into a living avatar and steadfast champion of the force.

Benefits to allegiance continue to accrue. The character maintains free will and can even betray the force they serve. If the character refuses apotheosis, their allegiance points continue to increase normally until death or retirement.

Accepting apotheosis may confer one or more significant benefits to the character. You are encouraged to craft suitable rewards and benefits. Following are examples of what apotheosis might bestow:

- Achieving some monumental personal goal, such as meeting their one true love, or finding a spiritual retreat where it is possible to achieve perfect happiness and escape from the turmoil of the world. This could even end tragically, as well, with the character achieving an epic destiny where the only suitable outcome is death.
- A limited immortality where the body does not age normally or suffer from disease or other afflictions. The character's healing rate does not change and they can still be slain by weapons or other injury. Twisted gods may choose to make this immortal body a mixed blessing, such as hideous scarring, endless pain, or some supernatural marking that cannot be removed.
- An increase of permanent hit points to CON+SIZ (or simply doubling current hit points). If hit locations are used, these are also adjusted accordingly. If total hit points are used, double them.
- Double the skill ratings of any three skills of the player's choice, suitable to the nature of the allegiance.
- A weapon, item, or significant artifact is provided through divine means, either as the result of a quest or some other means of gaining it. This item is incredibly powerful and recognizable by any who share or opposed to the character's allegiance.
- Being consumed entirely by the divine force and reborn as its living avatar, losing or gaining characteristic points as appropriate, with maximum power points doubling (though the POW characteristic remains unchanged). The character may even become a divine being akin to an angel or demon.

At this point, the player character has a POW×3 chance of initiating direct and immediate communication with the force. The force dominates the character's life, communicating with them frequently and directly. This may even become a hindrance; with the force interfering in actions that do not further its will.

## PASSIONS (OPTION)

Adventures are often full of intense emotion, which can lead to heights of heroism and depths of tragedy. These are defined as **passions**, distinct emotional connec-

tions to various entities, groups, places, or even oneself. Love, Hate, Fear, Devotion, and Loyalty are often placed in terrible conflict with one another, as well as challenging personal codes of honour. These are rated like skills and rolled on D100, allowing the character to become **inspired**, their actions charged by their beliefs. Inspired characters are more able to overcome challenges with superhuman effort and a likelihood of success. Failing such a roll may lead to **despair** or depression.

Like skills, passions increase through successful use with experience, and some of them can be reduced through actions contrary to the passion. Players always control their characters' behaviours: passions merely inform how the character is feeling about the subject, no matter how differently they act.

## BASIC PASSIONS

The most common passions are described here, though this list is not exhaustive. Like a skill speciality, a parenthesis after a passion indicates that a suitable focus must be chosen.

### Devotion (deity)

Devotion to a god or divine force represents a personal devotion of one's life to a deity or some divine force or entity. This indicates a sincere emotional dedication and strong faith. When used for inspiration, that faith manifests within the character, imbuing them with some small measure of courage.

### Fear (type or individual)

Fear is perhaps one of the strongest passions, driving all manner of behaviour, for better or worse. Fear can cause an individual to flee from the subject or act irrationally to escape its presence, or it can even cause an adverse reaction.

Common Fears can be focused on a particular group or an individual, such as a former enemy or treacherous relative. Fear cannot be defined towards general concepts or forces, such as 'old age' or 'earthquakes', and is generally not useful when the subject is something any reasonable being would fear, like death.

To inspire the character, the subject of the Fear must either be present, or their presence imminent. One cannot be motivated by Fear when the subject is hundreds of kilometres away and shows no sign of arrival. The threat of confronting the subject must be real and immediate.

The resulting behaviour from being inspired by Fear can be to aid some form of avoidance, flight, or defence from the subject, or even to spur violent opposition when cornered. At times, though, the gamemaster may ask the player to roll for their Fear passion if the character is embarking on a course of action that would put them into contact with the source of fear.

## Hate (group or individual)

Hatred unfortunately motivates many people, whether through racism, bigotry, or based on a particular hatred for a past wrong, real or imagined.

When used for inspiration, Hatred can only be used against a specific subject or type of subjects and does not apply to those allied with the subject of the hatred. Hates can also be aimed at specific people, usually for specific personal reasons.

## Honour

Honour is a martial virtue, a personal code of dignity, integrity, and pride. Personal honour. is not a slippery issue, subject to interpretation. The difference between honourable action and dishonourable action is clear to everyone, no matter how they behave. The Dishonour table lists things that most people agree are dishonourable actions for an average person. Performing these deeds diminishes honour.

### Dishonour

Dishonourable Act	Honour Lost
Attacking an unarmed foe	–5%
Cowardice	–5%
Desertion from battle	–5%
Refusing to offer mercy when it is deserved	–5%
Plundering a holy place of your religion	–5%
Discourtesy to someone under your protection	–10%
Flagrant cowardice	–15%
Treason against your allies	–15%
Breaking an oath	–25%
Attacking or stealing from the weak	–25%
Killing someone weaker than oneself	–35%
Rape or sexual assault	–50%
Killing family members	–50%

Honour is specific to the character and does not include other social obligations. One's Honour is not abused if someone insults their family—Love (family) covers that. Likewise, someone insulting one's god should consult the Devotion (deity) or Loyalty (temple) Passion, not Honour.

Honour can include almost anything that a character chooses it to, and their own individual code of honour. should be developed when this passion is taken. Someone with an extremely high Honour may be offended by anything that anyone says that could be construed as an insult, while a character with low or no Honour may not care what is said of them.

## Love

Love is an emotional bond or attraction felt by one individual for another individual or group. A character may have many loves.

- Love (family) is a natural emotion common to humankind in any age or culture. One's close family is often the first and most important community one belongs to. Family members are expected to support, protect, and avenge each other.
- Love (individual) indicates a deep feeling and attraction for another person. It usually implies physical and carnal commitment, although it may also include unrequited love.

## Loyalty (group or place)

Loyalty is the cornerstone of all of society beyond the family. It is the social bond which members of a community feel for each other. With it, one can call upon that community for support.

A character with conflicting loyalties may use their respective Loyalty ratings to determine an appropriate course of action. The player can choose based on the higher Loyalty rating or test them as an opposed roll. Thus, a player can use an opposed roll to determine if their character will obey their home town loyalty or to an individual if those loyalties are in conflict.

- **Loyalty (community)** is the measure of the bond a character has with their culture. It typically includes an obligation to avenge slights or injuries against that community or its members. Loyalty (community) is used to gain the support of the community in question.
- **Loyalty (location)** is the measure of one's willingness to live, fight, and die for a location they feel immense attachment to. This can be a home town, a city, or even a country.
- **Loyalty (individual)** is the measure of a character's bond to a specific individual, such as a ruler, boss, or another patron. A warrior owes personal loyalty to their leader; in return, the leader rewards their followers with compensation, support, or other privileges. Loyalty (individual) is also used to gain the personal support of that individual.

Other passions may exist, such as Distrust (individual or group), Respect (individual or group), or Greed, which works like Honour and can spur avaricious behaviour. You can work with your players to devise other passions, as desired, but if personal traits are being used, be careful not to overlap too much with those.

## STARTING PASSIONS

The easiest way to determine starting passions is to let the players define them. When characters are created, let each player pick three passions their character starts with one passion at 80% and two at 60%.



If desired, passions can be assigned or modified based on the character's culture or place of origin.

## Using Passions

Passions define a character's life intentions and serve to inspire them. The game-master may call for a passion roll. At other times, the player may suggest and request one, with the gamemaster's approval. Here are some of the ways that passions can affect play.

## Roleplaying Guidelines

At their most basic, a passion is a numerical rating of the degree of intensity a character feels for the subject of the passion, and can be used by the player when there is a question of how the character would act. The higher the passion, the more likely the character is going to act on it. The lower a passion, the more the character can ignore it.

Players always have control over their characters, but passion rolls can be used when a clear course of action is not obvious, or when the gamemaster thinks the character is behaving drastically 'out of character'. While the player is still in charge, the gamemaster might portray going against a passion (rolled or a high score) with comments like "Your character has a bad feeling about this but pushes on" or something to that effect.

## Demonstration and Support

A character with Loyalty might be called upon to roll it convincing someone else that they both share the same fealty. Trying to demonstrate one's Devotion, Hatred, Love, or Loyalty to sway others and be a good example are great ways to use passions in play. Succeed, and mutual support and aid may be offered; fail and the character may be turned away as a poseur and fraud.

## Inspiration

A character may attempt to be inspired by their passion and request a roll to augment a skill, with the gamemaster's approval. Only one attempt at inspiration can be made in a situation or 'scene'—such as the duration of a fight, social gathering, an action sequence, etc. The character does not get to make an inspiration roll every time the same action is attempted. The inspiration lasts for the time it takes to complete the activity, such as the duration of the combat or battle (with a maximum duration of one day). If in doubt, the gamemaster determines the duration of the inspiration. It does not take any time to attempt an inspiration based on a passion—they can happen as part of another action.

The gamemaster has the final say on whether a passion roll for inspiration can be attempted. Players are warned that passion rolls can be extremely risky as well as rewarding: a fumbled passion roll results in despair! If the character has already rolled to be inspired by a passion during the situation at hand, they cannot try to be

inspired again, even by a different passion. Additionally, the bonus from inspiration cannot be combined with an augment from another skill.

Remember that the gamemaster has the final say on the appropriateness of attempting Inspiration and its duration. The player must roll against the passion's rating on a D100:

- **Critical Success:** One chosen skill temporarily receives a +50% bonus for the duration of the task or situation. An experience check is gained in the passion.
- **Special Success:** One chosen skill temporarily receives a +30% bonus for the duration of the task or situation. An experience check is gained in the passion.
- **Success:** One chosen skill temporarily receives a +20% bonus for the duration of the task or situation. An experience check is gained in the passion.
- **Failure:** The character is despondent, modifying all further rolls made in the situation or scene by -10%. This penalty ends with the next scene.
- **Fumble:** The passion is immediately modified by -1D10% and the character is overcome by despair (see the Despair table, following). For the duration of the despair, the character is effectively incapable of doing anything more than running away or hiding, though the gamemaster may allow some degree of action beyond this in the right circumstances.

## Despair

Result	Duration of Despair
1-3	1D10 combat rounds
4-7	D10+10 combat rounds
8-9	Until sunset, sunrise, or similar length of time
10	1D3 game days

If a passion is ever reduced to 0%, removed it from the character sheet. A passion cannot go below 0. Additionally, the character can never regain a passion that has been lost in this fashion: it has been exhausted and cannot be renewed unless the gamemaster determines that an extraordinary set of circumstances or behaviour merits its return.

## Mandatory Rolls

Passions at 80% or higher represent staunchly held beliefs and connections and are not to be taken lightly or used only when convenient. Such extreme passions can require the player to make mandatory rolls due to these beliefs, if the gamemaster chooses. In general, the gamemaster has several options if the player has their character do something inappropriate for their rating in a relevant passion, such as a character with Hate (Nazis) 95% letting some Nazis go after a fight.

- Reduce the passion to below 80%.
- Oppose the passion with another passion as an opposed roll. If the opposed ability wins the contest with the passion, the player can act in a different man-

ner without modifying the primary passion. In this case, the conflicting passion won out.

## Gaining a Passion

Passions may easily be gained during play. Characters should get many opportunities to gain enemies, loved ones, allies, and loyalties. Both the player and gamemaster should agree upon introducing a new passion. When something significant occurs to the character, the gamemaster or player may suggest that a passion has been generated. Generally, the starting value is 60%, but might be higher based on circumstances.

## Voluntarily Reducing a Passion

A character with a passion 80% or higher who performs an action that directly contradicts that passion may either simply lower the passion to 80% (or lower) or try to oppose that passion with another one. However, the character may wish to reduce a passion in the following manner:

- When experience is determined, pick a passion to be lowered. If it has an experience check, it cannot be lowered at this time. If it has not been tested and the player wishes to lower it, roll as if checking for experience. If the experience roll is unsuccessful, reduce the passion by  $-1D6$ .
- A passion 50% or lower can be largely ignored in play, as it represents ambivalence about the subject. It can be removed from the character sheet, as desired.

## REPUTATION (OPTION)

Reputation measures a character's fame, notoriety, and renown. It includes one's family background, if relevant, and any actions they've done to earn a reputation. As a character's Reputation increases, people grow increasingly aware of them, knowing more and more about them.

## Gaining Reputation

Reputation is gained by doing things that gain the attention of others. Getting into the news, getting elected to office, doing something big and noteworthy, becoming a celebrity, helping someone famous, owning a famous item—these are all examples of things that can increase a character's Reputation.

Reputation does not increase because of experience checks. Instead, it is increased at the gamemaster's discretion, based on achievements and events that occur during play. Reputation can also increase through negative deeds. It does not decrease as passions do: behaving dishonourably, doing evil, failing spectacularly can make one just as famous (or even more so) than epic accomplishments.

The **Reputation Gains** table (below) provides examples about how Reputation might increase. Note that actions must be known to others—Reputation is gained

for actions taken in secrecy or obscurity. The gamemaster is encouraged to use these examples as listed or to use them as guidelines for other increases.

Reputation from a single act provides only one gain, though the gamemaster may modify it for multiple occurrences of the same action, up to the total of the possible roll. If you're using passions, it's possible to gain Reputation for an act and lose Honour for it at the same time.

## Reputation Gains

**Notable deed:** Gain +1d3 reputation

### Examples

- Swearing an oath of some import.
- Defeating an equally powerful foe.
- Outstanding use of a skill; achieving success in a noteworthy endeavour.
- A noteworthy marriage.
- Taking part in a great journey.
- Becoming a parent in a fortuitous birth.
- Having an important guest in your home or hall.
- Making a shrewd alliance.
- Taking an important part in a worship ceremony.
- Having some local media (newspaper, scribe, minstrel, etc.) talk about you.
- Having a popular blog, writing a book, being a minor celebrity, etc.
- A weird accident or stroke of luck.
- Lying and being discovered.
- Minor criminal acts.
- Breaking an oath of import.
- Acting discourteously to guests in your home or hall.
- A particularly significant fumble or visible failure.
- Losing a family member or ally.
- Breaking an alliance.
- Minor sacrilege.
- Bringing minor shame upon one's family.

**Extraordinary deed:** Gain +1d6 reputation

### Examples

- Swearing an epic oath.

- Defeating a superior foe (or number of foes).
- Critical use of a skill when it is important.
- An outstanding success in an extraordinary endeavour.
- A prestigious marriage.
- Having twins/triplets/etc.
- A major alliance.
- Being the subject of a popular tale, well-known song, or a major news story.
- Publishing a popular book or releasing a popular piece of music.
- Featured in a very successful media performance.
- A freak stroke of luck.
- Earning a major enemy.
- Significant act of sacrilege.
- Betraying or bringing harm to someone under your protection (such as a guest).
- A major criminal act.
- Breaking a major oath.
- Kin-slaying.
- A spectacular fumble or highly visible failure.
- Bringing major dishonour upon one's family.

**Heroic deed:** Gain +2d6 or more

### **Examples**

- Achieving a legendary success at a nearly impossible endeavour.
- Leading an army to victory or defeating one single-handedly.
- Defeating an enemy of divine or immortal nature.
- Marrying a king or queen or becoming one.
- Being the focus of a divine prophecy.
- Featured in a popular book or documentary.
- Building something epic like a new major temple or palace.
- A spectacular defeat.
- Slaying one's parents or children.
- An act of the darkest treachery or infamy.

## Tracking Reputation

The player should track the sources of their character's Reputation and how much has been gained. Again, once Reputation has increased, it does not decrease. One merely becomes famous for different things. The gamemaster may, however, modify its chance of success (see **Reputation Modifiers**).

## Using Reputation

Reputation is used in two ways: to identify someone, or to impress others (essentially saying "Do you know who I am?").

## Identifying Someone

Reputation may be used by the gamemaster to have non-player characters identify a character and the reason they're famous, or the players can roll to see if their characters have heard of a particular non-player character.

Apply any appropriate Reputation bonuses or penalties (see **Reputation Modifiers**) and roll. This is different than usual skills or characteristics, in that rolls are against the subject's Reputation, not one's own. A character may try to augment their Reputation

(or someone else's) with some sort of Communication skill, essentially talking someone up. If appropriate, a Knowledge or Lore skill might be used to augment a subject's Reputation if they are notable in that field.

If the roll succeeds, the one whose reputation was rolled against is recognized. This likely affects how the non-player character reacts to the character. Better qualities successes yield more information. Failure means they're not known, and a fumble means a disastrous misunderstanding or case of mistaken identity.

Someone can always try to deny who they are, but this grows increasingly difficult in more modern settings.

## Impressing Others

Reputation may be used to try to augment some Communication skills, if appropriate. Similarly, the gamemaster may allow the character to attempt to sway a non-player character's reaction to the character.

To use Reputation to augment another skill, roll against the character's Reputation:

- **Critical Success:** The character's Reputation adds a +50% bonus to the Communication skill to be used.
- **Special Success:** The character's Reputation adds a +30% bonus to the Communication skill to be used.
- **Success:** The character's Reputation adds a +20% bonus to the Communication skill to be used.
- **Failure:** The character subtracts -20% from the Communication skill to be used.

- **Fumble:** The character subtracts –50% from the Communication skill to be used.

## Reputation Modifiers

Reputation is modified by the social distance of the audience. Usually, Reputation among family, place of employment, and neighbourhood or home area is increased. On the other hand, Reputation diminishes with strangers and outsiders. Famous politicians, heroes, and celebrities might be completely unknown in distant places. Similarly, as time goes on, Reputations become less relevant. Add modifiers to a character's Reputation based on the observer's social proximity to them.

### Reputation Modifiers

Observer is...	Modifier
...from the same family, company, or locality, or has mutual acquaintances.	+25%
...well-travelled, follows gossip/news, is well-connected.	+10–25%
...from the same culture or region.	—
...from outside the character's social network or cultural group, or is out of touch with recent news.	–25%
...from outside the area where the character earned their Reputation, but within the same geographical region, or is of a different generation.	–50%
...from outside of the geographical region where the character earned their Reputation, or many years removed from the character.	–75%

## SANITY (OPTION)

There are many ways characters can become injured physically, through violence or accidents, but for some games, the most potent threat is that posed to the stability of the human mind. As defined in *Chapter 2: Characters*, characters have an optional characteristic called **Sanity**, represented by **Sanity points** (SAN). The more Sanity points a character has, the more psychologically stable they are. Sanity points are lost through trauma: encounters with horrific or unearthly monsters, witnessing death or violent events, or undergoing deliberate physical harm like torture. When exposed to Sanity-challenging events, characters roll against their current Sanity point total. Failure means a loss of SAN points, while success sometimes means only less SAN is lost. Sanity points can be regained through counselling, successfully defeating the source of the SAN loss, or by personal betterment.

As a note, this system is an abstraction specifically for the purpose of gameplay and does not intend to approximate or diminish the reality of mental illness or trivialize it in any fashion.

## SANITY MECHANICS

Each character has a Sanity characteristic, abbreviated as SAN. A character's initial SAN equals their POW×5. A character's SAN does not change because their POW later changes. Half the character's starting SAN is their temporary insanity score (TIS). Though SAN will vary dramatically throughout gameplay, their TIS never changes. At the gamemaster's discretion, a setting featuring normal humans may have the default TIS equal to POW, yielding a much higher chance of temporary insanity.

Occasionally, a character must make a successful SAN roll on D100 or lose SAN. The chance of success is equal to or less than the character's current SAN. The gamemaster will roll for how much SAN is lost if the roll fails. In some cases, an especially horrible or freakish experience may cost SAN even if the roll is successful, though this is likely a fraction of the total possible SAN loss.

Each character sheet includes an area to note current SAN and TIS; the value for TIS should be marked permanently. Current SAN should be written in pencil (if a paper sheet), like hit points or power point, as it changes with every loss.

If a character ever loses SAN greater than or equal to their TIS in a five-minute period (equal to one turn), they then go temporarily insane. Roll 1D6 for the character on the **Temporary Insanity** table and roll 1D8 on the **Temporary Insanity Duration table** (both following). The first table shows how the character is affected, and the second shows for how long it lasts.

When suffering temporary insanity, tell the player what their character is undergoing and ask them to roleplay it, if appropriate.

Time, counselling, potent drugs, some powers, or even divine intervention might heal temporary insanity. Appropriate drugs might be either made with an appropriate skill or purchased, if available. Additional means of dealing with temporary insanity can exist, at the gamemaster's discretion.

### Temporary Insanity

Result	Description and Effects
1	<b>Catatonia</b> ; the character assumes a fetal position.
2	<b>Stupefaction</b> ; the character babbles incessantly or stares into space without seeing anything.
3	<b>Paranoia</b> ; the character is lucid but convinced of unreasonable suspicions about almost anything.
4	<b>Phobia</b> ; the character stricken by great fear of something related to the source of the insanity.



5	<b>Amnesia</b> ; the character cannot remember who they are or what happened to them during or around the time of the SAN loss.
6	<b>Suicidal despondency* or a death-wish</b> ; the character is convinced that their own death is their only means of escaping the mental torment.

\* The character can never be forced to perform a suicidal act, and the gamemaster should use this result carefully, paying attention to the sensitivity of the player(s) involved.

### Temporary Insanity Duration

Result	Time Affected
1	Five minutes (one turn)
2	One hour
3	Two hours
4	Twelve hours
5	One day
6	Two days
7	One week
8	Two weeks

When a character's SAN reaches 0, they are considered permanently and completely insane, and are now either retired from play or become a non-player character to be controlled by the gamemaster. The only cure for permanent insanity is divine intervention or some other major process (extensive psychological reprogramming, years of therapy and meditation, etc.) to be determined by the gamemaster, if at all possible. If so, the amount of SAN restored should be decided accordingly.

## MAXIMUM SANITY

Certain skills, such as the Blasphemous Lore speciality of the Knowledge skill may reduce the maximum possible Sanity. As this skill increases, subtract it from 100, the result being the maximum Sanity the character may ever have, even if this is less than their original starting SAN.

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**For example**, someone with starting SAN 75 (POW 15×5) with Knowledge (Blasphemous Lore) 43% has a new maximum Sanity of 57% (100–43=57).

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## RESTORING SANITY POINTS

A character can regain lost SAN, but never to an amount exceeding their starting maximum Sanity total. Following are some ways SAN can be restored:

- **Success:** Defeating or destroying a cause of SAN loss can be worth an amount equal to half the potential SAN loss the cause threatened. The game-master should interpret the conditions for 'defeating' and determine the exact amount restored. This can be rolled or awarded as a blanket amount to anyone taking part in the defeat, not just those who lost SAN.
- **Counselling:** See the Psychotherapy skill. Generally, a successful skill roll regains 1D3–1 SAN.
- **Drugs:** Some drugs or substances can, at the gamemaster's discretion, restore lost SAN.
- **Powers:** Several psychic abilities and the Transfer superpower may restore lost SAN.
- **Self-improvement:** Attaining a 91% rating in a skill instantly restores 2D6 SAN points, representing the self-confidence and discipline associated with mastering a skill (this is a one-time bonus). If a character begins with this skill rating or higher, there is no SAN gain.

All Sanity gains are entirely at the discretion of the gamemaster, the sole judge of the situation and of what is appropriate.

## SANITY COSTS BY SITUATION

The following entries discuss those sanity-shaking situations which may occur in play. The gamemaster should determine additional situations. The value in front of the / is the amount lost if a successful SAN roll is made, while the amount on the other side is the amount lost if the SAN roll fails.

### Sanity Losses

Source of SAN Loss	Potential Loss
Something unsettling and grotesque, or a sudden scare	0/1
Minor unnatural creatures (zombies, werewolves, vampires, etc.)	0/1D3+
Scene of a violent death, finding a dead body	0/1D3
Finding a mutilated or mangled body	1/1D4
Witnessing a gruesome death	1/1D6
Suffering minor torture	1D3/1D6
Reality-challenging visions (Chaos, unnatural corruption, etc. )	0/1d8
Freakish and horrible monsters	1D2+/1D6+
Being afflicted by some horrible transformation	1D6/2D10
Monstrous alien gods	1D10/1D100

In the event of multiple exposures to the same source of SAN loss, the gamemaster may lessen the effects of later exposure (perhaps only allowing multiple exposures

to add up to the total possible rolled) or ignore the need to roll again altogether if the character has become familiarized or desensitized to the sanity-harming experience.

# CHAPTER 11: CREATURES

This chapter provides a wide range of potential encounters, whether stalwart allies, loyal pets, vicious animals, or supernatural beings, as well as sample characters from the past, fantasy settings, the modern world, and the future. There is no difference rules-wise between a creature and a non-player character—the gamemaster characterizes them with description and roleplaying. They all follow the same rules as characters. However, they each represent an appropriate specimen and are not balanced in the same fashion as a player character. You can use these creatures ‘as is’ or customize them as desired. No optional rules are used in these descriptions, though you can add or modify those as required (see Customizing Creatures and Non Player Characters).

All entries are described as ‘creatures’ for convenience, though they might be human or unliving machines.

## FORMAT FOR ENTRIES

Nearly every creature and non-player character follows the same format, though natural animals are in an abbreviated table.

- **Name:** A generic title.
- **Description:** Brief information about the entry.
- **Characteristics:** Characteristics are presented in both a rolled range and an average (below). Some entries may have missing characteristics: it is either negligible or not applicable (see Creatures Without Characteristics).
- **Hit Points (HP):** Usually the average of SIZ and CON, for some entries, hit points may be figured differently, such as by POW or another characteristic. At 2 hit points a living creature is unconscious or otherwise incapacitated, and when it reaches or goes below 0, it dies.
- **Movement Rate (MOV):** The primary means of movement is listed first. Creatures that are immobile have no MOV rate.
- **Damage Modifier (DM):** The average for the average creature, if any. Recalculate if necessary for larger or smaller specimens.
- **Armour:** The armour value and type of armour, if any.
- **Attacks:** The attack type, the skill rating, and damage roll. For attacks, ‘+dm’ means it is included, and ‘+½dm’ is when damage modifier is halved. Special combat abilities or conditions are noted here. All available attacks occur on the

same DEX strike rank, unless specified otherwise. Generally, a claw attack does 1D6+dm, and a bite or horn does 1D3+dm.

- **Skills:** The most relevant skills for an average encounter. For unlisted skills, humans have the base chances as a default, and additional skills should be determined by the gamemaster as appropriate (see Measuring Skill Ratings).
- **Powers:** Any powers an average specimen possesses, with types specified if necessary.

Power points are not listed but are equivalent to POW, where applicable.

## CREATURES WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

Some creatures have a '—' in place of certain characteristics, meaning it is not applicable or has a value of 0. A creature without a characteristic cannot be affected by attacks against or conditions that affect that characteristic. Following are guidelines for creatures lacking specific characteristics:

- **Strength (STR):** A creature without STR cannot interact with physical objects, other than moving around them.
- **Constitution (CON):** A creature without CON is immune to disease, radiation, poison, and other attacks requiring a resistance roll versus CON. It is never tired or fatigued. If it has SIZ and a material presence, its hit points are based on a different characteristic.
- **Size (SIZ):** A creature without a SIZ lacks a physical body or has a microscopic one. It usually cannot interact with physical objects. Its hit points are likely based on CON, if it has any conventional hit points at all.
- **Intelligence (INT):** Intelligent, sentient creatures have the normal range of INT, while animals and other non-sentient creatures possess 'fixed' INT, generally a rating of 3–5, and are ruled by instinct, not reason. A creature with fixed-INT or with no INT is unaffected by powers that affect rational thought, though it may be affected by powers that manipulate emotions.
- **Power (POW):** Even without POW, a creature may still have power points, but it does not regenerate them normally. Instead, it has some power or special ability letting it gain power points. Like living creatures, when it reaches 0 it is 'unconscious' until it somehow regains at least 1 power point.
- **Dexterity (DEX):** A creature without DEX is either immobile or is essentially stationary. If it has an attack, this occurs on DEX rank 1.
- **Charisma (CHA):** Though all creatures have some form of CHA, it is rarely relevant to those not of the same species. If necessary, assign CHA based on 1D6 for plain and featureless creatures, up to 6D6+ for beings of divine beauty. If relevant, temporarily modify the CHA of a creature from another species by –10 while dealing with those outside its species.

## CREATURES AS PLAYER CHARACTERS

Players may want to experience the game by role-playing members of non-human races (this bestiary calls every non-human a “creature”), especially in settings where they’re appropriate such as fantasy or science fiction. Wanting to play radically different creatures from humankind is a natural desire for role-playing, and if doing so fits the gamemaster’s choice of setting, it should be allowed. However, certain creatures are easier to role-play than others.

Incomplete creatures (those without a value in one or more characteristics) are often too limited for enjoyment. Additionally, it may be less enjoyable for a player attempting to role-play a creature whose INT characteristic is generated with a roll of less than 3D6 (or 2D6+6).

The gamemaster may also discourage players from trying to role-play extremely powerful or philosophically unappealing beings, based on the setting and the particular campaign.

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***For example, in a fantasy setting where the majority of the player characters are playing elves, the gamemaster may not allow players to create trolls or dwarf player characters due to the strife that these (traditional) elf-enemies will bring to the group. Alternatively, a modern horror campaign where characters are fighting occult threats may be inappropriate for a demonic or angelic player character (despite their appropriateness to the setting).***

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Similarly, if the creature would create undue difficulties due to its very nature, such as extreme size, social enmity, or cultural elements, the gamemaster should disallow players to choose to run it as a player character race. All such decisions are at the gamemaster’s discretion, and the player should ask the gamemaster if they are permitted to run a particular type of creature in the campaign.

These warnings aside, all creatures in this chapter are presented in as much detail as is required for use as a player character, though the gamemaster may wish to expand these entries to suit their particular setting and campaign. It is assumed in most cases that these statistics represent full-grown or mature versions of the creatures, meaning that the gamemaster should be able to limit the range of powers available to a player character version of the creature, with the assumption that in time, the player character creature may learn these additional powers and special abilities.

To choose whether or not a particular creature is suitable for the campaign as a player character, the gamemaster should ask three questions:

- **Is a player character version of this creature inappropriate for the campaign setting?**
- **Will this creature cause difficulties for other players or the course of the campaign?**
- **Will this creature unbalance the rest of the campaign?**

If the answer to any of these questions is “Yes”, the gamemaster is advised to disallow the creature for use as a player character, or to do so with the most stringent of conditions or special allowances.

## SANITY LOSS AND CREATURES

This chapter contains many creatures that might cause characters to lose sanity if viewed (see Sanity). The following creatures and can cause these SAN losses when a sanity roll is made.

Creature	SAN Roll Succeeds	SAN Roll Fails
Alien, Grey	0	–1D6
Alien, Xenomorph	1	–1D8
Angel	0 (or +1D3 SAN)	–1D3
Blob	1	–1D20
Cyborg (Grotesque)	0	–1D4
Demon, Greater	1D3	–2D6
Demon, Lesser	1	–1D6
Elemental	0	–1D4
Ghost	0	–1D4 (or more)
Ghoul	0	–1D6
Mummy	1	–1D8
Mutant (Grotesque)	0	–1D4
Robot, Killer	0	–1D4
Skeleton	0	–1D6
Vampire	1	–1D4 (or more)
Werewolf	0	–1D8
Zombie	1	–1D8

Some natural creatures may cause SAN loss, depending on the circumstances. SAN loss also depends on the setting, as supernatural creatures are unremarkable in a fantasy setting.

# NATURAL ANIMALS

These creatures are familiar to most players and thus their descriptions only focus on game mechanics. These represent generic examples rather than specific breeds or species, and can be modified as desired.

## NATURAL CREATURES

Most natural animals have rudimentary intelligence (INT 3–5), rarely fight to the death, and are generally territorial in behaviour. If a special success is rolled for any attack, bites and claws are slashing (rarely impaling), tentacles and constriction are entangling and crushing, tramples or kicks are crushing and potentially do knock-backs (based on the creature's SIZ). For creatures with poison, that is covered in **Poisons** in *Chapter 7: Spot Rules*. Attacks are presented in the order of preference. Creatures with no Dodge skill either do not Dodge or the skill is not applicable. Damage modifiers are average; modify if the STR or SIZ indicate so.

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### Alligator or Crocodile

- STR: 4D6+12 25
- CON: 3D6+6 18–19
- SIZ: 4D6+12 25
- POW: 3D6 10–11
- DEX: 2D6 7
- MOV: Walk 7 Swim 6
- Armour: 5 pt.hide
- HP: 22
- DM: +2D6
- Attack %, Damage: Bite 50%, 1D10+dm
- Skills: Dodge 30%, Hide 50%, Search 35%, Sense 30%, Stealth 75%, Track 15%

Alligators are smaller and weaker (–1D6 to STR and SIZ), have smaller jaws (1D8+dm), and are less aggressive than crocodiles.

- POW: 3D6 10–11 3D6
- DEX: 10–11
- MOV: Walk 12 Swim 2
- Armour: 3 pt.fur
- HP: 17
- DM: +2D6
- Attack %, Damage: Bite 25%, 1D10; Claw 25%, 1D6+dm
- Skills: Climb 35%, Move Quietly 35%, Search 35%, Sense 35%

Bears can attack twice in a round, using either two separate claw attacks or one claw and one bite attack. Grizzlies are larger, stronger (STR +1D6, CON +2, SIZ +2, +1 armour), and fiercer (+10% to combat skills). Polar bears are larger and more powerful (STR +2D6, CON +1D6+2, SIZ +2D6, +3 armour, +20% to attack skills, Swim 80%).

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### Bear

- STR: 3D6+10 20–21
- CON: 2D6+6 13
- SIZ: 3D6+10 20–21

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### Brontosaur

- STR: 4D10+40 62
- CON: 2D10+30 41
- SIZ: 4D10+50 72
- POW: 1D6+8 11–12



- DEX: 1D6 3–4
- MOV: Walk 7
- Armour: 14 pt.hide
- HP: 57
- DM: +7D6
- Attack %, Damage: Tail Lash 50%, 1D6+½dm; Trample 75%, 7D6+dm
- Skills: Listen 35%, Sense 30%, Spot 35%

Brontosaurus can attack once per round, using a tail lash or a trample if they are moving. The tail lash is an area-effect sweep attack. Trample is only used against targets who are prone or have a SIZ of less than 1/3 the brontosaurus's SIZ.

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## Condor/Eagle

- STR: 3D6+12 22–23
- CON: 3D6 10–11
- SIZ: 3D6+6 16–17
- POW: 2D6+6 13
- DEX: 2D6+12 19
- MOV: Fly 14 Walk 2
- Armour: 1 pt.feathers
- HP: 14
- DM: +1D6
- Attack %, Damage: Bite 45%, 1D6; Claw 45%, 1D6+dm

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## Dog

- STR: 2D6 7
- CON: 3D6 10–11
- SIZ: 1D6+1 4–5
- POW: 2D6 7
- DEX: 2D6+6 13
- MOV: Walk 10 Swim 6
- Armour: —
- HP: 7–8
- DM: –1D4
- Attack %, Damage: Bite 30%, 1D6+½dm

Wild dogs form packs of 1D8+3 or more. For larger dogs, use the statistics for wolves.

---

## Elephant

- STR: 6D6+34 55
- CON: 3D6+16 26–27
- SIZ: 6D6+42 63
- POW: 2D6+6 13
- DEX: 3D6 10–11
- MOV: Walk 10 Swim 2
- Armour: 4-pt.skin
- HP: 45
- DM: +6D6
- Attack %, Damage: Trample 50%, 4D6+dm; Plunge 25%, 6D6+dm; Trunk 50%, constriction; Gore 25%, 2D6+dm

Though they prefer to merely charge or trample, an elephant can attack with its trunk. If so, no damage is done. Instead, the target must make a resistance roll of their STR versus half the elephant's STR. If they fail, they are placed in position to be automatically trampled on the next round. Alternatively, the elephant may fling the victim away, doing falling damage based on one meter per 3 points of the elephant's STR. For every 6 SIZ points the victim has over 16, they drop two meters closer and take less damage.

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## Gorilla

- STR: 4D6+12 26
- CON: 3D6+6 16–17
- SIZ: 2D6+12 19
- POW: 2D6 7
- DEX: 3D6+6 16–17
- MOV: Walk 12 Swim 2
- Armour: 3-pt.fur
- HP: 16
- DM: +2D6

- Attack %, Damage: Bite 45%, 2D6; Wrestle 45%, 3D6+dm
- Skills: Climb 70%, Hide 40%, Listen 35%, Move Quietly 60%, Search 30%, Sense 40%

A gorilla can attack twice each round. It may strike twice with its fists, bite and strike, or bite and grapple. If a grapple succeeds, it grips its target and does its full damage modifier each round. If grappling, it may continue to bite, an *Easy* attack. Female gorillas are smaller than males (−1D6 to STR and SIZ).

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## Hawk

- STR: 1D3 2
- CON: 2D4 5
- SIZ: 1D2 1–2
- POW: 2D6 7
- DEX: 3D6+18 28–29
- MOV: Fly 12 Walk 1
- Armour: —
- HP: 4
- DM: −1D6
- Attack %, Damage: Claw 45%, 1D4+dm;

A hawk attacks with both claws simultaneously and bites 5 ranks later.

---

## Horse

- STR: 3D6+18 28–29
- CON: 2D6+6 13
- SIZ: 4D6+12 26
- POW: 3D6 10–11
- DEX: 3D6 10–11
- MOV: Walk 12 Swim 2
- Armour: 1-pt.hide
- HP: 20
- DM: +2D6
- Attack %, Damage: Kick 20%, 2D8+dm; Plunge 10%, 2D6+dm; Bite 10%, 1D6

- Skills: Dodge 45%, Hide 25%, Move Quietly 25%, Sense 80%

Horses not trained for combat flee when encountering blood, fire, gunfire, screams, or explosions. Warhorses are trained for violence and hold ground if the rider succeeds with a Ride check. Warhorses are usually bred for ruggedness (+2 to STR, CON, and SIZ).

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## Insect Swarm

- STR: —
- CON: —
- SIZ: —
- POW: —
- DEX: —
- MOV: Fly 12 Walk 10
- Armour: —
- HP: —
- DM: —
- Attack %, Damage: See description.
- Skills: Search 50%

The size of the hive determines the number of stings inflicted each round. A tiny wasp nest can sting 1D6 times per round, scaling up to a huge beehive or anthill doing 8D6. The dice type may be adjusted based on the severity of the venom (1 pt. for minor irritation all the way up to D10 for vicious predatory insects). Each character attacked by swarm is automatically stung the rolled number of times each combat round until they escape, deter, or destroy the swarm. An insect swarm attack for 2D6 combat rounds before giving up. Unless the targets are completely covered or enclosed there is no protection against an insect swarm. A *Difficult* Dodge roll can avoid an insect swarm, or other means (fire, smoke, poison, etc.) can be used to drive them away. Any protective gear the character may be wearing will reduce the number of stings per D6, with

light gear reducing each die by -1, bee-keeper gear by -4, and complete covering meaning no stings whatsoever. Once stung, the venom factor is based on the type of insect: bees are 20, wasps 15, army ants 10. Divide the total number of stings by the venom factor to get the venom potency (POT). After 1D6 hours, each stung character must make a resistance roll of CON versus the venom's POT. If successful, they resist the venom's POT and take half the venom's POT (round up) in hit point damage. If they fail the resistance roll, they take the venom's full potency as hit point damage. Successful intervention with an antivenom or equivalent treatment can reduce the number of stings by another 1D4-1 per 1D6, with a successful First Aid roll and the proper medical supplies. A character with a successful First Aid check can make a second *Difficult* Chemistry roll to improvise an antivenom from available chemicals or substances (see **Poison Antidotes**).

---

## Lion

- STR: 2D6+12 19
- CON: 3D6 10-11
- SIZ: 3D6+6 16-17
- POW: 2D6+6 13
- DEX: 2D6+12 19
- MOV: Walk 10 Swim 2
- Armour: 2-pt.skin
- HP: 14
- DM: +1 D6
- Attack %, Damage: Bite 40%, 1D10; Claw 60%. 1D6+dm; Rip 80%, 2D6+dm
- Skills: Dodge 20%, Hide 20%, Listen 30%, Sense 40%, Track 15%

A lion can make one claw attack and one bite attack each combat round. If both attacks hit, the lion hangs on for the

next round, continuing to bite. Instead of clawing, it rakes with its hind claws.

---

## Rat Pack

- STR: —
- CON: —
- SIZ: —
- POW: —
- DEX: —
- MOV: Walk 10 Swim 6
- Armour: —
- HP: —
- DM: —
- Attack %, Damage: # of packs x5%, 1D3 damage
- Skills: Climb 75%, Search 75%, Swim 75%

Each 'pack' consists of ten rats. Multiply the number of rat packs by x5: this result is the attack chance for each pack each combat round (roll for each pack). Each successful attack does 1D3 damage to the leg and/or abdomen hit locations (if hit locations are used). Special successes do slashing damage. A rat pack attack can be Dodged but not parried. Attacks against them are *Difficult*, but successful attack automatically kills one rat and chases away the rest of that pack, lowering the effectiveness of further attacks. Rat bites may also be diseased (see Disease).

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## Shark

- STR: 3D6+12 22-23
- CON: 2D6+9 16
- SIZ: 3D6+12 22-23
- POW: 3D6 10-11
- DEX: 2D6+3 10
- MOV: Swim 10
- Armour: 5-pt skin
- HP: 23
- DM: +2D6

- Attack %, Damage: Bite 75%, 2D6+dm; Fin Slash 50%, 2D3+½dm
- Skills: Sense 95%, Swim 100%

If a shark's bite misses or is dodged, it attempts a fin slash five DEX ranks later. If a shark's bite is parried or hits, it does not attempt a fin slash. After a successful bite attack, some sharks (like great whites) keep biting and thrashing around for subsequent combat rounds (an *Easy* attack for the same damage) until dislodged or the death of the target. A giant shark has STR and SIZ 6D6+24, CON 4D6+18, 39 hit points, and a +5D6 damage modifier.

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## Snake (Constrictor)

- STR: 3D6+12 22–23
- CON: 2D6+6 13
- SIZ: 5D6 17–18
- POW: 3D6 10–11
- DEX: 2D6+6 13
- MOV: Slither 6 Swim 4
- Armour: 1-pt.skin
- HP: 15–16
- DM: +1D6
- Attack %, Damage: Bite 65%, 1D4+½dm; Constrict 40%, 1D6+dm;
- Skills: Swallow 100%, special

A constrictor can attack twice in a combat round, first biting and then attempting constriction 5 DEX ranks later. If the constriction attack hits, the target is wrapped in the constrictor's coils. The target can gasp but cannot yell or shout. Each round of constriction does damage to the target's hit points (chest hit location). Only rigid chest armour (if armour by hit location is being used) reduces this damage. If a limb is free, the target can make *Difficult* attacks against the constrictor. If no limb is free, the target cannot attack under most circumstances (gamemaster's discretion). To become

completely free from constriction, the target must make a successful resistance roll of their STR against the constrictor's STR, instead of attacking in a round. For partial freedom, a *Difficult* Agility roll frees a single arm or other limb. A constricted target must succeed in a Stamina roll or fall unconscious. Once a target is either unconscious or dead, the constrictor swallows them whole. Unless wearing breathing apparatus that survived being crushed, the target suffocates. A giant constrictor adds +2D6 to STR and SIZ, has 19 hit points, a +2D6 damage modifier, and 4-point scaled hide.

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## Snake (Venomous)

- STR: 2D4 5
- CON: 2D6 7
- SIZ: 2D4 5
- POW: 1D8 4–5 3D6
- DEX: 10–11
- MOV: Slither 6 Swim 4
- Armour: —
- HP: 6
- DM: –1D6
- Attack %, Damage: Bite 70%, 1D2+1/2dm (impaling) + poison.
- Skills: Climb 50%, Dodge 50%, Hide 80%, Sense 65%, Stealth 90%, Swim 70%

Consult the sections on **Poisons** and **Sample Poisons** for more information about various types of venomous snakes. A giant venomous snake has STR and SIZ 4D6+12, 17 hit points, and a +2D6 damage modifier.

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## Squid (Giant)

- STR: 10D6 33
- CON: 2D6+6 13
- SIZ: 10D6 33

- POW: 3D6 10–11
- DEX: 2D6+12 19
- MOV: Swim 10 'Walk' 4
- Armour: 2-pt.hide
- HP: 23
- DM: +3D6
- Attack %, Damage: Beak 45%, 1D10+½dm + poison; Tentacle 45%, 1D6+dm
- Skills: Hide 70%, Swim 100%

A squid can attack up to five different targets simultaneously with its beak and ten tentacles. A squid's poison has a POT equivalent to its CON. The first tentacle successfully striking a target holds onto it, and when a second connects, the two constrict the target until the target can escape or cut free (each tentacle has 2 hit points). Each tentacle remaining around a target does normal damage each combat round. To escape from a tentacle, make a successful resistance roll of STR vs. the squid's STR, or a *Difficult* Effort roll to get a hand free to attack. Attacks against a squid while being held by its tentacles are *Difficult*. A leviathan-sized squid capable of taking on boats and whales has SIZ and STR +1D6 per meter of increased span from tentacle tip to tip, increasing hit points and damage modifier accordingly.

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## Tiger

- STR: 3D6+12 22–23
- CON: 3D6 10–11
- SIZ: 3D6+6 16–17
- POW: 3D6 10–11
- DEX: 2D6+12 19
- MOV: Walk 12
- Armour: 2-pt.skin
- HP: 13–14/
- DM: +1D6
- Attack %, Damage: Bite 45%, 1D10+½dm; Claw 70%, 1D8+dm; Ripping 80%, 2D8+dm

- Skills: Dodge 45%, Hide 80%, Jump 55%, Stealth 75%, Sense 70%, Track 50%

A tiger can make two simultaneous claws and one bite each combat round. The bite comes 5 DEX ranks after the claw attacks. If both claws successfully strike the target, the tiger hangs on and rips with its hind claws on the next round while continuing to bite.

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## Tyrannosaurus Rex

- STR: 10D6+32 67
- CON: 4D6+21 35
- SIZ: 6D6+32 53
- POW: 2D6+6 13
- DEX: 2D6+9 16
- MOV: Walk 12
- Armour: 10-pt.hide
- HP: 44/
- DM: +6D6
- Attack %, Damage: Bite 50%, 2D6+dm; Foreclaw 35%, 1D4+½dm; Kick 45%, 1D6+dm
- Skills: Jump 50%, Listen 45%, Sense 35%, Spot 50%, Track 50%

A tyrannosaurus attacks first by biting. If successful, 5 DEX rounds later it attacks with both foreclaws to seize the target for further tearing. For larger targets, it substitutes the foreclaw attacks for a single kick attack, sometimes even climbing on to the target and attacking with bite and two kicks in the next combat round.

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## Wolf

- STR: 2D6+6
- CON: 13 3D6
- SIZ: 10–11 2D6+1 8
- POW: 3D6 10–11
- DEX: 2D6+6 13

- MOV: Walk 10
- Armour: 2-pt.fur
- HP: 9–10
- DM: —
- Attack %, Damage: Bite 30%, 1D8+½dm
- Skills: Dodge 35%, Listen 75%, Sense 90%, Spot 60%, Track 80%

Wolves hunt in packs ranging from a dozen to 40 or more. In combat, wolves will often fight cooperatively. Several wolves may attack the same target simultaneously, ensuring that some are not parried or Dodged. One or two large wolves may attempt to knock their target down (see Knockdown). When the target is prone, others rush to tear at them. The gamemaster may also use these statistics to represent a large dog.

# FANTASY CREATURES

These are common to fantasy and horror settings, and can be used as allies, foes, or even player characters, modified as desired.

## Centaur

Half-human, half-horse, said to be wise and pastoral beings, keepers of lore, fine craftsmen, great musicians, and fierce warriors. They dwell in plains or forests, and freely intermingle with humans, sometimes serving as mentors or guardians.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
3D6+6	3D6	4D6+12	2D6+6	3D6	3D6+3	3D6
16–17	10–11	26	13	10–11	13–14	10–11

**Move:** 12

**Hit Points** 19

**Damage Modifier:** +1D4 (human);  
+2D6 (horse)

**Armour** 1-point hide (can wear armour)

### Attacks:

- Composite Bow 45%, 1D8+1+½dm (impaling)
- Lance 35%, 1D10+1+dm (impaling)
- Bastard Sword 40%, 1D10+1+dm (slashing)
- Target Shield 50%, 1D2+dm (knockback)
- Kick 50%, 1D6+dm (crushing)
- Rear and Plunge 35%, 2D8+dm (crushing)
- Trample 25%, 2D6+dm (crushing)

A centaur can kick 5 DEX ranks after striking with a melee weapon, though not when charging with lance. Their damage modifier with melee weapons is based upon STR x2, but normal for kicks, tramples, or charges.

**Powers:** Centaurs prefer magic to sorcery. A centaur with enough POW for magic has the following spells: Enhance 35%, Heal 60%, Illusion 45%, Perception 40%, and Vision 50%.

**Skills:** Appraise 50%, Bargain 35%, Command 25%, Dodge 35%, Etiquette 35%, Insight 40%, First Aid 40%, Jump 60%, Knowledge (History) 50%, Listen 35%, Perform (Lyre) 35%, Sense 50%, Spot 40%, Swim 35%, Track 25%.

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## Dragon

Gigantic, flame-breathing flying reptiles with huge claws and teeth, tough armoured hides, dragons are solitary creatures, living alone and devastating their surrounding countryside. Some dragons are intelligent, but many are merely cunning beasts. They are often hoarders, collecting gold or other treasures within their lairs. These statistics represent a bestial dragon. Dragons may be of different types, distinguished by colour and breath weapon (see below). Some dragons may even be flightless or have significantly different characteristics.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX
20D6	10D6	20D6	10	4D6+6	3D6
70	35	70	10	20	10–11

**Move:** 4 (10 flying)

**Hit Points** 53

**Damage Modifier:** +8D6

**Armour** 12-point scales

### Attacks:

- Breathe Flame 75%, 4D6+special (see below)
- Bite 65%, 3D6+dm (impaling)
- Claw 50%, 1D6+dm (bleeding)
- Tail 50%, 1D6+½dm (crushing)

Dragons attack by flying overhead and blasting fire down at their targets. A dragon's fire covers an area three meters in diameter with range equal to the dragon's POW in meters (see **Area Attacks**), but armour will protect against this damage. If the hit locations are used, the fire affects all hit locations: 4D6 is rolled once; and divide damage among hit locations. A dragon must spend 1D6 power points (or fatigue points) to belch flame. Additionally, any target struck is likely set on fire. When flying, a dragon only has its breath attack unless it enters close combat with an airborne target.

When on the ground, a dragon can make two attacks each combat round: it may either bite or breathe flame for one attack and will either use a claw strike or tail sweep for the other. The second attack is 5 DEX ranks after the first. A dragon's tail sweep attack is handled as an area effect sweep attack (see *Chapter 7: Spot Rules*).

**Skills:** Dodge 35%, Fly 100%, Listen 65%, Sense 50%, Spot 60%, Track 45%.

**Powers:** Dragons are intensely magical beings. Intelligent dragons have an INT of 4D6 and know magic or sorcery. If so, the dragon has additional skills such as Speak Language, various Knowledges, and even Appraise. Dragons may also have breath weapons other than flame (see Energy Projection).



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## Dwarf

Dwarves traditionally live underground in caverns and underground catacombs. They're famed for short tempers, fine craftsmanship, ancient grudges, excessive drinking, and long beards. They pride themselves on their ancestries, and differences between the various tribes of dwarves are significant.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
4D6	1D6+12	1D4+4	2D6+6	3D6	3D6	3D6
14	15–16	6–7	13	10–11	10–11	10–11

**Move:** 6

**Hit Points** 12

**Damage Modifier:** None

**Armour** 8 points (chain and a light helm)

### Attacks:

- Hammer 35%, 1D6+dm (crushing)
- Battleaxe 50%, 1D8+2+dm (bleeding)
- Heavy Crossbow 40%, 2D4+2 (impaling)
- Buckler 50%, 1D2+dm (knockback)

**Skills:** Appraise 50%, Bargain 45%, Brawl 50%, Craft (blacksmithing) 45%, Dodge 40%, Grapple 45%, Knowledge (Dwarf-lore) 35%, Language (Human) 35%, Language (Dwarf) 65%, Listen 45%, Repair (weapons and armour) 35%, Spot 45%, Status 35%, Throw 35%.

**Powers:** Traditionally, dwarves shun magic, though some use magic or sorcery. Dwarves have a natural ability like Super Sense (Dark Vision), with levels equivalent to  $\frac{1}{2}$  (round up) their POW.

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## Elf

Elves are traditionally forest dwellers with a strong connection to nature and the wild. They are long-lived, sometimes even immortal, and are often aloof and mysterious. There are many types of elves, from those who dwell in the wild woods, ascetic high elves, and those who ply the seas.

Humans and elves sometimes form relationships, though offspring are uncommon. Half-elves inherit traits from either parent. To create a half-elf, roll each characteristic as if for both races and average the result (round up). Any inherent powers from the elf lineage are halved or averaged, as appropriate.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
2D6+2	3D6	2D4+4	3D6+6	2D6+6	3D6+3	3D6
9	10–11	9	16–17	13	13–14	10–11

**Move:** 11

**Hit Points** 10

**Damage Modifier:** None

**Armour** 1 point (soft leather)

**Attacks:**

- Longbow 55%, 1D8+1+½dm (impaling)
- Short sword 45%, 1D6+1+dm (bleeding)
- Short Spear 40%, 1D6+1+dm (impaling)
- Short Spear (thrown) 55%, 1D6+1+½dm (impaling)

**Skills:** Climb 65%, Dodge 55%, First Aid 45%, Hide 35%, Jump 45%, Knowledge (Elf-lore) 45%, Language (Human) 40%, Language (Elvish) 85%, Listen 55%, Perform (Sing) 35%, Sense 30%, Spot 45%, Stealth 45%, Swim 35%, Track 40%.

**Powers:** Elves commonly use magic and have a natural ability like Super Sense (Night Vision) with levels equal to ½ their POW (round up). Common magic for an elf is Dispel 45%, Heal 50%, Illusion 35%, Perception 60%, Resistance 50%, and Vision 60%.

---

## Ghost

A ghost is the spiritual remnant of a living being still attached to the world of the living, aware or unaware of its deathly nature. They haunt locations (castles, mansions, graveyards, etc.), objects (weapons, vehicles, etc.) or even a specific person, usually connected with its death or former life. Most ghosts are malignant and hate the living. Ghosts are frequently insane, driven by a desire to right whatever wrong they feel was committed against them so that they might be allowed to 'pass on' to a higher plane. A ghost may not even understand this compulsion.

Ghosts can appear as wispy humanoid figures, glowing manifestations, solid-looking creatures, cloudy figures, headless things, vehicles, animals, etc. They are known by any number of names: spirits, shades, spooks, haunts, poltergeists, apparitions, phantoms, spectres, phantasms, etc.

Ghosts are often shaped by the circumstances of their death and their environment. Following are some options and suggestions for utilizing ghosts in a setting:

- Ghosts of redemption may appear as figures from a character's past, uttering omens. Or it may be drawn to protect someone it loved in life, providing aid and assistance in a time of great need.
- A ghost may appear as a spiritual advisor, relaying messages from a higher power. These rarely threaten or harm the living and may even provide guidance and mentorship.

- A poltergeist can be violent, throwing items and victims telekinetically around a room and using objects as improvised weapons.
- Ghost vehicles tend to appear at the same spot at the same time and date repeatedly. Boarding a ghostly train or ship is usually a method of transportation to another dimension or time. Characters who do this may disappear forever or may have to solve the haunting before being released.
- An entire building may itself be a ghost. If the building's mystery or dark secret is discovered, the building itself may disappear forever.

Ghosts usually possess only INT and POW, though some ghosts may have CHA. A ghost may, however, be solid, and have characteristics (STR, SIZ, and DEX) as a living being, though it will never have a CON value. Some material ghosts may not even know they are dead.

INT	POW	CHA
2D6+6	4D6	3D6
13	14	10–11
<b>Move:</b> 14 (equal to POW)		<b>Hit Points</b> None
<b>Damage Modifier:</b> None		<b>Armour</b> None (immaterial, see below).

Attacks:

- Ghostly Combat POW vs. POW, 1D3 power points (see below).

**Powers:** Ghosts can attack in ghostly combat, a POW vs. POW resistance roll. This looks as if the ghost is clawing at, enveloping, or otherwise physically attacking the target. If the ghost overcomes the target's POW, the target loses 1D3 power points (some ghosts can inflict hit point damage instead). If the ghost is overcome, it loses 1D3 power points. More powerful ghosts may drain 1D6 power points (or more) from a target, but only lose 1D3 power points if overcome by the intended target. This combat continues each combat round until the target is unconscious, or either side has fled. Unlike vampires, the drained power points are simply lost. A ghost flees before it reaches 0 power points. If a ghost reduces a target to 0 power points, it may possess them, usually causing the target to commit suicide or harm another person. Even if a ghost possesses a target, it remains tied to the site of its haunting and cannot leave.

In addition to ghostly combat, a ghost may have other powers suited to its former existence and role in the setting. Ghosts are immaterial and are not subject to the limitations of the Intangibility superpower. Traditional powers include psychic powers such as Cryokinesis, Mind Blast, Mind Control, Pyrokinesis, Telekinesis, or superpowers such as Drain, Energy Control, Invisibility, Teleport, and Weather Control. Ghosts may be vulnerable to magic, sorcery, psychic powers, or superpowers.

**Skills:** As appropriate.

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## Ghoul

Ghouls are hideously deformed humans who feed on the dead, caught between life and death. They are bestial in temperament and have little guiding intelligence. Most ghouls lack POW, being formed when a malignant spirit possesses a freshly dead corpse. The corpse is transfigured, animated, and must now devour flesh (living or dead) for sustenance.

Ghouls gain power points by consuming corpses, at the rate of 1 power point per 3 SIZ points devoured. A ghoule must expend 1 power point every morning or collapse, its spirit forced to return to the otherworld. If this happens, the ghouls' corpse rapidly decomposes, upon which it is finally dead. Additionally, every hour of exposure to sunlight forces a ghoule to spend 1 power point. Under normal circumstances, a ghoule will have 2D6+6 power points stored.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	DEX
4D6	3D6	2D6+6	3D6	3D6
14	10–11	13	10–11	10–11
<b>Move:</b> 8			<b>Hit Points</b> 12	
<b>Damage Modifier:</b> +1D4			<b>Armour</b> None (may wear armour)	

### Attacks:

- Claw 30%, 1D6+dm (bleeding)
- Bite 30%, 1D6+dm (bleeding) + venom (see below)
- Howl 100%, special (see below)

A ghoule attacks simultaneously with both claws and a bite. When it bites, the ghoule injects the target with venom with POT equal to its CON. The target must make a resistance roll of their CON vs. the venom's POT. If the target loses, the venom's full POT enters their system. If they successfully resist, only 1D3 of the venom's POT is injected. When the total POT injected is equal to or greater than a bitten character's CON, they are paralysed until an antidote counteracts the venom. The unfortunate character will remain in this state for as many days as they have points of CON, losing 1 point of CON each day. A character bitten by a ghoule (but not paralysed) purges the venom from their system at the rate of 1 POT per day.

Ghouls use a blood-chilling howl in combat against anyone within ½ the ghoule's CON in meters (round up). When a ghoule howls, make a resistance roll of its current power points versus each target's INT. If more than one ghoule howls, use the power point total of the ghoule with the most power points. If a target is overcome, they are stunned until all howling stops. If a character resists the howl's effects, they must try again on the next round. A character that successfully resists for five successive combat rounds becomes temporarily immune to its effects (gamemaster's discretion). The ghoule's howl costs 1 power point to use. The magic spells Countermagic and Resist Magic do not protect against ghoulish howling.

**Skills:** Climb 60%, Dodge 45%, Grapple 50%, Hide 35%, Jump 50%, Listen 60%, Sense 40%, Spot 50%, Stealth 60%.

**Powers:** More intelligent ghouls may know sorcery. All ghouls have a natural ability like Super Sense (Night Vision) with levels equal to  $\frac{1}{2}$  the ghoul's INT (round up).

---

## Giant

Giants are huge, ugly humanoids with a taste for human flesh. They are surly and untrustworthy creatures and usually only marginally less destructive than a tornado. Traditionally giants have several different cultures, based on their environment, such as hill giants, sea giants, mountain giants, fire giants, frost giants, etc. These types usually differ dramatically in intelligence, size, and behaviour. Some of them have societies, courts, and their own languages.

The following is a fully-grown, 8-meter tall 'generic' giant, roughly 60 years of age. Giants have lifespans like humans and grow 1D6+6 SIZ and 1D6+6 STR every ten years, but do not suffer the effects of ageing. For a less powerful giant, subtract age until it is the desired STR and SIZ.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
6D6+36	4D6+12	6D6+36	3D6	3D6	3D6	2D6
57	26	57	10–11	10–11	10–11	7

**Move:** 18

**Hit Points** 42

**Damage Modifier:** +6D6

**Armour** 12-point skin (see opposite)

### Attacks:

- Club 35%, 3D6+dm (crushing + knockback)
- Kick/Stomp 35%, 1D6+dm (crushing + knockback)
- Thrown Rock 35%, 2D6+ $\frac{1}{2}$ dm (crushing)

Giants use enormous clubs or tree trunks in battle and specialize in **Sweep Attacks**. A giant's club has hit points equal to 10+ its damage modifier dice.

**Powers:** Some powerful and older giants use magic or sorcery.

**Skills:** Sense 60%, Spot 40%, Throw 35%.

Giants have tough skin worth 6 points plus their damage modifier in D6s, thus a giant with a 6D6 damage modifier has 12-point skin. Some giants wear leg armour (often plate), which adds to the armour value on those locations. If hit locations are used, normal-sized characters fighting giants should roll only 1D10 to determine the location struck, unless they are using missile weapons.

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## Griffin

Griffins are chimerical creatures, combined of the body and rear legs of a lion, and the head, forelegs, and wings of an eagle. These flying predators traditionally have mountaintop nests and are often depicted in heraldic imagery.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX
10D6	3D6+12	10D6	6	3D6+6	3D6+12
35	22–23	35	6	16–17	22–23
<b>Move:</b> 8 (12 flying)			<b>Hit Points</b> 29		
<b>Damage Modifier:</b> +3D6			<b>Armour</b> 6-point hide		

### Attacks:

- Bite 70%, 1D6+dm (impaling)
- Claw 70%, 1D6+dm (bleeding)

A griffin attacks with two claws simultaneously and bites 5 DEX ranks later.

**Skills:** Dodge 30%, Fly 100%, Listen 50%, Sense 65%, Spot 75%.

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## Halfling

Halflings are small human-like beings, generally peaceful and civilized. Traditionally, they are fond of eating, pipe-smoking, and drinking, and have quiet professions such as farming, crafting, and inn-keeping. Halflings usually live in small rural communities in farmhouses or underground warrens. They often forsake wearing shoes.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
2D6	2D6+12	1D3+3	2D6+6	2D6+3	2D6+10	3D6
7	19	4–5	13	10	17	10–11
Move: 6			Hit Points 12			
Damage Modifier: –1D6			Armour None (may wear armour)			

### Attacks:

- Short Sword 35%, 1D6+1+dm (bleeding)
- Sling 35%, 1D8+½dm (crushing)
- Thrown Rock 50%, 1D4 (no damage modifier, crushing)
- Halflings are expert at throwing rocks and do not suffer their negative damage modifier.

**Skills:** Appraise 35%, Bargain 35%, Craft (farming) 75%, Dodge 60%, Drive (wagon) 45%, Grapple 35%, Hide 65%, Knowledge (Halfling-lore) 35%, Language (Halfling) 75%, Language (Human) 65%, Listen 65%, Sense 45%, Spot 50%, Throw 50%.

**Powers:** Traditionally, halflings shun magic, though some rare few use magic. Fewer still use sorcery.

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## Minotaur

Minotaurs are humanoids with bull's heads and hooved feet. Surly and violent, they have little civilization of their own, preferring to dwell in ruins or in the wild. Some can speak, while others are bestial and have no language abilities.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
3D6+12	1D6+12	3D6+12	2D6	3D6	3D6	2D6
22–23	15–16	22–23	7	10–11	10–11	7

**Move:** 6

**Damage Modifier:** +2D6

**Hit Points** 19

**Armour** 3-point hide (can wear other armour, usually leather)

Attacks:

- Great Axe 55%, 3D6+dm (bleeding)
- Head Butt 35%, 1D6+dm (knockback)
- Brawl 50%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

A minotaur can use either a head butt or weapon attack in combat round. A minotaur can only use both in a round if it is otherwise capable of making two attacks in a round.

**Skills:** Dodge 40%, Listen 35%, Sense 30%, Spot 35%, Track 55%.

**Powers:** Minotaurs normally disdain magic of any sort, and only the rarest knows any spells. If a minotaur is wounded or achieves a special success while striking an opponent, it goes berserk for 24–CON turns. This is like the sorcery spell Fury. A berserk minotaur can attempt to shake off the rage by making a successful roll of INT×1. After this berserk rage, it is considered fatigued (if fatigue is not used, all rolls are *Difficult*) until it has had a chance to rest.

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## Mummy

A mummy is an undead creature formed from a preserved, dried corpse, brought back to a semblance of life through a curse or powerful necromancy. Some cults keep mummies in their temples as guardians, while other mummies rise from the dead to protect their tombs from grave robbery. Some mummies speak, while others remain silent. Not all mummies are wrapped in bandages—some wear jewellery and items of great value as befitted their status in life.

Because of the dry, desiccated state of their flesh, fire is particularly effective against mummies. It is twice as easy to set a mummy afire as it is another normal target, and though damage is normal, the fires are more difficult to extinguish (lower the chance the fire will die out by half). Powers that use fire also have this effect.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
6D6	4D6+3	2D6+6	3D6	1D6+12	2D6	–
21	17	13	10–11	15–16	7	–

**Move:** 8

**Hit Points** 15

**Damage Modifier:** +1D6

**Armour** 3-point skin (may wear armour)

Attacks:

- Fist 70%, 1D3+dm (crushing)
- Grapple 25%, special
- Short Sword 45%, 1D6+1+dm (bleeding)

A mummy can attack with two fist attacks each combat round. If it succeeds with both attacks, it attempts to grapple and choke its target in the next round. A mummy may use ancient weapons appropriate to the era of its former life.

**Skills:** Language (ancient tongue) 90%, Listen 50%, Sense 45%, Spot 50%, Stealth 50%.

**Powers:** Mummies may remember sorcery from their former existence. A mummy sorcerer might have these spells in memory: Brazier of Power (4), Gift of the Earth (4), Pox (1), Sorcerer's Talons (2). If a mummy's tomb is intact, it likely has access to its grimoire, spell scrolls, and many magic items.

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## Orc

Orcs are savage, bestial humanoids who despise humanity, elves, dwarves, and nearly any other people they encounter. They usually have greyish skin, fangs, and pointed ears, and are sometimes referred to as goblins. Orcs prefer darkness but can function well enough in daylight. They have a rough civilization based almost entirely on brutality and enslavement of their own as well as any unlucky captives. They even practice cannibalism on weak or unlucky members of their own species. Orcs often serve the forces of darkness, or prey upon others for their own amusement and enrichment. Some orcs ride giant wolves, bred as mounts. Many types of orcs could exist, based on environmental, cultural, regional, or other variances. Common types are the formidable 'greater' orcs (STR 5D6, CON 3D6+3, and SIZ 3D6+6) and pestilential 'lesser' orcs (STR 3D6, SIZ 2D6).

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
4D6	3D6	2D6+2	3D6	2D6+3	4D6	2D6
14	10–11	9	10–11	10	14	7

**Move:** 8

**Hit Points** 10

**Damage Modifier:** None

**Armour** 6-point ring and light helmet

Attacks:

- Scimitar 35%, 1D8+1+dm (bleeding)



- Composite Bow 35%, 1D8+1+½dm (impaling)
- Short Spear 35%, 1D6+1+dm (impaling)
- Short Spear (thrown) 35%, 1D6+1+½dm (impaling)
- Spiked Shield 35%, 1D3+dm (impaling)

**Skills:** Climb 55%, Dodge 40%, Hide 35%, Knowledge (Orc-lore) 35%, Language (Human) 25%, Language (Orcish) 60%, Listen 50%, Ride (wolf) 50%, Sense 35%, Spot 45%, Stealth 40%, Track 30%

**Powers:** Sorcery is the most fearsome power in orc society, with orc sorcerers often serving as priests or leaders. A sorcery-using orc has a POW of 16+ and may know the following spells: Cloak of Night (2), Pox (1), Rat's Vision (1), Sorcerer's Razor (1), Sorcerer's Speed (2), Ward (3).

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## Skeleton

Animated skeletons are either created or summoned by magic or the result of an ancient curse. Most are human remains, but skeletons of other species exist. Animated skeletons are almost always encountered guarding some treasure, ancient tomb, or some other place of ill omen. Skeletons move at the same speed they did in life but cannot swim. They have no fatigue points and never tire.

STR	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX
3D6	2D6+6	3D6	1	3D6
10–11	13	10–11	1	10–11

**Move:** 10

**Hit Points** 13 (see below)

**Damage Modifier:** None

**Armour** None (may wear armour, also see below for immunities)

### Attacks:

- Broadsword 55%, 1D8+1+dm (bleeding)
- Self Bow 50%, 1D6+1+½dm (impaling)
- Large Round Shield 55%, 1D4+dm (knockback)

**Skills:** Dodge 40%

Skeletons have no CON, and their hit points equals their SIZ. They are immune to the special effects from bleeding and impaling hits. They take no damage whatsoever from thrusting weapons, unless the hit was a special success or critical hit, in which case, the damage is taken but the secondary effects are ignored.

Dried bones are brittle, and snap and splinter easily from a heavy blow. Regardless of the skeleton's current hit points, any blow striking a skeleton has a percentage chance of destroying the skeleton equal to the damage done multiplied by x4, in addition to the normal hit point loss. If the roll is successful, the skeleton instantly shatters to shards of bone.

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## Troll

Trolls are huge, flesh-eating humanoids with rough greenish-black hide, hairy shoulders and arms, and long claws. They traditionally dwell in mountains and forests, preferring to live in caves or sometimes beneath bridges. Some trolls can speak, while others are bestial and cannot. They are nocturnal creatures and shun sunlight whenever they can. There may be other species of troll, usually named for their environments (stone, ice, wood, rock, hill, mountain, sand, sea, lake, swamp, bog, etc.), differing in colouration and other ways. Smarter trolls use more sophisticated weapons, while some will even wear heavy armour.

Most trolls encountered are males, while female trolls (called troll-wives) are smaller and weaker (–6 to STR and SIZ) but smarter and faster (+1D6 to INT, POW, and DEX).

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
3D6+12	2D6+6	4D6+12	2D6	2D6	2D6+3	1D6
22–23	13	26	7	7	10	3–4

**Move:** 6

**Hit Points** 20

**Damage Modifier:** +2D6

**Armour** 3-point skin

Attacks:

- Tree Trunk Club 45%, 1D10+2+dm (crushing)
- Claw 50%, 1D6+dm (bleeding)
- Grapple 50%, special

A troll's usual tactic is to strike with its club then hit with a claw, but the troll cannot parry if it does so. Like a giant's club, a troll's tree trunk club has hit points equal to 10+ its dice in damage modifier.

**Powers:** Trolls regenerate rapidly from injuries, healing 1D3 hit points per combat round, unless they are dead. If the hit locations are used, trolls heal 1 hit point per wounded hit location per combat round. If a troll is in sunlight, or if the damage was done by fire, these wounds do not regenerate. Trolls can see in the dark as if they have the Super Sense (Night Vision) power with levels equal to ½ the troll's POW (round up). Troll-wives are almost always sorcery-using witches, equipped with spells such as Curse of Sorcery (4), Pox (1), Undo Sorcery (2), and Witch Sight (3).

**Skills:** Dodge 35%, Sense 55%, Spot 55%.

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## Unicorn

The unicorn is a horse-like magical animal with smallish hooves and a single long straight horn protruding from the centre of its forehead. Unicorns are almost always white, though black or grey ones are not unheard of. They are solitary, peaceful forest-dwellers, and are highly sensitive to magic and their environment. It is believed that they are immortal unless killed or their horn removed, and for this reason their horns are thought to grant immortality. Unicorns are often featured in heraldry

and are a sign of chivalric and maidenly virtue. They are especially trusting of maidenly human or elf women.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
2D6+24	2D6+6	2D6+18	2D6+6	2D6+12	2D6+6	4D6
31	13	25	13	19	13	14

**Move:** 12

**Hit Points** 19

**Damage Modifier:** +2D6

**Armour** None

Attacks:

- Horn 75%, 1D10+dm (impaling)
- Kick 40%, 1D8+dm (crushing)
- Rear & Plunge 40%, 2D8+dm (crushing)
- Trample 75%, 2D6+dm (crushing)

A unicorn can attack once a round, preferring to use its horn. A unicorn can parry with the horn as well as either simultaneously kick or gore with its horn.

**Skills:** Dodge 35%, Hide 65%, Insight 50%, Jump 90%, Listen 70%, Sense 80%, Spot 75%, Stealth 50%.

**Powers:** A unicorn can heal wounds with its horn by touching the wound and expending 1 power point per hit point to be restored. This healing can even reattach a severed limb, if at least 6 power points are spent. Attribute points lost through poison or disease can also be cured, but this takes 1 point of permanent POW per point cured, so unicorns are reluctant to perform this. Additionally, a unicorn can detect poison with a touch of its horn. If a unicorn horn is made into a cup, it shatters if poison is placed into it.

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## Vampire

Vampires are undead who survive by drinking the blood of the living. Created when they share blood with a vampire and are killed, they reawaken as ravenous creatures. However, many vampires regain their former intelligence and can move undetected through human society, immortal, remaining careful when they feed. Some are urbane and civilized and feed on lesser animals or use other means of procuring blood. Others are like wolves, killing with impunity.

Like ghosts, there are many types of vampires, ranging from beautiful, urbane, intelligent, and reclusive dilettantes to horrifically ugly monsters with bat-like features and protruding fangs, living in sewers and barely sentient. Some vampires may even strive to atone for the misdeeds of their previous life and the killings they committed. Following are qualities or aspects ascribed to vampires, true or false.

- A vampire casts no reflection.
- The third bite from a vampire causes the victim to die, and then to become one of the undead. When a character is turned into a vampire, their STR and CON double.

- Vampires have hairy palms, repulsive breath, and cry tears of blood.
- Killing the original or 'chief' vampire cures its victims of their vampirism. Alternately, killing the lead vampire instantly kills all those vampires it has created.
- Vampires cannot cross moving water such as a river.
- Garlic wards off vampires. Garlic has a POT of 2D6+6 (to vampires only) and must be resisted by the vampire's current power points. If the vampire succeeds, it can act against the garlic-holder. If it fails, the vampire is stunned until it is no longer in the presence of the garlic. If a vampire eats garlic, it takes 1D2 hit points damage per clove consumed.
- Vampires employ human servants to guard their secrets and protect them during daylight hours.
- A vampire cannot enter a home or residence uninvited.

Some vampires organize themselves into clans, with each having different appearances, tendencies, and even powers (see *Powers*, following).

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
3D6×2	3D6×2	3D6	2D6+6	(13)	3D6	3D6
20–22	20–22	10–11	13	(13)	10–11	10–11

**Move:** 12

**Hit Points** 15–17

**Damage Modifier:** +1D6

**Armour** None (can wear armour)

Attacks:

- Bite 50%, 1D4+½dm (bleeding) + Blood Drain (see below)
- Claw 50%, 1D4+dm (bleeding) + Chill Touch (see below)
- Hypnotic Gaze, POW vs. POW, (special see below)
- Grapple 75%, special

A vampire can make one bite and two claw attacks per round, or it may attempt a single claw and a hypnotic gaze attack. If it succeeds in both claw attacks and a bite attack, it grapples its target and drains their blood each round until the target is incapacitated. A vampire cannot attempt to Dodge during a round it bites or uses hypnotic gaze. These powers are described below.

**Skills:** Dodge 50%, Etiquette 50%, Fly 90%, Hide 70%, Insight 60%, Jump 75%, Knowledge (History) 75%, Language (ancient) 75%, Language (modern) 50%, Listen 60%, Persuade 60%, Sense 75%, Spot 75%, Stealth 80%, Track 75%.

**Powers:** Vampires have a wide range of powers attributed to them. The following are those almost all vampires have.

- **Blood Drain:** A vampire that successfully bites and damages a target can drain 1D6 STR or 1D6 power points from that target on each subsequent round it stays attached, grappling with them. If the target has lost all their STR, the vampire can choose instead to drain CON. At 0 CON, the victim dies. If the victim survives, these characteristic points regenerate 1 point per day of rest, or twice that time if active. If more than one characteristic is drained, alternate re-

covery each day to recover 1 point of STR, then 1 point of CON, etc. Power points regenerate normally. A vampire uses Blood Drain to recoup its own power points—it has no POW of its own and cannot regenerate them normally. STR, CON, or power points drained are transferred by the vampire as an equal number of power points. A vampire cannot store more power points than its CON. Any points beyond that are lost.

- **Chill Touch:** A vampire that touches a target can drain power points instead of blood. The vampire must have succeeded in a claw attack against the target (or touched an incapacitated or unaware target). On the subsequent round it makes a resistance roll of its current power points vs. the target's current power points. Armour does not protect against this attack. If the vampire succeeds, it drains 1D3 power points from the target, which are transferred to its current power point total. The vampire must remain in contact with the target each round to continue this drain and must succeed in a resistance roll each combat round. The target recovers these lost power points normally.
- **Hypnotic Gaze:** If a vampire overcomes a target's POW with its current power points in a resistance roll, the target is hypnotized and can be made to follow simple instructions. If these instructions are self-destructive, at the start of the round the target can attempt an Idea roll to snap out of it.
- **Night Sight:** Vampires have a natural ability combining the Super Senses of Dark Vision, Infrared Vision, and Night Vision at a level equal to half the vampire's INT (round up).
- **Regeneration:** Unless it is killed by a traditional method (see below), a vampire regenerates 1D3 hit points per combat round. If it is in direct sunlight or in the presence of a holy symbol, it does not regenerate this damage and must heal normally (it also takes damage from these sources, see Weaknesses, following). Additionally, the damage from holy water, a holy symbol, sunlight, or fire cannot be regenerated and must heal at the vampire's normal healing rate.

In addition to the above, vampires are said to have other powers, which may or may not be true.

- **Legions of the Night:** Vampires can control lesser creatures such as bats, rats, and wolves. The vampire can summon 1D6 rat or bat swarms, treating bat swarms as rat swarms but with Fly 100%), or 1D6 wolves. Each swarm costs 1 power point to summon and, and each wolf costs 3 power points to summon and control. These creatures may be created as sidekicks but use the vampire's current power point total instead of POW when determining control or can be handled through sorcery spells such as Bird's Vision (substitute a bat for a bird) and Rat's Vision.
- **Mist Form:** The vampire can transform itself into a mist, able to move through the tiniest of cracks and float through the air effortlessly. A vampire with this power may be forced into mist form when it is reduced to 0 hit points, but is not slain in the traditional manner. This could be the magic spell Change or the superpowers Alternate Form or Intangibility. While in mist form, the vampire has MOV 5 and is immune to most forms of physical damage, though magic may still affect it.

- **Shape Shifting:** The vampire can transform itself into a wolf, a bat, or even a swarm of rats at a cost of 3 power points. As with Mist Form, the power is identical to either Change or Alternate Form. Use the statistics for a wolf or rat swarm for the vampire's abilities in either of these forms, using the same game effects for rats as bats (though with Fly 100%).
- **Spellcasting:** Vampires are powerful spellcasters, with an assortment of spells ready for use. With their incredible lifespans and their access to forbidden tomes, scrolls, and unholy lore, vampires know many sorcery or magic spells. A vampire can know up to twice normal human capacity for magic or sorcery spells. Vampires use their current power point total to overcome targets or for their magic.

**Weaknesses:** Vampires, as cursed and unholy undead, have many weaknesses that set them apart from the living and other forms of undead. Following are traditional vampire weaknesses, of which all, many, of none may be true.

- **Blood Thirst:** A vampire loses 1D6 power points every day through simply being, spent when the vampire first arises. If the vampire reaches 1 or 2 power points, all its rolls are *Difficult* due to its weakness and its roaring thirst.
- **Daylight:** Vampires suffer 1 damage per combat round of exposure to direct sunlight. While in direct sunlight, a vampire cannot regenerate, shape change, turn into mist, or use its hypnotic gaze. Sunlight may cause additional problems for vampires, such as making all skill rolls *Difficult*. For this reason, vampires are traditionally nocturnal.
- **Decapitation:** A vampire who has been decapitated is dead, will not regenerate, and can never rise from the dead.
- **Fire:** Vampires take double damage from fire, whatever its source. Vampires are flammable, if attempts are made to set one afire.
- **Holy Symbols:** Vampires presented with a holy symbol in the hands of a character with true faith (perhaps the Devotion Passion at 80% or more or 50 allegiance to a 'good' aligned god) are inflicted with intense pain, losing 1D3 power points for each round the character with the holy symbol succeeds in a resistance roll of POW vs. the vampire's current power points. The character must be concentrating on this and can perform no other attacks each round. The vampire suffers 1D3 points of damage for each round if it comes into actual physical contact with the holy symbol. A vampire cannot attempt its hypnotic gaze power versus a character that wins in this resistance roll.
- **Holy Water:** Holy water counts as strong acid against vampires (see Acid), doing 1D4 damage per combat round. A character with at least 50 Allegiance to a benevolent deity may create holy water by spending one full turn in prayer and spending 1 power point over that water. The amount of water to be blessed is limited by the character's POW in SIZ.
- **Sacred Earth:** A vampire loses 3D6 power points each day it does not spend at least four hours in a coffin (or equivalent) lined with earth from its homeland; a penalty exacted at sunset. Thus, an ill-prepared vampire could lose 4D6 power points each evening if denied sacred earth and due to blood thirst (see above). If a vampire reaches 0 power points it becomes comatose, not dead

but unable move or function until someone transfers power points to it using a power.

- **Stakes:** If a wooden stake is driven through a vampire's heart and causes at least 1 point of damage, the vampire immediately disintegrates into dust. In combat, this is whenever a wooden weapon achieves an impaling or critical result on a *Difficult* attack, or an aimed shot at the chest hit location. A traditional wooden stake does 1D3+dm and has 6 hit points, with a base chance of 15%. Alternately, this merely prevents the vampire from acting and regenerating, and the vampire must be decapitated, the head and body burned separately to be destroyed utterly.

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## Werewolf

Werewolves are shape-changers able to transform from human, to wolf, with an intermediary hybrid form. This condition is called lycanthropy. Some wolves can make this change voluntarily, while others transform involuntarily on nights when the moon is full. This latter type of werewolf becomes a pure beast then, with no conscious control or even memory of their actions while in were-form. Traditionally, someone who survives a werewolf's bite will become a werewolf at the next full moon—a condition that is supposedly inescapable. Some types of lycanthropy are magical in nature (usually a curse), while other types are like a disease, up to the gamemaster's discretion.

In human form, a werewolf is outwardly normal and has normal human characteristics. Following are statistics for the hybrid (wolf-man) and wolf forms.

### Hybrid Form

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX
6D6	2D6+6	3D6	2D6+6	2D6+6	2D6+6
21	13	10–11	13	13	13

### Wolf Form

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX
6D6	2D6+6	3D6+1D3	1D4+2	2D6+6	2D6+6
21	13	12–13	4–5	13	13

**Move:** 12 / 13

**Damage Modifier:** +1D4 / +1D6

**Hit Points** 12 / 12–13

**Armour** 1-point fur (immunity to normal weapons, see below)

**Attacks** (hybrid form):

- Bite 50%, 1D4+½dm (bleeding)
- Claws 65%, 1D6+dm (bleeding)

### Attacks (wolf form):

- Bite 65%, 1D8+½dm (bleeding)
- Claws 45%, 1D6+dm (bleeding)

In either form, a werewolf can make one bite attack and two claw attacks each combat round.

**Powers:** Werewolves have the following powers:

- **Immunity:** Werewolves are immune to most forms of damage other than magic, fire, or silver. Other attacks simply bounce off, regardless of the result. Magic, fire, and silvered weapons do full damage. A weapon with a spell cast upon it, such as Sorcerer's Razor, does its magical damage but not the weapon's damage or the attacker's damage modifier. An outright magical weapon does normal damage. The gamemaster should determine if energy weapons or other similar attacks can damage a werewolf.
- **Regeneration:** Werewolves can regenerate 1 hit point each combat round unless that damage was done with a silver weapon. Werewolves heal from damage inflicted by a silver weapon at their normal healing rate.
- **Transformation:** Werewolves can assume one of three different forms; human, hybrid, and wolf. Shifting from one shape to another takes 5 DEX ranks and costs no power points. The werewolf can switch from any of these forms to another.

**Skills:** Climb 75%, Dodge 65%, Hide 60%, Jump 80%, Listen 70%, Sense 90%, Spot 70%, Track 90%.

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## Zombie

Zombies are animated corpses resurrected by necromancy, voodoo, demonic possession, or modern causes such as toxic chemicals, radiation, or biological plague. Whatever their origin, zombies thirst for human flesh (some prefer brains) and do little else than seek to feed. Zombies are usually incapable of speech and stalk the living in mobs. They are not particularly bright and are easily fooled.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
3D6×1.5	3D6×1.5	2D6+6	6	1	2D6	1D6
15–17	15–17	13	6	1	7	3–4

**Move:** 4

**Hit Points** 14–15

**Damage Modifier:** +1D4

**Armour** None (see below)

**Attacks:**

- Bite 30%, 1D3+½dm (bleeding)
- Claw 25%, 1D3+dm (bleeding)
- Grapple 35%, special
- Large Club 35%, 1D8+1+dm (crushing)



A zombie's skill with a weapon is equal to its DEX×5. Zombies never attempt to Dodge or parry.

**Powers:** Most slashing, crushing, and impaling weapons do only half damage to zombies. Fire does full damage. Some types of zombie can only be killed by a special success that damages the skull. This is whenever a weapon achieves a special or critical result on a *Difficult* attack, or a hit to the head hit location that does enough damage to incapacitate it. Some types of zombies are infectious—a successful bite turns the victim into a zombie in a number of turns equal to their CON, without exception.

**Skills:** Sense 50%.

# SUMMONED CREATURES

These entities are not native to this world or are summoned into existence when called. Theological entities like angels and demons should only be encountered in settings where allegiance is used, while elementals should only appear if the relevant powers exist to summon them.

## Angel

An angel is a holy being, emissary of a divine power. They have many forms; their appearance being based on the pantheon they inhabit. Angels serve as messengers, guardians, soldiers, mentors, or as harbingers. This example is a winged humanoid equipped with a breastplate and a flaming sword.

As noted in *Sanity Loss and Creatures*, a pious character may receive SAN when viewing an angel if their sanity roll is successful.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
4D6+12	2D6+24	2D6+6	2D6+6	4D6+12	2D6+12	4D6+12
26	31	13	13	26	19	26

**Move:** 10 (12 flying)

**Damage Modifier:** +1D6

**Hit Points** 22

**Armour** 10-pt. plate breastplate + 10-pt. divine radiance

- Attacks:
- Flaming Broad Sword 200%, 1D8+1+dm (slashing) +2D6 (fire)
  - Holy Fire 100%, 10D6 (fire, see below)
  - Voice of Heaven 100%, special (see below)

As divine beings, angels are capable of exceeding skill levels of 100% even if this option is not used for player characters (see *Attacks and Parries Over 100%*). An angel can never be separated from its sword, and the sword cannot be broken.

**Powers:** Angels are said to have a host of powers, of which any individual angel may have some, all, or none:

- **Divine Radiance:** Angels can emit a radiance of light that protects them from injury, serving as 10-pt. armour against any source of damage, including from powers.
- **Flight:** Whether winged or wingless, angels can fly at great speed. Angels possess the Flight superpower at levels equal to their POW, though it does not cost any power points to use. An angel may appear wingless, then manifest great birdlike wings that suddenly grow and unfold from its back.
- **Healing Touch:** Angels can lay hands upon and heal the sick, infirm, and wounded. Beyond restoring hit points at a cost of 1 hit point per power point, the angel can remove any illness, disease, major wound, or infirmity by spending 1 point of its own permanent POW per infirmity. If the angel's power points reach 0, it returns to its plane of origin until bidden or allowed to return (at least one week, after which it is fully restored).
- **Holy Fire:** Angels can summon holy fire, a flame strike from above with an area of effect of three meters square. If caught in this flame, pious characters whose allegiance aligns with the angel may make a roll of their allegiance as a %. If successful, the character takes no damage from the holy fire. Failing, or non-pious, targets are engulfed in flame, doing 10D6 damage (divided amongst hit locations, if used). Unlike normal fire, holy fire does not linger. Its effects are nearly instantaneous, disappearing at the end of the combat round it was summoned. This costs 10 power points and can be summoned once per day.
- **Invisibility:** Angels can become Invisible at will as per the superpower, with equivalent half their POW in levels (round up). This costs only 3 power points per use.
- **Voice of Heaven:** An angel can speak with the voice of Heaven (or an equivalent). This is an area of effect attack ten meters in diameter from the angel, it may warn those within range to cover their ears, and any who obey are spared. This voice, booming and regal, stuns anyone in range if they fail a resistance roll of their POW vs. the angel's POW. Success means that they are unaffected this combat round. This power costs 3 power points and takes the place of any physical attack.

**Spells:** Angels may use magic or superpowers. Magic spells commonly used are Countermagic, Dispel, Enhance, Light, Speak to Mind, and Teleport, all at 100%. Angels rarely use sorcery and are never mutants. They may have psychic powers or the equivalent.

**Skills:** Command 100%, Dodge 100%, Flight 100%, Insight 75%, Knowledge (any) 100%, Language (any) 100%, Sense 90%, Spot 90%, Teach 90%.

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## Demon, Greater

A demon is an infernal being, summoned or on this plane for terrible purpose. A greater demon is no mere guardian or servant—it is encountered because something monumental is at stake. Depending on its personality, it may be bestial and fo-

cused only on destruction, or it may be witty, urbane, charming, and persuasive. These statistics represent a combat-oriented demon, clawed and horned, ready to wreak havoc upon any who defy it.

While viewing an angel can potentially restore SAN points to a pious believer, those who worship the infernal powers are not nearly so lucky. A character viewing a greater demon is at risk for SAN loss, even if they summoned it in the first place.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
3D6+24	3D6+12	3D6+12	3D6	3D6+6	3D6+6	3 or 21
34–35	22–23	22–23	10–11	16–17	16–17	3 or 21

**Move:** 10 (12 flying)

**Hit Points** 22–23

**Damage Modifier:** +2D6

**Armour** 8-pt. tough hide (may wear armour)

Attacks:

- Great Sword (used one-handed) 150%, 2D8+dm (bleeding) +2D6 flame (special)
- Whip 90%, 1D3–1+½dm (entangle) +1D6 fire (special)
- Flame Breath 100%, 6D6 fire (special)
- Claws 150%, 1D6+dm (bleeding)
- Grapple 150%, special

A greater demon usually begins with a blast of fire from its mouth before engaging in physical combat. It can make two (or more) attacks per round, preferring to use the whip first to immobilize a foe then strike with the great sword 5 DEX ranks later. Its flaming great sword can ignite flammable materials. It fights two-handed with a long whip, also aflame. If either weapon is lost, it resorts to using its claws or grappling. Unlike the weapons of an angel, a greater demon's weapons have double hit points but can be broken or otherwise destroyed (they are immune to fire, however).

**Skills:** Climb 90%, Dodge 75%, Fly 100%, Jump 75%, Sense 75%, Spot 75%, Throw 75%.

**Powers:** Demons are said to have a host of powers, of which any individual demon may have some, all, or none:

- **Aura of Terror:** The greater demon has a radiance of malevolence and hatred that manifests in an aura of terror. Anyone coming within the demon's POW in meters must make a POW vs. POW resistance roll to avoid being overcome with terror. Failure means the character is stricken with fear and all attacks and other actions become *Difficult*. Affected characters can attempt a new resistance roll at the beginning of the next combat round, though for this resistance roll their POW is halved (round up). The demon can activate this aura for 1 power point, and it lasts for the demon's POW in combat rounds, or until the demon chooses to stop the power. Anyone on the demon's 'side' or those of the same allegiance are exempt from this power unless the demon wishes it to af-

fect allies. If a character fails the resistance roll and sanity is used, the character loses the full amount of possible SAN from seeing the greater demon.

- **Blight:** The demon's overall presence causes an area to become tainted, twisted with the dark evil in the demon's soul. This is not useful in combat, but contaminates an area over time, until it has a foreboding and lingering presence of evil and malice. Living plants wither or grow twisted and bitter, the soil becomes dry and bleak, and the very atmosphere takes on an unhealthy aspect. The radius of this effect is equal to the greater demon's POW×100 meters. It costs no power points to activate, is automatic and beyond the demon's control (the presence cannot be masked or hidden). It takes 30 days minus the demon's POW for this presence to become manifest, and the demon's POW in months for an area to recover once it has become blighted.
- **Flame Breath:** A demon can breathe a blast of fire with a range equal to its CON in meters. This blast is an area attack three meters square. Any caught within this blast will take 6D6 fire damage (regardless of their allegiance), damage divided between all hit locations, if used. This fire lingers and continues burning for three subsequent rounds. Consult the rules for fire for more details. This fiery blast costs 6 power points per blast.
- **Flight:** The greater demon has huge bat-like wings and can fly, tirelessly and effortlessly.
- **Regeneration:** A demon has hellish vitality and can regenerate 1D6 hit points per combat round at no power point cost. If hit locations are used, the demon heals 1D3 hit points per hit location per combat round.
- **Sheath of Smoke and Fire:** The demon can sheath itself in a flaming radiance that causes 1D6 points of fire per combat round to any creature that gets within two meters of it, such as in physical combat. This sheath can ignite any flammable substance around the demon. It serves as 1 point of additional armour against any wooden missile weapon directed at it, such as an arrow or cross-bow bolt. This sheath may be activated at will and costs 1 power point per round to maintain.

A greater demon may have one or more chaotic features, as well.

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## Demon, Lesser

A lesser demon is much smaller than a greater demon and has been summoned by a sorcerer (see the Summon Demon spell) or sent as an emissary or agent of corruption. This lesser demon is a grotesque creature, like an emaciated gargoyle with claws, wings, and horns. It is not cowardly but prefers to serve through means other than combat. When destroyed, it returns to the infernal realms, where it is bullied and tormented. Thus, it wishes to prolong its freedom in this world for as long as is possible.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
2D6+3	3D6	1D6+6	2D6+3	2D6+6	3D6+3	1D6+3
10	10–11	9–10	10	13	13–14	6–7

**Move:** 8 (12 flying)  
**Damage Modifier:** None

**Hit Points** 10  
**Armour** 1-pt. scaled hide

Attacks:

- Claw 50%, 1D3+dm (bleeding)
- Bite 35%, 1D3+½ dm (bleeding)
- Grapple 45%, special

A demon can make two claw attacks in a combat round. If successful with both, it attempts to grapple and bite on the next combat round.

**Skills:** Bargain 55%, Climb 65%, Dodge 50%, Fast Talk 40%, Fly 75%, Hide 45%, Knowledge (Region: Hell) 35%, Listen 40%, Sense 35%, Spot 50%, Stealth 35%.

**Powers:** Lesser demons are not particularly powerful, though one may have a few sorcery spells if its POW is high enough. Common spells are Curse of Sorcery (4), Flames of the Sun (4), Midnight (1), and Pox (1). A sorcerer summoning a lesser demon may choose which spells the demon knows if adequate research is done beforehand. The demon may also have one or more chaotic features.

## ELEMENTALS

Elementals are primal elemental spirits manifest in bodies composed of the element of their type. They are usually summoned into existence by the magic spell Conjure Elemental, the sorcery spell Summon Elemental, or through other means, perhaps even occurring naturally.

Elemental hit points are determined by adding their CON+SIZ, not averaging. Elementals do not heal lost hit points or regenerate power points: when one is reduced to 0 hit points or spends its last power point, it disappears, reduced to the raw element it was composed of.

As magical beings, elementals are immune to normal attacks such as weapons or firearms. They are, however, vulnerable to one another's attacks. Depending on the setting, energy or chemical weapons may affect them, and attacks by substances that naturally oppose them may also have an effect. Finally, many powers will affect elementals, at the gamemaster's discretion.

Presented here are four traditional types of elementals—air, earth, fire, and water. Others may exist, whether spirit; shadow; hybrids; or even aspects such as time, gravity, light, etc. The examples are average, and they can be made more or less powerful, as desired.

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### Air Elemental

Air elementals usually appear as floating, transparent female humans of surpassing beauty, either naked or in wispy garments, surrounded by a whirlwind. They are

barely tangible, as if formed out of thickened air. Their voices are soft and faint, and they are mischievous, with a short attention span. Air elementals are often called sylphs.

ST	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
3D6	3D6	2D6	4D6	3D6	4D6	3D6+3
10–11	10–11	7	14	10–11	14	13–14

Move: 10 (12 flying)

Damage Modifier: None

Hit Points 17–18

Armour None, but invulnerable to normal attacks

Attacks:

- Scouring Wind 50%, 1D10 (knockback, range is POW in meters)

**Skills:** Dodge 75%, Fly 100%, Language (summoner's) 100%, Listen 75%, Science (Meteorology) 100%, Sense 75%, Spot 75%.

**Powers:** An air elemental has control over its element, using any of these power types:

- **Magic:** It can cast the Lift and Lightning spells at its POW×3% for the regular power point cost.
- **Sorcery:** It can cast Wings of the Sky (4) at will, with no power point cost.
- **Superpowers:** It has equivalent to ¼ its POW (round up) in levels of the Energy Control (Wind) and Energy Projection (Wind) superpowers.
- An air elemental may, at the cost of its own life, destroy a fire elemental of equivalent strength.
- It may also provide breathable air for one character, at the cost of 1 hit point per round.
- Air elementals can turn invisible at will at a cost of 1 power point, though they reappear if commanded by their summoner, or if they attack someone.

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## Earth Elemental

Earth elementals appear as thick-bodied humanoid forms, made of stone, earth, and minerals, with roots and vines like veins and sometimes hair or beards of moss and leaves. Their voices are low and raspy, and they are often slow-witted and grumpy, surly when summoned, though they still do the bidding of their summoner. In other environments, they may appear as the type of earth available, such as sand and sandstone in the desert. They are often called gnomes.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
5D6+12	3D6+6	3D6	2D6	3D6	2D6	1D6+3
29–30	16–17	10–11	7	10–11	7	6–7

Move: 6

Damage Modifier: +1D6 or +2D6

Hit Points 26–28

Armour None, but invulnerable to normal attacks (see below)

Attacks:

- Fist 50%, 1D6+dm (crushing)

**Skills:** Appraise 50%, Craft (Blacksmithing) 75%, Language (summoner's) 25%, Science (Metallurgy) 100%.

**Powers:** An earth elemental has control over its element, using any of these power types:

- **Magic:** It can cast the spells Dull and Wall at its POW×3% for the regular power point cost.
- **Sorcery:** It can cast Gift of the Earth (4) at will, with no power point cost.
- **Superpowers:** It has equivalent to ¼ its POW (round up) in levels of the Barrier superpower.
- An earth elemental may, at the cost of its own life, destroy an air elemental of equivalent strength.
- It can also sink into the ground and move at normal speed, emerging when it wishes. It can extend this ability to a character of its SIZ or smaller, engulfing them and moving the character through the earth unharmed at the elemental's normal MOV rate. It will only do this with a willing character but does not supply oxygen for the voyage (see Choking, Drowning, and Asphyxiation).
- In addition to being invulnerable to normal attacks, an earth elemental has a chance of breaking any normal weapon made of metal. If a character successfully strikes an earth elemental with a metallic weapon, they must make a resistance roll of their weapon's hit points vs. the earth elemental's CON. If the weapon's roll fails, it automatically breaks. If it succeeds, it does not break. This roll needs only to be made once at the first successful strike in a round, and it applies to weapons with magic spells or sorcery temporarily cast upon them, but not magical weapons.
- Earth elementals are also aware of any precious metals or anything underground within their INT×100 meters, but will only begrudgingly admit this, and must be convinced or commanded to go and retrieve these things. Use of this power costs the earth elemental power points equal to the SIZ of the item brought back.

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## Fire Elemental

Fire elementals appear as four-legged reptiles made of fiery plasma. They scorch the ground where they walk, and smoke emerges from their mouths when they speak in their hissing, crackling voices. They are generally irritable and quick-tempered. Fire elementals are often called salamanders.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
2D6+6	3D6	3D6+6	2D6	3D6	4D6	1D6+3
13	10–11	16–17	7	10–11	14	6–7

Move: 10

Hit Points 26–28

Damage Modifier: +1D4

Armour None, but invulnerable to normal attacks

Attacks:

- Flame Breath 50%, 1D10 per round (fire, range is POW in meters)
- Grapple 50%, special + 1D6 per round (fire)

**Skills:** Demolition 75%, Dodge 50%, Language (summoner's) 50%, Listen 50%, Sense 50%, Spot 50%.

**Powers:** A fire elemental has control over its element, using any of these power types:

- **Magic:** It can cast the magic spells Flame and Resistance at its POW×3% for the regular power point cost.
- **Sorcery:** It cast Flames of the Sun (4) at will, with no power point cost.
- **Superpowers:** It has equivalent to ¼ its POW (round up) in levels of the Energy Control (Heat) and Energy Projection (Heat) superpowers.
- A fire elemental may, at the cost of its own life, destroy a water elemental of equivalent strength.
- It can ignite any flammable material by touch but will never willingly extinguish or prevent a fire.

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## Water Elemental

Water elementals appear as beautiful aquatic, vaguely translucent human females the colour of the sea, with greenish-blue hair and skin. They are alluring and usually are scantily clad or nude. If encountered on land, water elementals leave wet foot-prints and are constantly dripping with water. They are intelligent, thoughtful, and speak in gurgling voices. Water elementals are often called undines.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
3D6+6	3D6+6	2D6	4D6	3D6	3D6	3D6+3
16–17	16–17	7	14	10–11	10–11	13–14



Move: 10 (12 swimming)

Damage Modifier: None

Hit Points 23–24

Armour None, but invulnerable to normal attacks (see below)

Attacks:

- Drowning 50%, special (see below)

**Skills:** Dodge 75%, Language (summoner's) 75%, Navigate 100%, Science (Oceanography) 100%, Sense 50%, Spot 50%, Swim 100%.

**Powers:** A water elemental has control over its element, using any of these power types:

- **Magic:** A water elemental can cast the magic spells Heal and Unseal at its POW×3% for the regular power point cost.
- **Sorcery:** A water elemental can cast Bounty of the Sea (4) at will, with no power point cost.
- **Superpowers:** The water elemental has equivalent to ¼ its POW (round up) in levels of the Drain and Super Movement (Water Walking) superpowers.
- A water elemental may, at the cost of its own life, destroy an earth elemental of equivalent strength.
- To drown an opponent, a water elemental engulfs the target's mouth and nose in a bubble of water. If it has succeeded in a touch attack, all further drowning attacks against the target are *Easy* until the target has either broken free or is dead (see the rules for drowning). This attack costs the water elemental an equivalent number of hit points to the damage inflicted on the target. It may cease the drowning attempt at any time.
- In addition to being invulnerable to normal attacks, a water elemental has a chance of rusting any normal metal weapon or warping any wooden weapon striking it. If a character successfully strikes a water elemental with a metallic weapon, they must make a resistance roll of the weapon's hit points vs. the water elemental's CON. If the weapon's roll fails, it rusts (losing 2 hit points, –1 to damage) or warps (–1 hit point, –5% to hit). If it succeeds, it is unaffected. This roll needs only to be made once at the first successful strike in a round, and it applies to weapons with magic spells or sorcery temporarily cast upon them, but not magical weapons.
- While submerged, a water elemental can become invisible at will at the cost of 1 power point, though it reappears if commanded by the summoner, or if it attacks someone.
- While underwater, a water elemental can speak clearly to any within normal hearing range.
- Water elementals are also aware of any items within the body of water they were summoned from, within their INT×100 meters, but only admit this if asked, and must be convinced or commanded to go and retrieve these items. Each

use of this ability costs the water elemental power points equal to the SIZ of the item brought back.

## CHAOTIC FEATURES

Demons and other creatures of chaos are inconsistent in their appearance and powers. Just as living beings have mutations, unnatural creatures may have chaotic features. If desired, each individual chaotic creature may have one or more chaotic features, rolled or chosen from the following table.

D100%	Chaotic Feature
01–03	POW+1D6
04–05	POW+2D6
06	POW+3D6
07–09	DEX+1D6
10–11	DEX+2D6
12	DEX+3D6
13–14	STR+1D6
15	STR+2D6
16–17	CON+1D6
18	CON+2D6
19–20	Never surprised.
21–22	Absorbs 1 point of any magic or sorcery cast against it, adding +1 power point per spell.
23–24	Spits acid of 2D10 POT 1D6 times per day, six-meter range.
25–26	Breathes 3D6 fire 1D6 times per day; single target, three-meter range.
27–28	Reflects 1-pt. magic or sorcery back at user.
29–30	Highly flammable; if ignited burns all within three-meter radius for 2D6 points damage until extinguished.
31–32	Hypnotic pattern on skin; viewers must succeed in an Idea roll or be stunned for 1D3 rounds.
33–35	Appearance is confusing; all attacks against it are at –20%.
36–37	Large and valuable gem clearly visible on body.
38–40	Regenerates 1 hit point per combat round until dead.

## D100%    Chaotic Feature

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- 41–42    Can attempt to befuddle a target each round in addition to any combat, with a POW vs. POW resistance roll. Failure puts the target into a confused and highly suggestive state. To perform any actions, the target must make a *Difficult* Idea roll, and may be ordered by the creature to act contrary to their normal wishes. Resisting these commands also requires a successful *Difficult* Idea roll.
- 43–45    Creature seemingly invincible; appears to take no damage until it reaches 0 hit points, then falls over dead.
- 46        Invisible until it attacks.
- 47–48    Appearance is extremely confusing; all attacks against it are at –30%.
- 49–50    Poison touch of 2D10 POT; natural attack must do 1 hit point of damage for poison to work.
- 51–52    CON is –2D6, but regenerates 3 hit points per round until dead.
- 53–54    6-pt. armoured skin. If already has armoured skin, +6 to its current armour value.
- 55–56    MOV 12
- 57–58    Absorbs 1 or 2 points of any magic or sorcery cast against it, adding the amount to current power points.
- 59–60    Can launch a POW vs. POW attack each round; if successful, target loses 1D6 power points.
- 61–62    Explodes upon reaching 0 hit points, causing 3D6 damage to all within three meters. Armour, shields, etc. will protect against this, though weapon parries cannot.
- 63–65    Appears far more dangerous than really is.
- 66–67    Can turn invisible at will when not in combat.
- 68–70    Reflects 1- or 2-pt. magic or sorcery back at user.
- 71–72    8-pt. armoured skin. If already has armoured skin, +8 to current armour value.
- 73–74    10-pt. armoured skin. If already has armoured skin, +10 to current armour value.
- 75–76    12-pt. armoured skin. If already has armoured skin, +12 to current armour value.
- 77        Appears utterly harmless until it enters combat.
- 78–80    Regenerates 1D6 hit points per combat round until dead.
- 81–82    Can leap vertically or horizontally ten meters from a standstill.
- 83–84    Undetectable through magic or sorcery.
- 85        Appearance extremely disorienting; all attacks against it are at –40%.

## D100%    Chaotic Feature

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86–87	Extremely valuable gem (or gems) inside creature, discovered if creature is cut open.
88–90	Makes agonizing screams continually.
91–92	Overpowering stench causes nausea in any who breathe near it. If target fails a Stamina roll, all actions against this creature are <i>Difficult</i> for 1D6+2 rounds.
93–94	Reflects 1D6+2-pt. magic or sorcery back at user. Roll randomly each turn a spell is cast against the creature to determine how much is reflected.
95–96	The hideous appearance of the creature demoralizes those who it beats in a POW vs. POW resistance roll. If target fails, all actions against this creature are <i>Difficult</i> for 1D6+2 rounds.
97–98	SIZ +2D6
99	Roll twice again on this table. If this is rolled again, add another two chaotic features, and roll again, etc.
00	This creature has CHA 5D6 and is particularly endearing. It attacks with a CHA vs. INT resistance roll. Failure causes the victim to befriend the creature, perhaps even offering to serve it. The creature may have up to 1D6 current companions of this nature, at the game-master's discretion. The charmed character may even fight friends to defend the creature.

## SCIENCE FICTION CREATURES

These creatures are most suitable for science fiction, futuristic, post-apocalyptic, or even horror settings.

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### Alien, Grey

Grey aliens visit Earth for research and experimentation upon humans and animals and have been doing so for millennia. Because of their relatively frail bodies, they rely on sophisticated technology to immobilize their captive subjects. Their motives are unknown, and exhibit no signs of emotion, rarely even acknowledging the sentience of their subjects as they conduct bizarre and humiliating experiments upon them.

Grey aliens are sometimes encountered at UFO crash sites, wandering around dazed and trying to defend their ship until a rescue arrives. They are either naked or in formfitting mesh jumpsuits and equipped with alien technology.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
1D6+3	2D6	1D6+3	2D6+12	3D6	3D6+3	1D6+1
6–7	7	6–7	19	10–11	13–14	4–5

Move: 7

Hit Points 7

Damage Modifier: –1D4

Armour None

Attacks:

- Stun Pistol 50%, 2D6 (stuns, see weapon description)
- Disintegrator Rifle 35%, 3D6+2 (see weapon description)

**Skills:** Dodge 40%, Fine Manipulation 75%, First Aid 75%, Hide 60%, Knowledge (Human Culture) 55%, Knowledge (Region: Milky Way) 85%, Language (Area) 20%, Language (Zeta Reticulan) 100%, Listen 55%, Medicine 100%, Navigate 70%, Pilot (UFO) 80%, Repair (Quantum) 50%, Science (Astronomy) 75%, Science (Planetology) 95%, Science (Zoology) 50%, Sense 60%, Spot 50%, Stealth 50%, Technical Skill (UFO Sensors) 50%

**Powers:** Grey aliens use what humans believe to be psychic powers. Commonly psychic powers are Emotion Control, Mind Control, Mind Shield, Telekinesis, and Telepathy. Each of these is at their POW×2%, or higher.

## Alien, Xenomorph

Discovered on the edge of space, these xenomorphs are ravenous for flesh, devouring any living being they come across. Vaguely insectile, xenomorphs communicate with one another in an unknown fashion and are capable of surprisingly sophisticated tactics. They reproduce through a complex and extremely rapid process wherein eggs are implanted into their victims until gestation is complete, at which point the newborn alien emerges and devours the former host. Scientists theorize that each clutch of these aliens is led by an egg-laying brood queen of immense size and superior intelligence. Xenomorphs are cunning, coordinating their attacks to quickly overrun any area they are introduced into, building giant hives and capturing living hosts to serve in their vile reproductive process.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
3D6+3	3D6	3D6+3	2D6	2D6	3D6+6	1D6
13–14	10–11	13–14	7	7	16–17	3–4

Move: 12

Hit Points 12–13

Damage Modifier: +1D4

Armour 2-pt. carapace (spews acidic blood, see below)

Attacks:

- Claw 50%, 1D6+dm (bleeding)
- Bite 35%, 1D6+dm (bleeding)

- Tail Lash 35%, 1D4+dm (impaling)
- Grapple 35%, special

Each round, the xenomorph can attack twice with claws and once with a bite attack 5 DEX ranks later. If it is successful with both claw attacks, it attempts to grapple and bite on the next round. If appropriate, it substitutes its bite for a tail lash attack.

**Skills:** Climb 75%, Dodge 50%, Hide 60%, Jump 50%, Listen 35%, Sense 50%, Spot 35%, Stealth 50%, Track 75%.

**Powers:** Xenomorphs have a special defence: acidic blood. This biological acid is intensely powerful and sprays from any physical wound the xenomorph takes, actively corrosive for 1D6+2 combat rounds. Any target one meter from the xenomorph must make a Luck roll to avoid being spattered. Failure indicates that the character takes 1D3 points from the acid. Armour initially protects against this acid, but not for long. It continues to eat away at armour, doing damage each combat round until it is through the armour. The gamemaster should keep track of the acid's damage each round until the armour's value is overcome. At this point, it burns the character. Removing the armour without being burned takes one full combat round and a *Difficult* Agility roll. If hit locations are used, only the armour on the affected hit location(s) need be removed. Failure indicates that the armour is still on. A fumble indicates that the acid got onto the character. Once a character is being burnt by the acid, it continues burning until it is neutralized by some force, or the acid eventually stops being corrosive at the end of the 1D6+2 rounds.

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## Blob

A grotesque mass of slimy protoplasmic matter. This creature is horrific, constantly extending multiple pseudopods, tendrils, and even approximations of human limbs and sensory organs. Blobs are semi-translucent, and their engulfed victims can be viewed inside as they are eaten away by powerful digestive acids. Blobs can compact their bulk, squeezing through tight spaces, changing their overall shape, but not their actual mass.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX
18D6	12D6	24D6	2D6	3D6	1D6
63	42	84	7	10–11	3–4
Move: 10			Hit Points 63		
Damage Modifier: +8D6			Armour None, but see below		

Attacks:

- Engulf 70%, engulfs + dm (see below)

**Skills:** Climb 50%, Hide 25%, Sense 25%, Stealth 25%, Track 25%.

A blob has no armour, but fire and electrical attacks do only ½ damage (round up) and physical weapons such as firearms do only 1 point of damage.

**Powers:** A blob engulfs the target upon a successful attack. Its damage modifier is applied to an engulfed character, and in the subsequent round the character begins

to be digested. If using hit locations, damage is divided between all hit locations simultaneously. This does 1D3–1 points of damage each combat round. Protective gear does not work unless it is utterly enclosed, and it only lasts within a blob for combat rounds equal to its armour value. Getting out of a blob is extremely difficult, requiring a successful *Difficult* Effort roll. Blobs also regenerate 1 hit point per combat round until they reach full hit points.

## Robot, Giant

The giant robot was built by a top-secret government organization to defend the world from a bewildering array of strange alien creatures and giant monsters. Armoured and equipped with a variety of astonishing weaponry, the giant robot is idolized by people everywhere, despite doing immeasurable property damage whenever it fights.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX
16D6+32	16D6+32	16D6+32	3D6	2D6	3D6
88	88	88	10–11	7	10–11

Move: 24 (176 flying)

Hit Points 188 (+100 from Extra Hit Point power)

Damage Modifier: +10D6

Armour 30-pt. armoured hull

### Attacks:

- Energy Cannon 100%, 10D6 (crushing)
- Missile Pod 100%, 8D6+8 (impaling + knockback)
- Energy Sword 75%, 4D10+dm (bleeding)
- Fist 75%, 1D6+dm (crushing)
- Kick 75%, 1D6+dm (crushing, knockback)
- Stomp 75%, 2D6+dm (crushing)
- Grapple 75%, special

**Powers:** The giant robot has a variety of components best represented with super-powers, including: Absorption (Electric) 20; Adaptation (High Pressure, Vacuum, always on, no power point cost) 30; Armour (Heat, Kinetic, Radiation) 30 each; Energy Projection (Kinetic) 10; Extra Energy +200; Extra Hit Points +100; Flight 30; Resistance (Radiation, Sound) 10 each; Super Sense (Dark Vision, Infrared Vision, Night Vision, Super Hearing, Super Vision) 10 each; Super Skill 15 (Artillery +60%, Brawl +40%, Fly +60%, Navigate +20%, Repair +20%, Spot +40%). In addition to these powers, the giant robot has a missile pod and a giant energy sword built into its structure.

**Skills:** Artillery 75%, Dodge 40%, Fine Manipulation 35%, Fly (Internal Rockets) 90%, Jump 55%, Knowledge (Kaiju) 50%, Language (English) 30%, Language (Japanese) 75%, Listen 65%, Martial Arts 40%, Navigate 50%, Repair (Mechanical) 55%, Spot 65%, Throw 55%

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## Robot, Killer

Killer robots have many different origins. They may have been built for the military and gone amok, household robots turned murderous, or assassins sent from some future time or distant reach of space. Regardless of the reason, the killer robot is pitiless and resourceful, usually bent on the destruction of a single person, an entire group of people, or perhaps anyone of a particular race (for example, human).

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
4D6+24	4D6+12	2D6+9	2D6+6	2D6	3D6	3D6
38	26	16	13	7	10–11	10–11

Move: 10

Hit Points 21

Damage Modifier: +2D6

Armour 20-pt. internal plating

Attacks:

- Plasma Rifle 80%, 2D10+4 (impaling)
- Assault Rifle 80%, 2D6+2 (impaling)
- Automatic Shotgun 80%, 4D6/2D6/1D6 (impaling)
- Heavy Pistol 80%, 1D10+2 (impaling)
- Fist 80%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

Depending on where and when it is encountered, the killer robot is either equipped with advanced weaponry or armaments appropriate to the setting.

**Skills:** Artillery 80%, Brawl 80%, Climb 50%, Demolition 50%, Dodge 40%, Drive (Motorcycle) 75%, Drive (Truck) 60%, Grapple 80%, Jump 50%, Knowledge (Future History) 65%, Knowledge (Region: Local) 50%, Language (Binary) 100%, Language (Local) 60%, Listen 65%, Pilot (Helicopter) 50%, Repair (Electronics) 75%, Repair (Mechanical) 95%, Spot 75%, Strategy 40%, Throw 55%.

**Powers:** The killer robot usually has a few superpowers such as Super Sense (Infrared Vision, Super Hearing, Super Vision, Ultrasonic Hearing) at 5 each. It can use these powers without any power point cost. Some killer robots can shape change, stretch, or are armed with integral weaponry such as claws, blades, laser eyes, or internal firearms.

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## Robot, Utility

A trusted servant of humankind, the utility robot has been engineered to aid in humans. Utility robots are traditionally programmed to be humble and friendly, and above all to avoid performing any actions that could lead to the harm of a living being. Some utility robots have internal tools built inside them when they do mechanical or electrical maintenance and repair, or they may be simple approximations of humankind, destined for roles such as diplomacy, translation, and personal assistance.



STR	SIZ	INT	DEX
2D6+6	3D6	2D6+6	3D6
13	10–11	13	10–11
Move: 8		Hit Points 10–11	
Damage Modifier: None		Armour 4-pt. plating	

Attacks:

- Brawl 30%, 1D3+dm (crushing)
- Power Tools 50%, 1D6 (fire or electric, see below)

Most utility robots have strict programming injunctions about harming sentient species. However, some are less strict about it than others, and may act in self-defence. Technical robots have a few internal tools such as welders or electric dischargers that can be used for damage.

**Skills (Diplomacy Package):** Appraise 85%, Bargain 55%, Etiquette 95%, Fast Talk 75%, Heavy Machine (Binary Loadlifter) 50%, Hide 25%, Insight 35%, Knowledge (Alien Cultures) 75%, Knowledge (Linguistics) 100%, Language (all known) 95%, Listen 55%, Persuade 45%, Teach 60%.

**Skills (Technical Package):** Fine Manipulation 95%, Heavy Machine (Spaceport Systems) 95%, Hide 35%, Language (Galactic Common, cannot speak) 50%, Language (Machine) 100%, Listen 50%, Pilot (Star fighter) 50%, Repair (Electronic) 95%, Repair (Mechanical) 95%, Repair (Quantum) 75%, Spot 50%, Technical Skill (Computer Use) 100%.

## NON PLAYER CHARACTER DIGEST

These sample non-player characters can be used instantly or easily customized as needed, reskinned or even used as quick player characters. Their wide range of potential weapons does not mean they always go heavily armed, but that they are skilled in more than a single weapon.

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### Cave Dweller

A primitive human from a long-vanished epoch of history, the cave dweller is entirely focused around survival for self, family, and tribe. Barely able to use tools, the cave dweller has not yet progressed past the hunter-gatherer stage of civilization, and either inhabits caves for safety or migrates as the seasons change, warring with other tribes for resources or even survival. Cave dwellers often venerate the spirits of weather and their prey.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
15	16	10	8	12	15	9

**Move:** 10

**Hit Points** 13

**Damage Modifier:** +1D4

**Armour** 1-pt. hide

**Attacks:**

- Short Spear 50%, 1D6+1+dm (impaling)
- Short Spear (thrown) 50%, 1D6+1+½dm (impaling)
- Light Club 50%, 1D6+dm (crushing)
- Rock (thrown) 50%, 1D2+½dm (crushing)
- Grapple 50%, special

**Skills:** Brawl 50%, Climb 60%, Craft (Wood Carving) 25%, Dodge 35%, Hide 35%, Jump 50%, Language (Own) 40%, Listen 55%, Sense 50%, Spot 65%, Stealth 30%, Throw 50%, Track 40%

**Powers:** Cave dwellers rarely have any powers, though some primitive shamans may have a few magic spells or psychic powers if their POW is high enough.

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## Criminal Mastermind

The criminal mastermind is a gang leader or highly placed member of an organized crime family, most likely having worked their way up through the ranks. They are skilled in running a large group of individual criminals in the day-to-day activities of organized crime. Unscrupulous, ruthless, determined, and cunning, the criminal mastermind is a resourceful and dangerous enemy. Though they are not physically imposing, they make up for it in ambition, callous disregard for human life, and an army of skilled and vicious henchmen.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
11	12	12	12	17	16	14

**Move:** 10

**Hit Points** 12

**Damage Modifier:** None

**Armour** None

**Attacks:**

- Medium Pistol 75%, 1D8 (impaling)
- Straight Razor 65%, 1D4+dm (bleeding)
- Machine Gun 55%, 2D6+4 (impaling)

**Skills:** Appraise 55%, Bargain 65%, Command 65%, Craft (Cooking) 55%, Craft (License Plates) 35%, Demolition 35%, Disguise 25%, Dodge 50%, Drive (Getaway Car) 45%, Etiquette 45%, Fast Talk 55%, Gaming 60%, Hide 35%, Insight 75%, Knowledge (Law) 55%, Language (Local) 75%, Language (Own) 75%, Listen 55%, Medicine (Pharmacology) 35%, Perform (Singing) 50%, Persuade 75%, Sense

40%, Sleight of Hand 35%, Spot 45%, Status 55%, Stealth 55%, Strategy 60%, Throw 45%.

**Powers:** Criminal masterminds rarely have powers and are usually the enemies of those with superpowers.

---

## Cyborg

The cyborg is a human augmented with technological elements, either as a means of improvement or as replacement for body parts lost through accident. Half-flesh and half-machine, the cyborg has come to accept this newfound condition, despite the alienation it creates. They may be entirely human in appearance or be an obvious amalgam of flesh and metal.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
33	24	14	14	11	22	14

**Move:** 10

**Hit Points** 19

**Damage Modifier:**

+2D6 **Armour** None

Attacks:

- Brawl 90%, 1D3+10+dm (crushing)

**Skills:** Climb 40%, Dodge 65%, Drive (Car) 55%, Hide 40%, Jump 75%, Language (Own) 85%, Listen 75%, Pilot (Experimental Jets) 75%, Repair (Electronic) 55%, Science (Cybernetics) 40%, Spot 85%, Stealth 40%, Throw 65%.

**Powers:** The cyborg's augmentation is best represented with superpowers, such as the following:

- **Defensive Systems:** Armour 5 (vs. electrical energy) Internal Battery: Extra Energy 5 (+50 power points)
- **Physical Improvements:** Leap 5 (+10 meters), Super Characteristics 40 (+20 STR, +10 CON, +10 DEX), Super Speed 2 (1 extra movement, 1 extra action)
- **Sensory Enhancements:** Super Sense (Super Hearing 10, Super Vision 10, Infrared Vision 5, Ultrasonic Hearing 5)
- **Tactical Modifications:** Defence 2 (–10% to be hit), Super Skill 8 (Jump +40%, Listen +40%, Spot +60%, Throw +25%), Unarmed Combat 5 (+10 damage, –25% to one target's chance of hitting, +25% to Brawl skill)

**Weaknesses:** The cyborg has the following weaknesses to balance out this awesome power:

- Cyborg identity makes normal life impossible.
- Significant involvement with government agency responsible for cyborg modifications.
- Cyborg components take an extra 1D6 damage from magnetic-based attacks.

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## Demigod

The offspring of a god and a mortal, the demigod adventures across the world, battling supernatural threats and aiding normal humans in struggles against the tyranny of the gods. Caught between two worlds, the divine and the mortal, the demigod has a mighty destiny, but has not yet decided whether that fate is to aid humanity in overthrowing the gods, or to lead mortals to greater worship and fealty to the heavens. The demigod often attracts lesser heroes to their cause and is a locus for trouble. Immortal, the demigod can be encountered at any point in history.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
35	34	15	13	18	15	17

**Move:** 10

**Hit Points** 25

**Damage Modifier:** +2D6

**Armour** 20-pt. Armour (Kinetic)

Attacks:

- Brawl 110%, 1D3+dm (crushing)
- Grapple 110%, special
- Short Sword 100%, 1D6+1+dm (bleeding)
- Round Shield 80%, 1D3+dm (knockback)

**Skills:** Brawl 110%, Climb 80%, Command 45%, Dodge 65%, Drive (Chariot) 65%, Etiquette 25%, Grapple 110%, Insight 55%, Jump 75%, Knowledge (Mythology) 85%, Language (Ancient Own) 100%, Language (Local) 90%, Listen 65%, Navigate 60%, Perform (Harp) 50%, Persuade 45%, Ride (Horse) 45%, Sense 70%, Spot 60%, Status 45%, Stealth 50%, Strategy 60%, Swim 75%, Throw 85%

**Powers:** The demigod has a variety of powers from the divine parentage, such as the following superpowers:

- Adaptation (Radiation, Underwater, Vacuum) 5 each; Armour (Kinetic) 20; Extra Energy 20 (+200 power points); Extra Hit Points 30 (+30 HP); Leap 10 (+20 meters to Jump distance); Regeneration 3 (heals 3 HP per combat round); Sidekick (see below); Super Characteristics 50 (STR +20, CON +20, POW +5, CHA +5); Super Skills 20 (Brawl +40%, Grapple +40%, Knowledge [Mythology] +40%, Sense +40%, Shield +80%, Strategy +40%, Sword +80%, Throw +40%), Unarmed Combat 5 (+10 brawl damage, -25% to one attacker's skill, Brawl/Grapple skill +25%).

**Weaknesses:** The demigod's character failings are:

- Inability to live a normal life.
- Hunted by enemies of the gods.
- Hunted by rival gods themselves.
- Always called on for help by mortals.

Demigods often have a mortal sidekick (using the Sidekick superpower or a normal non-player character), someone culturally familiar with the world and reminding them of the humility of mortal existence. Depending on the setting, a demigod could

use magic spells or sorcery. They may not even be a divine being and might just be a mutant.

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## Detective

Whether a police detective, forensics expert, private eye, or criminologist, a detective is trained in investigation, observation, surveillance, interrogation of suspects and witnesses, examination of physical evidence, and deduction. Some detectives live action-packed lives full of car chases, beautiful women, and brushes with both the law and criminals. Others work in high-tech laboratories, dusty libraries and sitting rooms, or even in front of a computer terminal searching public and private records.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
13	12	14	17	14	14	15

**Move:** 10

**Hit Points** 13

**Damage Modifier:** +1D4

**Armour** None

Attacks:

- Medium Pistol 75%, 1D8 (impaling)
- Fist 65%, 1D3+dm (crushing)
- Grapple 50%, special

**Skills:** Appraise 35%, Bargain 35%, Climb 55%, Disguise 35%, Dodge 40%, Drive (Sedan) 55%, Etiquette 25%, Fast Talk 65%, Hide 40%, Insight 55%, Knowledge (Law) 65%, Knowledge (Region: Local) 55%, Knowledge (Streetwise) 50%, Language (Local) 75%, Listen 45%, Persuade 45%, Research 75%, Sense 50%, Sleight of Hand 25%, Spot 65%, Stealth 50%, Track 35%

**Powers:** Detectives rarely have powers, though some few magicians or sorcerers become detectives.

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## Galactic Knight

This spacefaring paladin follows a mystic tradition that provides great and mysterious powers. As a defender of peace and justice throughout the galaxy, the galactic knight has sworn an oath to uphold a code of honour, and serves almost as an intergalactic ranger. Most of the galaxy does not understand the strange force the galactic knight serves, though they are respected or feared wherever they go. The galactic knight shuns traditional weaponry, and instead uses an antiquated but sophisticated hand weapon to deadly efficiency.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
16	15	14	15	21	17	15

**Move:** 10

**Hit Points** 15

**Damage Modifier:** +1D4

**Armour** None

### Attacks:

- Energy Sword 150%, 2D10+dm (bleeding) Brawl 80%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

**Skills:** Climb 75%, Command 50%, Dodge 75%, Hide 45%, Insight 75%, Jump 65%, Knowledge (Region: Galaxy) 35%, Language (Alien) 70%, Language (Own) 105%, Listen 65%, Martial Arts 80%, Navigate 50%, Persuade 35%, Pilot (Starfighter) 65%, Repair (Mechanical) 55%, Sense 70%, Spot 65%, Stealth 70%, Strategy 50%, Throw 60%.

**Powers:** The galactic knight is skilled in a mystical tradition that provides several psychic abilities, among them Danger Sense 60%, Empathy 55%, Mind Control 35%, Precognition 40%, Telekinesis 45%, and Telepathy 50%.

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## Gunslinger

The gunslinger makes their living killing people, specializing in fast and deadly combat with a handgun. In most cases, the gunslinger began life as something else, but was driven to a life of violence through tragedy or a taste for killing. The gunslinger's reputation is by far their most potent weapon—many lay down their weapons rather than face certain death. This gives the gunslinger steady work, helping those who need help, whether on the side of law or criminality. Sometimes reputation is a two-edged sword, attracting those who would make themselves famous.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
14	15	14	14	15	18	13

**Move:** 10

**Hit Points** 15

**Damage Modifier:** +1D4

**Armour** 1-pt. heavy clothing

### Attacks:

- Medium Revolver 95%, 1D8 (impaling)
- Sporting Rifle 85%, 2D6 (impaling)

- Double-barrelled Shotgun 75%, 4D6/2D6/1D6 (impaling)
- Knife 75%, 1D4+2+dm (impaling)
- Fist 75%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

**Skills:** Brawl 75%, Climb 60%, Demolition 30%, Dodge 60%, First Aid 40%, Gaming 65%, Grapple 50%, Insight 65%, Knowledge (Region: Local) 65%, Language (Own) 70%, Listen 65%, Ride (Horse) 75%, Sense 50%, Sleight of Hand 35%, Spot 75%, Stealth 50%, Throw 55%, Track 40%.

**Powers:** Gunslingers rarely have powers.

---

## Knight

A mounted and armoured warrior, skilled in swordsmanship, jousting, and the etiquette of chivalry. Drawn from the noble class, a knight has sworn their allegiance to their liege, and draws a stipend from lands under their domain to pay for their weapons, armour, horses, and lifestyle. Knights practice their skills regularly, compete in tournaments, and journey to war whenever their liege orders. Ideally, a knight is chivalrous and pious, adhering to a code of honour and decency, though this varies knight by knight.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
15	15	15	11	12	15	14

**Move:** 10

**Hit Points** 15

**Damage Modifier:** +1D4

**Armour** 10-pt. plate and heavy helm

**Attacks:**

- Long Sword 75%, 1D8+dm (bleeding)
- Kite Shield 65%, 1D4+dm (knockback)
- Lance 75%, 1D8+1+ mount's dm (usually +2D6, impaling, see below)
- Light Mace 65%, 1D6+2+dm (crushing)
- Long Bow 60%, 1D8+1+½dm (impaling)
- Dagger 50%, 1D4+2+dm (impaling)
- Armoured Gauntlet 50%, 1D3+1+dm (crushing)
- Tournament lances do crushing damage.

**Skills:** Command 45%, Dodge 50%, Etiquette 65%, Knowledge (Heraldry) 50%, Language (Other) 35%, Language (Own) 60%, Listen 45%, Ride (Horse) 75%, Sense 20%, Spot 45%, Status 60%, Strategy 30%.

**Powers:** Knights generally do not have powers, though some rare ones know magic. However, a knight may have access to a magic artifact, whether a blessed weapon, holy relic, or armour with some virtue laid upon it. Elves are rumoured to have their own orders of knighthood, and these knights would naturally use magic freely. Evil knights who have sworn allegiance to dark powers may use sorcery.

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## Maniac

A seemingly normal person who has gone violently, homicidally insane, the maniac is a figure to be feared. The maniac either stalks young victims in isolated locales, such as summer camp or some camp-ground, or takes to the road as a serial killer, seeking out victims to murder for unfathomable reasons. In appearance, the maniac comes in two flavours: utterly ordinary, or in a distinctive costume or mask.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
15	14	14	14	15	17	12

**Move:** 10

**Hit Points** 14

**Damage Modifier:** +1D4

**Armour** None

### Attacks:

- Butcher Knife 75%, 1D6+dm (impaling)
- Wood Axe 75%, 1D8+2+dm (bleeding)
- Chainsaw 65%, 2D8 (bleeding)
- Pitchfork 55%, 1D6+dm (impaling)
- Machete 65%, 1D6+dm (bleeding)
- Grapple 75%, special

**Skills:** Brawl 75%, Dodge 50%, Drive (Van) 65%, Hide 60%, Language (Own) 60%, Listen 45%, Sense 40%, Spot 65%, Stealth 80%, Throw 50%, Track 40%

**Powers:** Most maniacs do not have any powers, though some possess exceptional toughness and resilience. These are usually caused by a mutation of some sort, and appropriate mutations include Hardy, Increased Characteristic, Regeneration, or even Natural Weapon (teeth).

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## Mutant

This unfortunate soul was mutated through exposure to some radioactive or biological agent, or came to be through a hard luck roll of the genetic dice. Feared and unable to live a normal life, the mutant lurks on the outside of society. In a post-apocalyptic setting, the mutant is likely the victim of radiation and is one of many such creatures, threatening the 'pure' humans left.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
19	9	13	14	12	15	10

**Move:** 10

**Hit Points** 11

**Damage Modifier:** +1D4

**Armour** 7-pt. bony knobs on skin

### Attacks:

- Brawl 55%, 1D3+1D6+dm (crushing)



**Skills:** Disguise 25%, Dodge 40%, Drive (Dune Buggy) 40%, Fast Talk 25%, First Aid 40%, Hide 40%, Language (Own) 55%, Listen 35%, Sense 25%, Spot 30%, Stealth 25%, Track 25%.

**Powers:** This mutant has developed the following mutations: Congenital Disease (haemophilia, CON -5), Increased Characteristic (STR +6), Natural Weaponry (bony knobs on hands, +1D6 damage), Sensitivity (blood), Structural Improvement (bony knobs across skin, +7-pt. natural armour).

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## Ninja

The ninja is a feared shadowy killer from antiquity and even the modern world, trained in secret martial arts and techniques of stealth, infiltration, and assassination. Ninjas are often born into clans, though some rare few seek out the life and are accepted into the ancient orders. They are killers-for-hire, working alone or in groups.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
14	13	10	14	15	17	12

**Move:** 10

**Hit Points** 12

**Damage Modifier:** None

**Armour** None, or 2-pt. light chain mail

### Attacks:

- Katana 65%, 1D10+1+dm (bleeding)
- Dagger 65%, 1D4+2+dm (impaling)
- Composite Bow 50%, 1D8+1+½dm (impaling)
- Blowgun 50%, 1D3 (impaling) + poison (see below)
- Fist 55%, 1D3+dm (crushing)
- Kick 55%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

A ninja's blow-darts are usually covered in a paralytic POT 15 poison (see **Poisons**).

**Skills:** Climb 80%, Disguise 55%, Dodge 65%, Fine Manipulation 45%, Hide 70%, Jump 65%, Language (Own) 70%, Listen 65%, Martial Arts 35%, Sense 50%, Sleight of Hand 55%, Spot 55%, Stealth 75%, Swim 55%, Throw 50%, Track 35%.

**Powers:** Ninja do not generally have powers, though in settings where they do, they would have either sorcery or superpowers approximating extraordinary martial arts.

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## Pirate

A colourful predator of the high seas, the pirate is an ocean-going bandit, ranging from urbane rogues to despicable savages. This pirate is a sample crewmember of an average pirate ship and is skilled in seamanship and hand-to-hand combat.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
14	15	13	11	10	14	13

**Move:** 10

**Hit Points** 14

**Damage Modifier:** +1D4

**Armour** None

### Attacks:

- Cutlass (Sabre) 55%, 1D8+1+dm (bleeding)
- Knife 45%, 1D4+2+dm (impaling)
- Flintlock Pistol 50%, 1D6+1 (impaling)
- Musket 40%, 1D10+4 (impaling)
- Fist 50%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

**Skills:** Artillery 30%, Brawl 50%, Climb 80%, Craft (Carpentry) 55%, Dodge 40%, Fine Manipulation 45%, Gaming 35%, Grapple 50%, Jump 45%, Knowledge (Region: Local) 40%, Language (Local) 40%, Language (Own) 55%, Listen 45%, Navigate 50%, Perform (Sing Sea Chantey) 45%, Pilot (Ship) 35%, Sense 30%, Sleight of Hand 35%, Spot 50%, Swim 45%, Throw 50%.

**Powers:** In most settings, pirates don't have any powers. Some pirate chiefs, however, make pacts with darkness and are taught sorcery if their POW is high enough to qualify. Appropriate spells are Bird's Vision (1), Breath of Life (1), Rat's Vision (1), Sorcerer's Razor (2), Sorcerer's Sureness (2), and Wings of the Sky (4).

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## Police Officer

This is a police officer from any modern country. Trained in a wide variety of law enforcement techniques, the police officer is usually on patrol, or is called to the scene of an incident. In the event of a major incident in an urban area, police will likely be the first on the scene. More heavily armed police officers are a part of a Special Weapons and Tactics (S.W.A.T) team and are usually called on to deal with excessively violent situations.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
14	14	14	14	14	14	14

**Move:** 10

**Hit Points** 14

**Damage Modifier:** +1D4

**Armour** 8-pt. bulletproof vest (4-pt. vs. melee weapons) or 12-pt. riot gear

**Attacks:**

- Medium Pistol 70%, 1D8 (impaling)
- Shotgun 50%, 4D6/2D6/1D6 (impaling)
- Baton (Light Club) 50%, 1D6+dm (crushing)
- Pepper Spray 65%, special (POT 16, blinds 1D4+2 combat rounds)
- Taser 65%, special (see Stunning or Subduing)
- Grapple 65%, special

**Skills:** Brawl 65%, Dodge 40%, Drive (Police Car) 55%, Insight 35%, Knowledge (Law) 50%, Language (Spanish) 30%, Language (English) 80%, Listen 50%, Persuade 50%, Ride (Horse) 45%, Sense 30%, Spot 45%, Stealth 30%, Throw 45%.

**Powers:** Police officers rarely, ever, have powers.

## Priest

The priest is a devout worshipper of their patron deity, having left the safety of the monastery and into the outside world, armoured in piety and armed with the blessings of the deity. The priest ventures to strange and exotic lands to bring the message of truth to the unbelievers and strikes with vengeance any who oppose their divine mandate.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
14	13	14	15	16	13	15

**Move:** 10

**Hit Points** 14

**Damage Modifier:** +1D4

**Armour** 8-pt. chain and light helmet

**Attacks:**

- Morning-star Flail 50%, 1D10+1+dm (crushing)
- Full Shield 45%, 1D4+dm (knockback)
- Sling 40%, 1D8+½dm (crushing)
- Kick 40%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

**Skills:** Art (Illuminated Manuscripts) 35%, Command 25%, Craft (Bookmaking) 35%, Dodge 40%, First Aid 45%, Insight 35%, Knowledge (Religion) 70%, Language (Own) 70%, Listen 45%, Literacy (Common) 70%, Perform (Hymns) 35%, Persuade 45%, Ride (Horse) 35%, Spot 40%, Status 35%, Teach 30%

**Powers:** The priest has psychic abilities granted by their deity: Divination, Mind Shield, Precognition, and Sensitivity, all at the priest's POWx1%. Additionally, the priest has an allegiance of at least 50 to their patron deity, with whatever benefits that may entail. See *Allegiance*.

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## Psychic

Born with a particular gift, the psychic's powers developed during young adulthood. The psychic learned self-discipline and meditation techniques to quiet the voices echoing through their head, and now these strange gifts have been put to the purpose of aiding others, using them to seek knowledge and hidden truth.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
12	13	14	15	19	14	14

**Move:** 10

**Hit Points** 14

**Damage Modifier:** +1D4

**Armour** None

### Attacks:

- Fist 35%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

**Skills:** Art (Painting) 35%, Bargain 35%, Dodge 40%, Drive (Automobile) 30%, Fast Talk 35%, Insight 50%, Knowledge (Art History) 45%, Language (Own) 90%, Listen 35%, Research 65%, Sense 35%, Spot 40%, Status 35%, Stealth 30%.

**Powers:** The psychic abilities Aura Detection 35%, Precognition 25%, and Psychometry 50%.

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## Soldier

The soldier is trained in modern principles of warfare, utilizing weaponry and tactics, obedient to the chain of command, supportive of teammates, and remaining calm under fire. Under ideal conditions, the soldier is well-equipped, well-supported, and well-informed. This example soldier is especially fit and experienced, perhaps an elite commando.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
15	14	15	13	11	13	13

**Move:** 10

**Hit Points** 15

**Damage Modifier:** +1D4

**Armour** 8-pt. bulletproof vest (4-pt. vs. melee weapons) + 3-pt. light helmet

### Attacks:

- Assault Rifle 65%, 2D6+2 (impaling)
- Combat Knife (Dagger) 50%, 1D4+2+dm (impaling)
- Grenade (Explosive) 40%, 4D6 (knockback)

**Skills:** Artillery 30%, Brawl 45%, Climb 50%, Command 25%, Dodge 40%, Drive (Humvee) 45%, First Aid 40%, Grapple 50%, Hide 35%, Jump 35%, Language (Own) 65%, Listen 45%, Spot 45%, Stealth 40%, Strategy 20%, Throw 40%

**Powers:** Soldiers rarely, if ever, have powers.

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## Sorcerer

Chosen from youth and apprenticed in the mystic arts, the sorcerer deals with demons and commands the very elemental forces. The sorcerer is arrogant among lesser, non-magical mortals. At the same time, they are exceedingly careful of getting into personal combat, an arena they are woefully unprepared to compete in.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
9	11	15	19	21	14	12

**Move:** 10

**Hit Points** 13

**Damage Modifier:** None

**Armour** None, or 4-pt. Sorcerer's Armour

Attacks:

- Dagger 35%, 1D4+2+dm (impaling)

**Skills:** Appraise 35%, Dodge 40%, Etiquette 35%, Fast Talk 45%, Hide 30%, Insight 35%, Knowledge (Academic Lore) 50%, Knowledge (Blasphemous Lore) 20%, Knowledge (Occult) 70%, Language (Demonic) 50%, Language (Own) 85%, Listen 35%, Persuade 45%, Research 75%, Ride (Horse) 35%, Sense 35%, Sleight of Hand 35%, Spot 55%.

**Powers:** These sorcery spells are in memory: Curse of Sorcery (4), Sorcerous Armour (4), Sorcerer's Sharp Flame (3), Summon Demon (1), Undo Sorcery (2), Heal (2), Witch Sight (3).

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## Spy

A secret operative working clandestinely for a government agency, trained in infiltration, stealth, disguise, combat, and other espionage skills. Missions range from armed intrusion to infiltration of enemy groups with surveillance, sabotage, or assassination as the end goal. They may be equipped with an array of gadgets and weapons, some disguised as commonplace items. Consult *Chapter Eight: Equipment* for guidelines on constructing high-tech spy gear.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
14	14	13	15	14	15	14

**Move:** 10

**Hit Points** 14

**Damage Modifier:** +1D4

**Armour** 5-pt. ballistic cloth tuxedo (3-pt. vs. melee weapons)

Attacks:

- Light Pistol 75%, 1D6 (impaling)
- Sniper Rifle 75%, 2D10+4 (impaling)
- Throwing Knife 75%, 1D4+½dm (impaling)
- Fist 80%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

- Kick 65%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

**Skills:** Appraise 45%, Brawl 65%, Climb 60%, Demolition 40%, Disguise 60%, Dodge 50%, Drive (Sports Car) 85%, Etiquette 65%, Fast Talk 75%, Fine Manipulation 75%, First Aid 55%, Gaming 65%, Grapple 65%, Hide 75%, Insight 65%, Jump 50%, Knowledge (Espionage) 75%, Language (Own) 90%, Language (Other) 70%, Listen 65%, Martial Arts 45%, Persuade 55%, Pilot (Boat) 65%, Pilot (Helicopter) 45%, Research 45%, Ride (Horse) 45%, Sense 60%, Sleight of Hand 55%, Spot 65%, Stealth 70%, Strategy 50%, Swim 65%, Throw 65%, Track 35%.

**Powers:** Spies rarely, if ever, have any powers.

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## Superhero

Given powers by some freak accident or genetic abnormality, the superhero has vowed to do right, seeking justice for everyone, using their abilities to help normal people and protect them from threats both natural and unnatural, as well as those posed by super villains. Most keep their superheroic identities a secret, living normal lives when they can. A few superheroes have partners or join teams. The superhero is often wracked with self-doubt, wondering if the cost of heroism is too high.

This sample superhero is Stormcloud, a brash (and inexperienced) lightning-based hero, and enemy of Doctor Dread. Stormcloud's civilian identity is that of a television meteorologist.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
25	20	12	14	16	20	15

**Move:** 10 (62 flying)

**Hit Points** 16

**Damage Modifier:** +1D6

**Armour** 12-pt. Armour (Kinetic, Radiation)

Attacks:

- Lightning Bolt 45%, 6D6 (electric)
- Brawl 50%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

**Skills:** Art (Photography) 70%, Brawl 50%, Dodge 50%, Drive (Car) 35%, Fly 80%, Grapple 35%, Knowledge (Region: Local) 35%, Language (other) 00%, Language (Own) 85%, Perform (News) 50%, Research 45%, Science (Meteorology) 25%, Status 25%, Technical Skill (Use Computer) 35%.

**Powers:** Stormcloud has the following superpowers: Absorption (Electric) 18; Armour (Kinetic, Radiation) 12 each; Energy Projection (Electric) 6; Extra Energy 15 (+150 power points); Flight 10; and Super Characteristics 30 (STR +14, CON +8, DEX +8).

**Weaknesses:** Stormcloud's character failing is a weakness to water, losing -2D6 power points each round wet or submerged.

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## Supervillain

Unlike the superhero, the supervillain enjoys a life of crime, utilizing their abilities in pursuit of fortune, power, revenge, or other malfeasance. The supervillain can be a master criminal or a glorified thug, depending on their ambition. Some supervillains choose to work alone, while others have a cadre of minions. Even fewer supervillains work together in teams, as the unstable personalities tend to make equitable partnerships impossible.

This sample supervillain is Doctor Dread, a former defence industries engineer whose funding was cut. After using unlicensed military tech to build a suit of protective armour, Doctor Dread seeks a means of financing further (and potentially illegal) weapons research. These statistics represent Doctor Dread in the armour.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
15	18	9	17	17	18	10

**Move:** 10 (62 flying)

**Hit Points** 14

**Damage Modifier:** None

**Armour** 4-pt. Armour (Kinetic) + 20-pt. Force Field (Electric, Kinetic, Radiation)

Attacks:

- Heat Projector 70%, 6D6 (fire)
- Brawl 50%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

**Skills:** Command 35%, Dodge 40%, Drive (Van) 55%, Fine Manipulation 65%, Jump 65%, Language (Own) 125%, Listen 45%, Repair (Electronic) 85%, Repair (Quantum) 75%, Research 85%, Science (Physics) 95%, Spot 50%, Technical Skill (Use Computer) 95%.

**Powers:** Doctor Dread's armour provides the following superpowers: Armour (Kinetic) 4; Energy Projection (Heat) 6; Extra Energy 15(+150 power points); Flight 3; Force Field (Electric, Kinetic, Radiation) 20 each; Leap 10 (+20 meters to Jump distance); Super Sense (Infravision, Ultrasonic Hearing) 1 each.

**Weaknesses:** Doctor Dread's character failings are full-time supervillainy; physically distinctive (ugly); psychological failings (bloodthirsty, arrogant); supervillain identity tied to armour and not on full-time; armour can be shut down or removed.

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## Thug

A goon for hire, usually working for a criminal group or sometimes just looking for trouble. A thug can be backup muscle or on their own, whether breaking-and-entering, robbery, banditry, or mugging.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
16	14	15	10	10	12	11
<b>Move:</b> 10			<b>Hit Points</b> 15			
<b>Damage Modifier:</b> +1D4			<b>Armour</b> 1-pt. leather jacket			

Attacks:

- Heavy Pistol 50%, 1D10+2 (impaling)
- Switch-blade 50%, 1D4+dm (impaling)
- Baseball Bat 50%, 1D6+dm (crushing)
- Fist 50%, 1D3+dm (crushing)
- Head Butt 35%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

**Skills:** Demolition 20%, Dodge 35%, Drive (Truck) 50%, Gaming 30%, Grapple 50%, Hide 25%, Insight 25%, Knowledge (Region: Home City) 35%, Language (Own) 50%, Listen 35%, Persuade 35%, Sense 30%, Sleight of Hand 25%, Spot 35%, Stealth 25%, Throw 35%.

**Powers:** Thugs never have powers. If they did, they'd be doing better for themselves.

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## Tribal Warrior

The tribal warrior is encountered in any area where civilization has not reached. They use weapons that are considered primitive by the standard of the day, and participate in their tribe's survival, hunting and fighting to defend the tribe against trespassers and attackers. The tribal warrior places great faith in the wisdom from the elders of the tribe who interpret the words of the gods.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
16	14	15	11	13	16	13
<b>Move:</b> 10			<b>Hit Points</b> 15			
<b>Damage Modifier:</b> +1D4			<b>Armour</b> 1-pt. hide armour			

Attacks:

- Short Spear 65%, 1D6+1+dm (impaling)
- Short Spear (thrown) 75%, 1D6+1+½dm (impaling)
- Light Club 55%, 1D6+dm (crushing)
- Light Club (thrown) 65%, 1D6+½dm (crushing)



- Shield 65%, 1D2+dm (knockback)
- Blowgun 75%, 1D3 (impaling) + poison (see below)\*
- Grapple 65%, special

\*A tribal warrior's blow-darts are usually covered in a paralytic POT 10 poison (see **Poisons**).

Some tribal warriors adopt the use of captured weapons from civilized men, while others shun them.

**Skills:** Climb 75%, Dodge 40%, Hide 45%, Jump 45%, Language (Own) 60%, Listen 55%, Sense 60%, Spot 65%, Stealth 60%, Swim 55%, Throw 65%, Track 70%.

**Powers:** Tribal warriors rarely have powers. However, tribes are usually allied with a shaman or wise person who may have powers. These powers are usually psychic abilities or magic spells, sometimes sorcery.

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## Viking

Vikings are northern warriors who take lengthy sea-voyages for exploration, trade (against strong opponents or allies), and raiding (against enemies or those weaker). They are fierce and proud, excellent sailors, and surprisingly civilized given their savage reputation. Vikings have their own code of honour and laws and adhere to them stringently, though their rules do not apply to others.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	CHA
15	14	15	11	11	13	12

**Move:** 10

**Hit Points** 15

**Damage Modifier:** +1D4

**Armour** 7-pt. scale and light helmet

Attacks:

- Broad Sword 65%, 1D8+1+dm (bleeding)
- Hand Axe 55%, 1D6+1+dm (bleeding)
- Hand Axe (thrown) 55%, 1D6+1+½dm (bleeding)
- Self Bow 50%, 1D6+1+½dm (impaling)
- Large Round Shield 50%, 1D4+dm (knockback)
- Brawl 55%, 1D3+dm (crushing)

**Skills:** Appraise 45%, Bargain 35%, Brawl 25%, Craft (type) 05%, Dodge 40%, Gaming 40%, Grapple 35%, Insight 15%, Jump 25%, Language (Own) 55%, Listen 40%, Navigate 35%, Pilot (ship) 25%, Ride (type) 05%, Spot 35%, Status 25%.

**Powers:** Vikings rarely have any powers. Some spellcasters use a variety of magic types, from rune magic, shapeshifting, or sorcery. Depending on the setting, a wealthy or favoured Viking may have weaponry, armour, or some other magic artifacts.

# CUSTOMIZING CREATURES AND NON PLAYER CHARACTERS

It may be necessary to customize these creatures and non-player characters based on the power level of your game, or to better match the competency of the player characters. Here are guidelines for doing so and for managing these creatures and non-player characters as needed.

It may make more sense for opponents to be of a higher calibre in one power level, such as a fantasy or superhero setting, while in other settings it might seem inappropriate or too challenging. In cases like these, the gamemaster may choose to increase the threat an opponent faces in another fashion, such as to increase the number encountered, or give them superior equipment, or other means as described below.

## NORMAL CAMPAIGNS

The creatures and non-player characters in this chapter are geared for a normal campaign. They do not normally need to be adjusted, unless for a particular setting. Whenever adjusting characteristics, take note of any modified secondary characteristics (damage bonus, hit points, major wound, power points, etc.).

One thing to keep in mind is that even a little armour goes a long way. Adding 3 points of armour to an entity can make them challenging, and with more than +6 points they become very difficult to harm.

## HEROIC CAMPAIGNS

For a heroic campaign, here are ways you can adjust creatures or non-player characters to better suit heroic-level characters:

- Increasing the number of the creatures or non-player characters encountered by +25% or more.
- Adding one more extremely competent leader to any groups, perhaps built on the epic power level.
- Having them use superior tactics, be more cautious or aggressive, and taking better advantage of their terrain to gain tactical advantages and keep the player characters off-balance.
- Increasing key characteristics by another D6, or a flat +3, keeping the rollable maximums intact.
- Modifying combat-oriented and other relevant skills by +25% or multiplied by  $\times 1.5$ .
- Adding more powers or increased efficacy in existing powers.

- Equipping them with better equipment, armour, weaponry, etc.

## EPIC CAMPAIGNS

For an epic campaign, here are ways to adjust creatures or non-player characters to present more of a challenge:

- Doubling the number that would be encountered by normal characters.
- Giving them a leader at the superhuman power level.
- Increasing characteristics by +6 or more, beyond racial maximums.
- Doubling skill rankings.
- Having them use skills like Command and Strategy to even the playing field.
- Adding all-new powers or multiple power groups, or combining entries, with superpowers like Extra Hit Points an easy solution.
- Giving foes the best equipment, armour, and weaponry available, whether power armour, magical artifacts, medical supplies capable of instant healing, etc. .

## SUPERHUMAN CAMPAIGNS

For a superhuman campaign, the gamemaster may choose to adjust the following aspects of a creature or non-player character:

- Numbers can be increased to the limit of what you feel comfortable handling, mixing up normal, heroic, and epic level non-player characters to vary the challenge.
- Increasing characteristics far past the rollable maximums, using whatever powers to make these foes almost titanic in abilities and competency.
- Tripling or even quadrupling skill ratings far above 100%.
- Adding less obvious powers like Extra Hit Points, Super Characteristics, Super Skill, etc.
- Equipping opponents with exceptional arms, armour, and other gear, including magical or powered gear. They will also use this equipment tactically and to the best of their abilities.

## General Notes

As noted, these are just suggestions, and should be applied intelligently. Examine the player characters' abilities and use that as a basis for how tough to make meaningful opponents. Don't be afraid to scale back an encounter by having enemies flee, or increase the difficulty by having new enemies arrive, or introducing some environmental factor make things more difficult for everyone.

Gauging an enemy's relative strength against a player character's is a difficult art to master, and the flat distribution of dice results and unexpected tactics can make a

potentially easy encounter a life-or-death struggle or end a climactic battle with a single first (and lucky) shot.

It's important, though, to always remember the main rule: have fun and make sure the players are having fun, too.

# CREATURE HIT LOCATION TABLES

Hit locations allow for great detail in determining where an attack landed and appeal to many because they represent a more 'realistic' depiction of injuries. The standard hit location chart provided is suitable for any bipedal humanoid, other creatures have differently-shaped bodies and need different hit location charts.

This section presents a variety of hit location charts and quick formulas for determining the hit points per location for any creature desired. To determine which table to use, pick the one most appropriate to the desired creature.

- **Humanoid:** Human, Alien (Grey), Angel (wings hidden), Cyborg, Dwarf, Elf, Ghost, Ghoul, Giant, Halfling, Minotaur, Mummy, Mutant, Orc, Robots (Giant, Killer, Utility), Skeleton, Troll, Vampire (in human form), Elementals (Earth, Water), Werewolf (in hybrid form), Zombie
- **Formless:** Blob
- **Four-Legged Humanoid:** Centaur
- **Four-Legged:** Bear, Dog, Gorilla, Horse, Lion, Tiger, Unicorn, Wolf
- **Four-Legged with Tail:** Alien (Xenomorph), Alligator or Crocodile, Elemental (Fire)
- **Giant Four-Legged With Tail:** Brontosaurus
- **Multi-Limbed:** Squid (Giant)
- **Snake:** Snakes (Constrictor, Venomous)
- **Two-Legged with Tail:** Tyrannosaurus Rex
- **Winged:** Hawk
- **Winged Four-Legged:** Griffin

To determine hit points per location, either use the hit point formula, or use the Hit Points Per Location table.

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## Humanoid

D20 Roll	Result	Formula
1–4	Right Leg	1/3 total
5–8	Left Leg	1/3 total
9–11	Abdomen	1/3 total
12	Chest	2/5 total
13–15	Right Arm	1/4 total
16–18	Left Arm	1/4 total
19–20	Head	1/3 total

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## Formless

D20 Roll	Result	Formula
1–20	Body	Total

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## Four-Legged

D20	Result	Formula
1–2	Right Hind leg	1/4 total
3–4	Left Hind leg	1/4 total
5–7	Hindquarters	2/5 total
8–10	Forequarters	2/5 total
11–13	Right Foreleg	1/4 total
14–16	Left Foreleg	1/4 total
17–20	Head	1/3 total

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## Four-legged Humanoid

D20	Result	Formula
1–2	Right Hind leg	1/4 total
3–4	Left Hind leg	1/4 total
5–6	Hindquarters	2/5 total
7–8	Forequarters	2/5 total
9–10	Right Foreleg	1/4 total
11–12	Left Foreleg	1/4 total

13–14	Chest	2/5 total
15–16	Right Arm	1/4 total
17–18	Left Arm	1/4 total
19–20	Head	1/3 total

---

## Four-legged with Tail

D20	Result	Formula
1–3	Tail	1/3 total
4	Right Hind leg	1/4 total
5	Left Hind leg	1/4 total
6–9	Hindquarters	2/5 total
10–14	Forequarters	2/5 total
15	Right Foreleg	1/4 total
16	Left Foreleg	1/4 total
17–20	Head	1/3 total

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## Giant Four-legged with Tail

D20	Result	Formula
1–2	Tail	1/3 total
3–4	Right Hind leg	1/4 total
5–6	Left Hind leg	1/4 total
7–10	Hindquarters	2/5 total
11–14	Forequarters	2/5 total
15–16	Right Foreleg	1/4 total
17–18	Left Foreleg	1/4 total
19–20	Head	1/3 total

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**Multi-Limbed**

D20	Result	Formula
1	Arm	1/4 total
2	Arm 2	1/4 total
3	Arm 3	1/4 total
4	Arm 4	1/4 total
5	Arm 5	1/4 total
6	Arm	1/4 total
7	Arm 7	1/4 total
8	Arm 8	1/4 total
9	Arm 9	1/4 total
10	Arm	1/4 total
11–15	Body	2/5 total
16–20	Head	2/5 total

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**Snake**

D20	Result	Formula
1–6	Tail	1/3 total
7–14	Body	2/5 total
15–20	Head	1/3 total

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**Two-legged with Tail**

D20	Result	Formula
1–2	Tail	1/3 total
3–5	Right Leg	1/3 total
6–8	Left Leg	1/3 total
9–11	Abdomen	2/5 total
12–15	Chest	2/5 total
16	Right Arm	1/4 total
17	Left Arm	1/4 total
18–20	Head	1/3 total

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**Winged**

D20	Result	Formula
1–3	Right leg	1/5 total
4–6	Left leg	1/5 total
7–12	Body	2/5 total
13–15	Right wing	1/5 total
16–18	Left wing	1/5 total
19–20	Head	1/4 total

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**Winged Four-Legged**

D20	Result	Formula
1–2	Right Hind leg	1/4 total
3–4	Left Hind leg	1/4 total
5–7	Hindquarters	2/5 total
8–10	Forequarters	2/5 total
11–12	Right Wing	1/4 total
13–14	Left Wing	1/4 total
15–16	Right Foreleg	1/4 total
17–18	Left Foreleg	1/4 total
19–20	Head	1/3 total

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**Winged, Four-legged with Tail**

D20	Result	Formula
1–2	Tail	1/4 total
3–4	Right Hind leg	1/3 total
5–6	Left Hind leg	1/3 total
7–8	Hindquarters	2/5 total
9–10	Forequarters	2/5 total
11–12	Right Wing	1/4 total
13–14	Left Wing	1/4 total
15–16	Right Foreleg	1/3 total
17–18	Left Foreleg	1/3 total
19–20	Head	1/3 total

Winged Humanoid					
D20	Result	Formula			
1-3	Right Leg	1/3 total	11-12	Right Wing	1/5 total
4-6	Left Leg	1/3 total	13-14	Left Wing	1/5 total
7-9	Abdomen	1/3 total	15-16	Right Arm	1/4 total
10	Chest	2/5 total	17-18	Left Arm	1/4 total
			19-20	Head	1/3 total

## CREATURE HIT LOCATION TABLE

To determine the hit points per location, compare the creature's total hit points with the fraction. Each total hit point value is provided a range and fractions are rounded up based on that range. For a more precise calculation, use the formulas provided above.

Total	2/5	1/3	1/4	1/5
1-3		2	1	1
4-6	3	2	2	1
7-9	4	3	3	2
10-12	5	4	3	2
13-15	6	5	4	3
16-18	8	6	5	3
19-21	9	7	6	4
22-24	10	8	6	4
25-27	11	9	7	5
28-30	12	10	8	5
31-33	14	11	9	6
34-36	15	12	9	6
37-39	16	13	10	7
40-42	17	14	11	7
43-45	18	15	12	8
46-48	20	16	12	8
49-51	21	17	13	9
52-54	22	18	14	9



Total	2/5	1/3	1/4	1/5
55-57	23	19	15	10
58-60	24	20	15	10
61-63	26	21	16	11
64-66	27	22	17	11
67-69	28	23	18	12
70-72	29	24	18	12
73-75	30	25	19	13
76-78	32	26	20	13
79-81	33	27	21	14
82-84	34	28	22	14
85-87	35	29	22	15
88-90	36	30	23	15
91-93	38	31	24	16
94-96	39	32	24	16
97-99	40	33	25	17
100, etc.	41	34	26	16